

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION

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## Dating: The Old-Fashioned Path to Love and Romance

**It's an old dance, dating, a waltz of courtship, love, and romance.**

JEFF MINICK

**O**K, I agree with some of you right off the bat. What's a 70-year-old guy doing giving advice about dating and courtship? In words made famous by the man we now call president, "Come on, man!"

Agreed in part. I am "old, and grey, and full of sleep," as the poet Yeats once wrote of a former heartthrob, and though I'm not yet King Lear doddering through a wilderness of memories, I am well on my way.

On the other hand, I've been around the block a few times, I've got one foot in the past and one in the present, and like a lot of codgers my age, I'm always ready to shoot out suggestions to the younger set, though to be frank, they rarely ask me about anything of import.

Anyway, let's look at the dating game.

**Then**

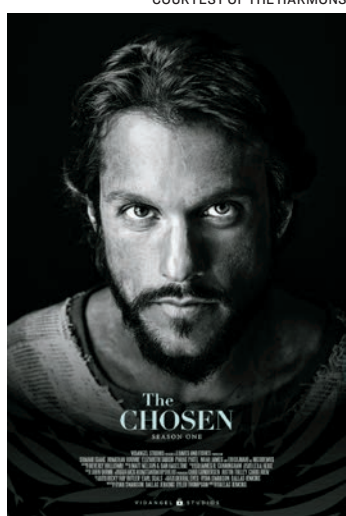
It's early March 1976, and I'm sitting in the Harvard Gardens, a pub and restaurant in Boston. It was nowhere near Harvard, and back then it was anything but a garden, but the beer was cheap, and the establishment was an easy walk from my fifth-floor walkup room.

I was working in The Old Corner Bookstore that year, managed then by Doubleday and now defunct, and in the evenings I was scribbling away on a novel. I wrote by hand because burglars had broken into my place and had stolen my typewriter. Many evenings I would then stroll down Beacon Hill to Harvard Gardens for a beer or a Black Russian. There the working class from the Back of the Hill mingled with medical personnel from Massachusetts General Hospital, which was across the street.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Harmon Brothers: Entrepreneurial Spirit Runs in the Family

From selling potatoes at a young age to crowdfunding millions of dollars, these brothers are driven by common ideals and values



More than \$10 million was raised for "The Chosen," through Angel Studios, making it the most successful crowdfunding campaign ever for a television series.

COURTESY OF THE HARMONS

THALIA ZHAO

For many tech entrepreneurs, a first venture starts with an angel investor and a promising idea. For Neal Harmon, it all began with a cow.

"I saved up money when I was 11 and bought my first cow," he said.

His brother Jeffrey had some color to add to the story.

"And then he had a plan to make a million dollars—like if every cow had twins, by the time he was 18, he'd be a millionaire. That's where Neal started, and we kind of followed after that."

Today, Neal, 43, and his brothers have come a long way from selling cows. Neal is co-founder and CEO of VidAngel, a service that lets users set custom filters

to block out explicit content in streamed video content. Jeffrey Harmon, 38, is co-founder and chief content officer at VidAngel, which also produces its own original shows including "The Chosen" and "Freelancers" through Angel Studios. Daniel Harmon, 41, heads up the brothers' award-winning advertising company, Harmon Brothers, as chief creative officer.

**'The Chosen' has been viewed more than 100 million times in 180 countries.**

However, the three are only a fraction of the full set of Harmon siblings—six brothers and three sisters. Growing up, the adults of the family had given the siblings

free rein to explore wherever their imaginations would take them, making for many misadventures—and very few dull moments—around the house.

"When I was growing up, I could build treehouses, go sail down canals ... a little bit like Tom Sawyer," said Neal. "Some parents would be worried about that, but our parents just trusted us and let us experiment and try new things. And because we were quite poor growing up, we also tried all sorts of businesses."

**Entrepreneurial Roots**

One of these businesses involved potatoes from the family farm in Idaho—and lots of them. As teenagers, Jeffrey and Daniel would often haul two tons of potatoes at a time down to Utah. On a good day, they'd be able to earn more than \$100 an hour selling them door-to-door.

What made the potato business even more lucrative was that they'd always take the family

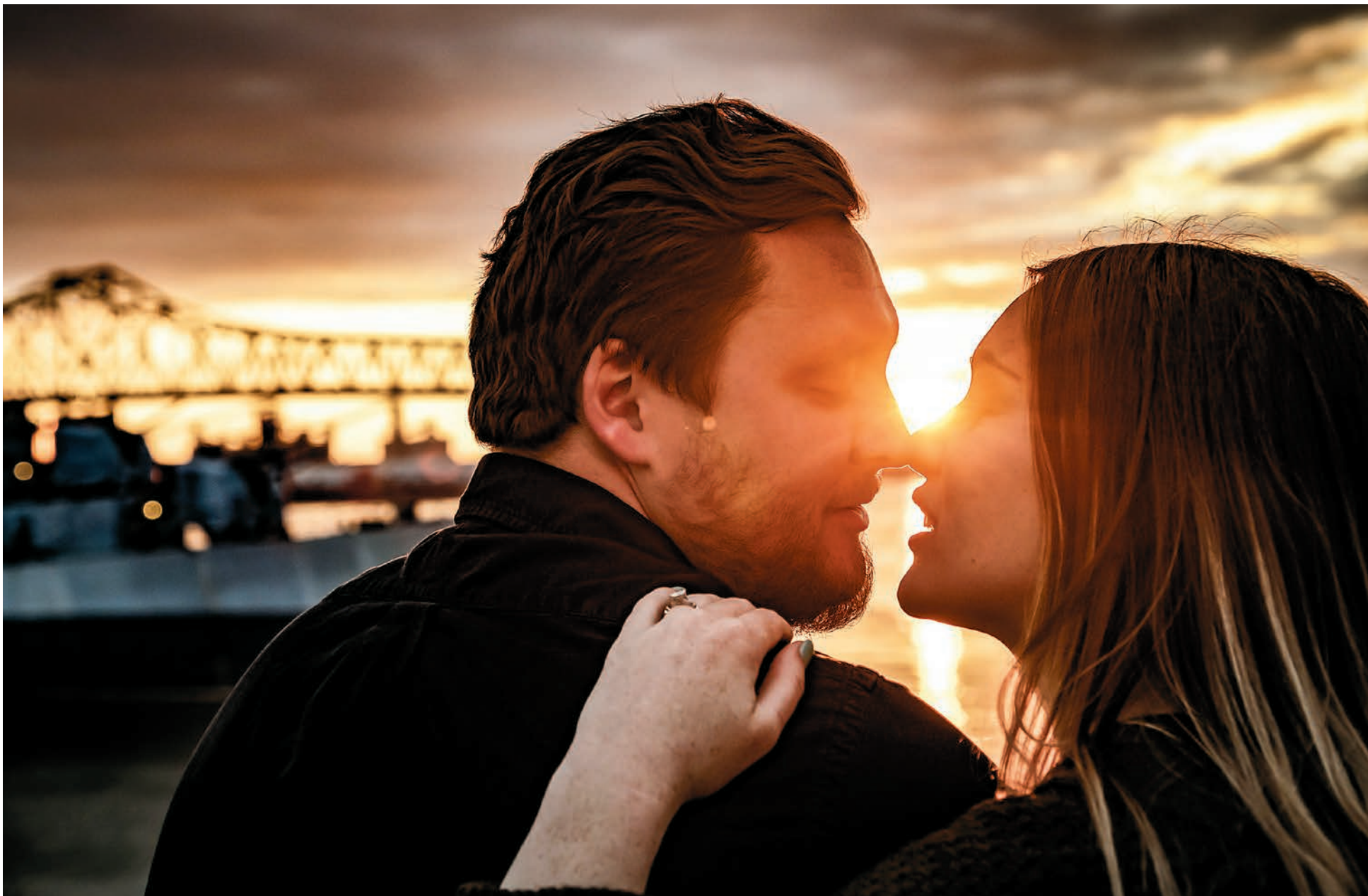
trucks, so their only expense was gas. However, it wasn't always convenient to have the trucks randomly disappear for these day trips, and one Harmon uncle decided to take matters into his own hands.

"Our uncle went and bought a 15-passenger van with almost 400,000 miles on it for \$900 on auction," said Jeffrey. "Then he drove it back, picking us up, and said, 'Hey, you're buying this van from me for \$900, you two, because you're gonna stop borrowing the trucks from the farm to haul your potatoes to Utah!'"

The Harmon adults did whatever they could to support the children in their big ideas, regardless of whether it was potatoes, cows, or landscaping. Before Jeffrey and Daniel could drive, their father would chauffeur them down to Utah to sell potatoes. One of their grandfathers gave the brothers a client list to start a landscaping gig.

*Continued on Page 4*

JACOB BOURGEOIS/UNSPASH



If affection develops into love, marriage should be next on the agenda.

## Dating: The Old-Fashioned Path to Love and Romance

Continued from Page 1

On this particular night, I was sitting with my acquaintance Jimmy J., a window washer, when I remarked that one of the three nurses at the next table was pretty. Jimmy sent a drink to her—he should have sent one to each nurse, but he was glassy-eyed with beer—and they invited us to join them. The nurse and I talked, and shortly after midnight, they got up to go home. “Go after her,” Jimmy J. told me, and I hurried out the door onto Cambridge Street, where the wind and cold were butcher knives on the flesh. I ran after her and said, “I don’t usually do this, but could I have your phone number?” She replied, “I don’t usually do this, but here it is,” and she wrote it out on a piece of paper from her purse.

Just then a little old man—either a drunk or an angel, or both—appeared, put one arm over each of our shoulders, and said: “Give the guy a chance! Give the guy a chance!”

The next day, I called and asked her out on a date, and Kris gave me a chance. Within 18 months, we were married. Together we had four children, loved each other, quarreled, laughed a lot, and together faced hardships and experienced various adventures until her death 26 years later.

### Now

Times have changed.

Google “Is dating dead?” and numerous sites pop up declaring it so. Aspirations for marriage and a family have changed. Hanging out and hooking up have become the new norm.

In her insightful online article “The Two Biggest Reasons Dating Is Dead,” Suzanne Venker writes of today’s young people that they understand sex, “but how to communicate, how to date, and how to love, well, it’s all Greek to them.”

She blames the death of dating on lowered female sexual standards—“Women don’t gain power by being promiscuous—they lose it”—and the failure of both sexes to aspire to marriage, which is a primary purpose of dating.

To these, I would add the confusion today about sex and gender, particularly among college students and university graduates. A society that wants women to become more like men and men more like women throws dating out the window.

But suppose you want to revive dating? Suppose you like the idea of courtship? And suppose, as Venker writes, you really don’t understand how to go about it?

Here are some tips that might help.

### Say No to Texting

The inspiration for this article came from a wife and mother whose single female friends

**Google ‘Is dating dead?’ and numerous sites pop up declaring it so. Aspirations for marriage and a family have changed.**

*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. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning as I Go” and “Movies Make the Man.” Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See [JeffMinick.com](http://JeffMinick.com) to follow his blog.*

meet men who seem unable or unwilling to ask them out. “None of the males make a move,” one of them said. Another woman, a former student of mine who graduated several years ago from Appalachian State University, bright and attractive, told me that in her first two years in college, several young men had asked her out by text, but never face to face.

Let’s say you meet the friend of a friend at a supper. You find her attractive and interesting and want to get to know her better. You get her phone number from your friend, and you text her, reintroducing yourself and asking her if she’d like to have a glass of wine together.

Bad move.

When you text to ask a woman out, you are sending a message that you’re either too intimidated or too cowardly to make a phone call. Either ask her out in person or if circumstances render that impossible, call her.

And for the ladies: Remember my angel on Cambridge Street. “Give the guy a chance,” he said, and you might consider following that advice. That young man you met at your friend’s dinner might have struck you as nerdy or shy, he might be a bumbler as I was, but he also might be the man who will make you happy, your white knight in disguise.

### Online Dating

Two years after my wife’s death, I signed up with an online dating service. Over the next few years, I used that service from time to time, and met some nice women, others with whom I quickly proved incompatible, and one who was crazy.

Eventually, I developed a dislike for this electronic matchmaking and closed my account. Scrolling through pictures and profiles made me feel too much like a judge at a cattle show, and two of the women I dated told me they shared that same sentiment when looking at men.

Along the way, I did learn a few things about this modern method of dating. When you put together your profile, tell the truth. If you’re a smoker, say so. If you’re unemployed, admit it. Report your correct age, and don’t post 10-year-old photographs of yourself as if they were taken yesterday. Once you open a correspondence with a “match,” arrange to meet as soon as possible, otherwise you are avoiding the personal touch and wasting time.

### Crunch Time

So there you are, out on a first date, seated opposite each other at a table in a nice restaurant. Your date is easy on the eyes, has a pleasant demeanor and a lovely smile, and



JELENA ZELEN/SHUTTERSTOCK

A tip for guys: Be the gentleman, despite today’s ideas of sexual equality.

the evening looks promising.

And then you open your mouth and begin talking.

As you blather away about your work at the office, your education, your sessions with a counselor for your various neuroses, your trips to Europe, and so on, you fail to notice the glazed look creeping into the eyes of the person opposite you. You’re not only behaving like a narcissist, but you’re also missing the whole point of the evening.

You’re there to share with that other person. You’re there to find out about each other, to listen as well as speak. And I mean really listen. If your date says her father died two months ago, don’t ask her what sort of music she enjoys.

Another tip, especially for guys: Play the gentleman. Offer to pay for supper. Show some manners while you’re eating. If the sidewalks outside are slippery, offer her a hand. When you arrive at her car, open the door for her.

Yes, I know these gestures grate against today’s ideas of sexual equality, but I don’t care a fig for that. Most women—yes, even the young ones—appreciate a gentleman.

### On the Dance Floor

In the movie “Kate & Leopold,” an Englishman from the 19th century is transported through time to modern-day New York City. There Leopold meets Kate, a woman disappointed in love, and her bumbling brother, Charlie.

Leopold’s etiquette, his antique views on love and courtship, his pursuit of Kate, and the advice he gives to Charlie about ways to win a woman’s heart might serve as a primer on dating, even in today’s cultural chaos. Leopold teaches Charlie, for example, what flowers to buy for Patrice, gets him her phone number, and schools him before he calls her on what he should say.

It’s an old dance, dating, a waltz of courtship, love, and romance. As Charlie and his sister discover, the manners, customs, and understood rules of that dance don’t inhibit relationships, but actually help build them. Robert Frost once said of writing free verse, it’s “like playing tennis with the net down.” The same is true of “free love.”

### Goals

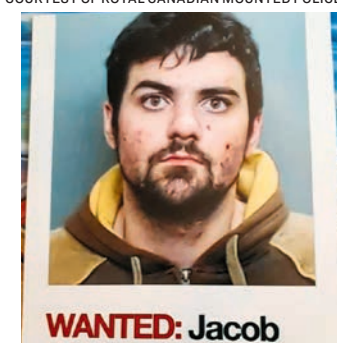
The immediate goal of dating as an adult is to get to know another person. If familiarity develops into affection, and if affection deepens into love, then marriage should be next on the agenda. Several people of my acquaintance, young and old, have often drifted in and out of relationships, have lived with a partner for months and years, broken up, repeated that same behavior, and eventually, as Suzanne Venker points out, they often ended up jaded and cynical about love.

Author Jefferson Bethke wrote: “Dating without the intent of marrying is like going to the grocery store with no money. You either leave unhappy or take something that isn’t yours.”

If you want marriage and a family, quit listening to the cultural gurus of our time, go retro, and try old-fashioned dating.

A final thought: Always bear in mind the words of songwriter Steve Forbert, “You cannot win if you do not play.”

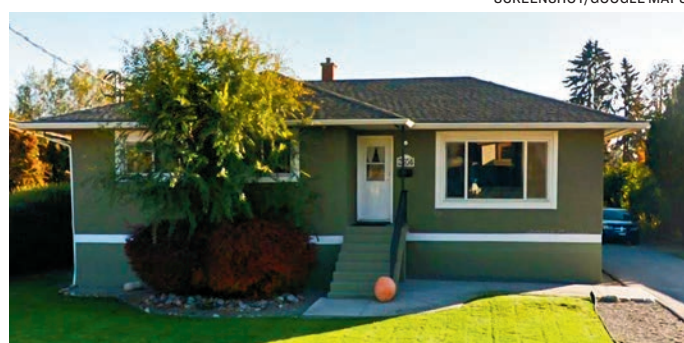
COURTESY OF ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE



WANTED: Jacob

“Everything I had went to drugs, chasing drugs,” Philp recalled.

SCREENSHOT/GOOGLE MAPS



Bill’s Place.

## Former Fentanyl Addict Celebrates ‘Amazing Life on the Other Side’

JENNI JULANDER

Last month, a man in Kelowna, British Columbia, celebrated four years sober after living the life of a hardcore drug addict who had plunged headfirst into heroin and fentanyl use. He spent time in prison, saw his friend die on his shoulder from an overdose, and came close to death himself.

Crediting a special recovery program called Bill’s Place for saving him, Jacob Philp, 33, described his new life as a “complete 180” compared with his life before recovery.

Philp is now a homeowner and is married with two beautiful children. He works as a supportive housing program coordinator.

### He never counted on treatment actually working.

“I love the person I am today,” Philp told The Epoch Times. “I have a new-found self-respect that I’ve never had in my life.”

But it wasn’t always this way.

He once had to steal, scam, and lie to loved ones on a daily basis to feed his habit. He was homeless and slept in construction site outhouses, for fear the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would catch him if he went to the shelter.

“When I was stuck in my addiction, I was homeless, I was on the streets, I couldn’t scrape together anything,” Philp said. “Everything I had went to drugs, chasing drugs. I gave up everything.”

Philp’s descent into drug use started with his insecurities. He was unsure of his identity and afraid of not fitting in with others.

When he smoked weed for the first time at the age of 12, it felt like a quick fix. From

there, he tried mushrooms and psychedelics, and developed a heavy drug habit as early as age 14.

“For other people, it was just dabbling,” Philp said. “But for me ... I had no switch in my brain to tell me enough was enough.”

When he started dating a woman who used heroin, he tried it with her and soon became addicted to both heroin and meth. Within the first month, he says he started spending his entire paycheck on heroin.

Philp’s life spiraled out of control. He lost his job, pawned off his belongings, and before long, became homeless. Eventually, he was arrested and spent several “brutal” months at Kamloops prison.

It wasn’t long before Philp was ready to get out. His mother hired an attorney, and they learned that the best way to get out of jail was for him to willingly start treatment for drug addiction.

He agreed, for what he calls “the wrong reasons.” He never counted on treatment actually working.

After he got out on bail, his father threatened to pull bail if his son didn’t make his daily calls to the recovery center.

But it wasn’t long before he ran into old friends, who recommended he try fentanyl, a drug he describes as “night and day” compared to heroin.

The drug was dangerous, though. Soon, his friends began overdosing and dying, and Philp had some close calls himself.

“I lost a lot of friends to fentanyl in that short amount of time,” he recalled. “I woke up and my friend was dead on my shoulder.”

A couple of months after getting out of jail, Philp finally entered into a treatment center called Bill’s Place, which wasn’t at all what he expected, though he says it saved his life.

It wasn’t your average rehabilitation



Jacob Philp with this family.

center; Philp said he could tell something was different the moment he arrived.

“I was expecting ... this big, crazy place that looks like a hospital or something, full of counselors and nurses and doctors,” he said. “It was nothing like that, nothing at all. It was a house! I was like, ‘What is this madness?’”

A man with tattoos greeted him at the door.

Philp recalled: “He looked like someone that I would’ve hung out with in my previous life. But the difference here was he was smiling, he was laughing, he was happy. He had this light on in his eyes.”

Philp thought he was a counselor but later found out the man was actually a recovering addict. He says it was a moment that gave him hope.

“My first impression,” he said, “was here’s a bunch of guys who are struggling like I’m struggling right now, only they’re happy and they’re laughing.”

He added that he felt like he fit in; the

other people in the program instantly accepted him, and for the first time, he felt like part of a community.

“There was a magic in that place that saved my life,” Philp said.

He also attributes his recovery to his parents’ support.

“They never gave up,” he said. “My parents wouldn’t sit there and support the addiction, but if I was ready to take a step or go to treatment, they were there.”

Philp has been sober since 2017. By sharing his story, he aims to bring that same glimmer of hope to other addicts.

“It can be so, so scary to take that first step,” he said. “[But] there’s an amazing life on the other side.”

He added that the best parts of his transformation are “the relationships, the happiness, the inner peace” that he has achieved.

“That’s just daily now,” he said. “It’s a complete 180-degree turn from where I was.”

## Defying the Odds

Boy with ‘1 in 10,000’ birth disorder: ‘I’m not that strong, I’m just brave’

JENNI JULANDER

A young Ohio boy who wasn’t expected to live past infancy has defied the odds. Now, at the age of 9, he is tackling life head-on and refuses to let anything hold him back.

Born preterm with a rare birth disorder, a severe cleft palate, and serious lung and heart issues, doctors predicted that Carson Locher didn’t have long to live.

Doctors didn’t expect Carson’s mother, Jessie Beals, to have a full-term pregnancy. Early on, they discovered a tear in her uterine wall and said she would likely miscarry, reported Fox News.

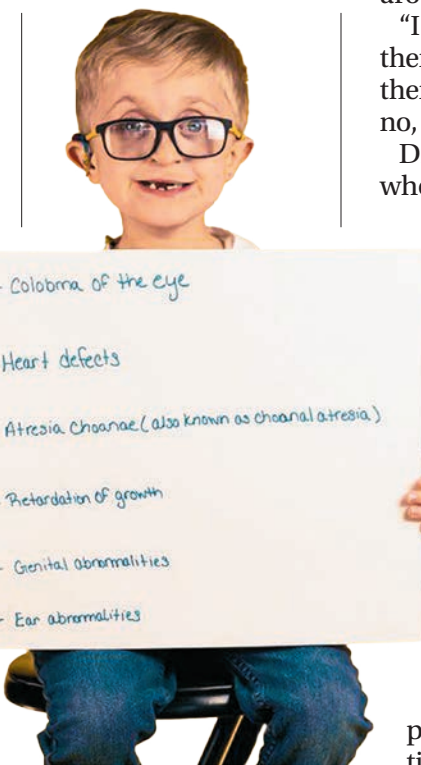
At 20 weeks in utero, little Carson was still growing strong, but doctors detected severe issues during his first sonogram.

“It got really awkward, and they brought in more techs and the doctor, and nobody really talked after that,” Beals told Fox News. “They weren’t 100 percent sure what was wrong but noticed his head was growing faster than his body.”

Carson, who was born in August 2011, four weeks early, wasn’t breathing. Beals said her son had lung problems and heart issues, but “nobody was sure what was wrong with him.”

Despite the profound issues present at his birth, Carson proved to be a fighter.

The tiny warrior underwent surgery at 8 months old and, in his 9 years of life, has had a total of 17 operations and 36 hospital stays, the report stated.



Carson raises awareness and money for the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation.

Despite his life challenges, Carson remains humble about his determination.

“I mean, I’m not that strong,” he told Fox News, “I’m just brave.”

It was also predicted that Carson wouldn’t be able to walk or talk, but he’s tackled that prognosis, too. Indeed, he started walking as a toddler, and he started speaking around age 6.

“I wasn’t supposed to live past a year old, then the doctor said I wouldn’t live past 1, then the doctor said I wouldn’t live past 2, no, 5,” Carson said.

Dr. Richard Grossberg, a pediatrician who specializes in neurodevelopmental disabilities at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital in Cleveland, ultimately diagnosed Carson with CHARGE syndrome, a complex condition that causes numerous life-threatening birth defects.

The acronym CHARGE stands for “Coloboma of the eye, Heart defects, Atresia of the choanae, Retardation of growth and development, Genital anomalies, and Ear abnormalities.”

“It’s rare, it’s 1 in 10,000 live births,” Grossberg told the outlet.

Still, Carson has beaten the odds and pursues a life full of sports and activities, just like most other third-graders his age. Grossberg said that Carson “may be the cutest kid on the planet.”

“He goes to school and does quite well given he has this disorder,” Grossberg said. “My hope is Carson will live a normal lifespan; I’m optimistic about his future.”

Carson enjoys sports, swimming, and fishing and is keeping up with his schoolwork. He learned how to do cartwheels from his older sister, with whom he shares a birthday.

The proud mom Jessie Beals said that her little son is determined to defy all odds. “If you tell him he can’t do it, he’s going to show you,” Beals said.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JESSIE BEALS



A doctor said Carson wouldn’t live past the age of 1.

“I call him my hero,” she said. “A lot of people never meet their hero, but I truly have given birth to mine. He has a heart of gold.”

A family member even posted a video of him dancing on stage in April 2019, whipping out moves you might not expect from someone who was told he would never walk.

The brave boy is adamant about educating others about CHARGE syndrome and has even started a YouTube channel to raise awareness and raise money for the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation.

“This is truly a big thing for me,” Carson told Fox News. “Very mean people, I feel like it will really help them, the very language they use, and who they do it to. I think it will really help them understand what this is all about.”

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# Harmon Brothers: Entrepreneurial Spirit Runs in the Family

Continued from Page 1

The other funded half of Neal's missionary trips, and always matched his grandchildren's contributions to their own travel funds dollar for dollar. He also got up in church to advertise his grandsons' potatoes—"which is totally inappropriate for him to do," added Jeffrey, laughing.

But they did manage to sell their entire carload of potatoes that day, thanks to Grandpa's stunt.

"I don't remember my dad raising his voice at me, ever," said Neal. "He was so calm and just let me figure out things for myself."

There was a lot that the brothers figured out for themselves. Through the patience and encouragement of the adults around them, they learned that their grit and hard work were what would get them ahead in life. They learned the importance of action, of being unafraid to try things out for themselves. And perhaps most of all, they learned the value of having a family that would be devoted to each other against all odds.

"I believe that our success would not be possible without the heritage that came before us," Neal said. "Both our parents and grandparents on both sides went through very, very difficult times. But they stuck it out and were very committed to our family."

## Family First

Having grown up in Idaho, where family-owned businesses were common, the brothers saw firsthand that mixing family with work had the potential to go very badly. Mistakes could turn into grudges that broke family relationships beyond repair, and it was something the brothers knew they had to work through as they started and ran their own companies together.

"If you want to work with family, you have to get really good at just letting things slide," said Neal.

"I think we've all been committed to the idea that regardless of how sticky it gets or how much we disagree at certain points, that we're not going to let business as opposed to family [take priority] in [our] relationships," said Daniel. "Because at the end of the day, that's all this life is about anyway, right?"

But once everyone has agreed on the same set of priorities, working with family does come with its own benefits, especially when all nine children are entrepreneurs who often help each other out.

"You see a lot of Big Tech companies that have been born out of some college friends or high school friends that just knew each other really well, [who] knew how to communicate really well," said Daniel. "It's a similar advantage we have in that we have the familiarity, we have the trust, we have the similar values and aspirations and ideals."

## Solutions to Everyday Problems

These similar ideals have powered the engine of innovation for the Harmon brothers.



Daniel Harmon, chief creative officer, Harmon Brothers.

“**We’ve all been committed to the idea that regardless of how sticky it gets ... that we’re not going to let business as opposed to family [take priority] in [our] relationships.**”

Daniel Harmon

From their beginnings up until today, as they operate several successful projects that span the advertising, entertainment, and technology industries. These eclectic business interests can be explained by the “user method,” Jeffrey said, which guides many of the brothers' business decisions.



The Tuttle Twins series by Connor Boyack is being adapted into an animation project. It was crowd-funded through Angel Studios.

Coined by Jeff Schwarting in his eponymous book, the user method is the idea that entrepreneurs should pay attention to the problems they run into in their lives; in finding a solution for their own prob-



Jeffrey Harmon, co-founder and chief content officer of VidAngel.

“**Rather than creating stuff that you think other people will want, you build things that you would use.**”

Jeffrey Harmon

lems, they might just happen upon the next big thing.

"Rather than creating stuff that you think other people will want, you build things that you would use. And by doing that, more often than not, the market is very big because there's a lot of people in the world who have the same problems or like the same things you do," said Jeffrey.

He gave the inception of Dry Bar Comedy, an online standup series produced by Angel Studios, as an example of the user method in action. Dry Bar was pitched as a platform for family-friendly and clean comedy, which was a sharp deviation from the age-restricted humor that has long become an industry norm.

"We got phone calls from many board members and investors saying, what are you doing, this is stupid, nobody wants clean standup, standup is a saturated market—"

"There's no more room in the market," added Neal.

"There's no more room in the market, because they're thinking of it from a market standpoint," Jeffrey said. "But we just say: 'You want this, right? And we want this. So there clearly is a market, and we think it's a lot bigger than the current market of lewd and blue comedy.'"

Today, Dry Bar Comedy is the largest library of standup comedy online, boasting more than 300 specials in its catalog. In total, these specials garner more than a billion views a year.



Neal Harmon, co-founder and CEO of VidAngel.

“**I believe that our success would not be possible without the heritage that came before us.**”

Neal Harmon

## 'The Chosen'

The brothers had gotten a similar reaction when they first began crowdfunding to produce "The Chosen," a television series on the life of Jesus Christ. Little did the naysayers know then that the Angel Studios campaign would raise more than \$10 million, making it the most successful crowdfunding campaign ever for a television series.

"A lot of people told us, 'Jesus movies have been done a bajillion times. What makes you think yours is going to be different?'" Jeffrey said.

But different was what the brothers were shooting for—Hollywood-caliber different. The brothers were really looking for a way to create something that they wanted to see themselves: the professionalism and polish of big-name studios crossed with some of the most enduring stories known to humanity. More importantly, they wanted to share these stories in a way that could be enjoyed by viewers of all religious and spiritual persuasions.

"It's [just] good storytelling, regardless of your faith, which was what we were trying to do," said Neal.

He then shared a recent string of texts sent to him by a friend. In them, the friend had screenshotted a comment from the pay-it-forward comment wall on "The Chosen," where viewers who've watched the series for free can thank the donors who made it possible.

"There was a note in there from somebody



who said that they were thinking about suicide and that they were willing to take their lives, and that they didn't because they watched 'The Chosen,'" he said. "And my friend who screenshot these messages, he's Hindu, and he said, 'Wow, this is truly God's work.'"

"The Chosen" has been viewed more than 100 million times in 180 countries. Yet, it too started out with the user method, as the brainchild of a few brothers who were just looking to make a show that they wanted to watch.

Since there's no reason to fix a business formula that has clearly been working well, the brothers are now looking to work their magic once again by tackling their own needs in another industry: children's entertainment.

"We've hit the global comedy community, and we're hitting the global Christian community, and the third group we're trying to serve—which is also us, you notice all these are us—is a global freedom community, which is where Daniel is focused with Tuttle Twins," said Jeffrey.

## Freedom and Animation

Written by Connor Boyack, the Tuttle Twins book series is geared toward teaching children and teenagers about the principles that power a free society, from the intricacies of a legal system to the fluctuations of a market economy. To date, the series has sold more than 2 million copies. Now, under a partnership with the Harmon brothers, it's being adapted into a cartoon crowd-funded by Angel Studios with Daniel as director and showrunner.

"We've known Connor Boyack, the author of the Tuttle Twins books, for years. [We're] very like-minded with similar values," Daniel said. "I bought his first book, called 'The Law,' immediately. I felt like it was a real solution to teach my kids some of the principles that I grew up with, that I learned in my education."

Though this is Daniel's first foray into the world of animation, the Harmon Brothers agency has been creating entertaining, educational, and viral content for a long time. Their advertisements have collec-

Growing up, the Harmon's parents, and grandparents, encouraged their entrepreneurial spirit. Jeffrey is in the bottom row, left, Daniel is in the bottom row, center. Neal is in the back row, center, in the blue shirt.

Comedian Jenna Kim Jones during her Dry Bar Comedy special "Don't Buy Skinny Jeans."



tively earned more than a billion views and generated more than \$350 million for their clients, including Squatty Potty, Chatbooks, Purple Mattress, and Fiber Fix.

"We felt like we could do justice, not just by the principles of the books themselves, but we felt like our background in storytelling via marketing through ads was a really great preparation to bring a lot of comedy, adventure, and storytelling into the books," Daniel said.

Daniel wants to create a genuinely engaging series that children would choose to watch over their other options. His vision for the show is 80 percent entertainment and 20 percent education, in which the emotions, characters, humor, and storyline will make the educational aspect resonate with children in a memorable way.

"What I'm finding is that there's a big gap between the number of people who like freedom and those who really understand what freedom really means in practice," he said. "Very, very few people understand what freedom means and what principles of freedom are in practice. And that's the gap we're looking to close with the Tuttle Twins."

Reception to the concept of a Tuttle Twins cartoon series was very warm, and support came from "a much broader audience than expected," according to Jeffrey. In fact, many backers of the show viewed it as more of a passion project than an investment. Although crowdfunding patrons may receive returns on their investment, many of them have told the Tuttle Twins team that they viewed their contribution as more of a donation.

"It was somewhere between 25 percent and 30 percent of our investors, when they put their money in, they said something to the effect of 'I don't care if I ever make a dime back, this just needs to exist!' said Daniel. "That was kind of the mentality, like 'I'm in, regardless of how this turns out as far as a profitable venture.'"

## Values and the Future

Signs like this show the brothers just how strong the market for values-based content is—that despite Hollywood's massive mar-



During the early days of VidAngel.

keting budgets, there is a growing population of people who are quietly tuning it all out. Knowing that this group is out there, counting on their success, is what keeps the brothers going, despite all the bumps in the road.

Last year marked the end of a four-year-long legal dispute between VidAngel and Disney, in which Disney had sued the former for copyright infringement based on VidAngel's former content distribution model. Both parties came to a settlement eventually, but the resolution was a costly one for VidAngel, which had to file for bankruptcy in the process.

"The fact that we had 8,000 families that had invested for us to be able to fight that battle is the reason that we were able to pull through during the darkest of times in that lawsuit," said Neal. "When you're doing something and you're at the end of your rope and you think of somebody else, that has a different impact on your soul than if you're just fighting for yourself. And it just gets you through."

Just then, Daniel offered up the fun fact that Neal's favorite movie is "Cinderella Man."

"There's a scene where [the main character] is getting beat up pretty bad, and what gets him through the fight is remembering his kids he's fighting for, to try to provide for them and his wife. And [when] he's just fighting just to have a good career, just to be competitive, it wasn't enough," Daniel said. "But once he tapped into his motivations with his family, he was able to rise above and compete in a meaningful way."

At the end of the day, family is where it all starts and ends with the Harmon brothers. It was what first nurtured their confidence and ambitions as children, what instilled in them the values that have guided them to success as adults—and now, with each brother having a family of his own, it's why they must continue their work.

With the Tuttle Twins series, the brothers are hoping that the values that they grew up with will be passed down to their children. But their overall goal goes beyond any one project and is one shared by most parents: the wish to create a better world for their children to inherit.

Jeffrey said, "My 9-year-old came up to me yesterday. She's been saying she wants to build rockets her whole life. But then she came up to me yesterday—'You wanna know what I want to do when I grow up?'"

"I said, 'Build rockets,' and she was like, 'Nope.'"

"And I was like, 'Be an astronaut?' 'No.' 'Do you want to ... be an inventor?' 'No, I want to work with VidAngel and be an angel for creating movies!'"

"For the first time in my life, I'm excited for my kids to be able to get into the film industry," he added. "That's exciting to me."

## TIMELESS WISDOM

# National Debt or National Greatness

JOSHUA CHARLES

The United States has passed a foreboding milestone: \$28 trillion in national debt. In 2021, the federal debt alone is projected to be 102 percent of gross domestic product—which doesn't include the \$1.9 trillion "American Rescue Plan" that President Joe Biden recently signed into law.

The debt-to-GDP ratio has only exceeded 102 percent twice in American history—1945 and 1946—as a result of the spending required to win World War II (103.9 percent and 106.1 percent respectively). With that victory secured, it immediately plummeted as the United States entered a new golden age of prosperity.

However, while the American economy enjoyed an average growth rate of 3.1 percent between 1951 and 2020, the Congressional Budget Office is currently projecting that over the next three decades, that rate will fall to 1.8 percent.

This is on top of a growing solvency cri-

**For too long, we've believed we could have it all, forgetting that at some point—either now or in the future—every expense must be paid for, and every debt repaid.**

sis in our nation's most important "entitlement" programs: Social Security and Medicare.

In 2019—prior to COVID-19—the U.S. Treasury was already warning that these programs would be "bankrupt" (meaning they would pay less to beneficiaries than they promised) much earlier than previously predicted. They warned that Social Security would be insolvent by 2035, and Medicare by 2026. I was born in 1988, roughly in the middle of the millennial generation. That means that both of these programs, for which I am taxed a great deal, will be bankrupt 15 years (Social Security), and 27 years (Medicare) before I am even eligible for them. The situation is even worse for young people in their teens and 20s today.

Even more worrying, our birthrate has been plummeting. For a society to simply maintain its population, it must produce 2.1 babies per woman. The United States has been below that number since 1971. But in 2019—again, prior to COVID-19—it had fallen to a record low of only 1.7. That number has fallen even further during the pandemic, which means even fewer people are contributing to the system.

The reasons we have arrived at this financial juncture are various and complex. But what is simple and straightforward is this: We are here because we have exhibited a collective lack of wisdom with respect to our national finances. For too long, we've



Our Founding Fathers warned about accumulating debt. "Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States," 1940, by Howard Chandler Christy.

believed we could have it all, forgetting that at some point—either now or in the future—every expense must be paid for and every debt repaid. In doing so, we have forgotten the profoundly moral dimension of national finances, and the duty every generation has to pay its bills, and not unduly burden future generations.

## A Warning From Our Founders

Our founders warned us of this very situation. In his Farewell Address, our first president, George Washington, had a great deal to say about this topic.

"As a very important source of strength and security," he said, "cherish public credit." He enjoined his country to "[avoid] likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by

vigorous exertion in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear."

Speaking with the candor of a statesman, Washington reminded American politicians that it was essential for the American public to understand why minimal debt was best. "To facilitate to them [the public] the performance of their duty," he said, the public must be reminded that the payment of debts requires revenue, and "to have revenue there must be taxes," and "that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant."

This final point by Washington is worth considering. We normally think of taxation taking place in one way: the government directly confiscating our money. But it actually takes place in two ways: first, by direct taxation (the kind we normally think about) and the other by currency-devaluing inflation.

With direct taxation occurs, the people feel the burden immediately. Cost and benefit are aligned and experienced at the same time. There is no sugar high resulting from a benefit gained while the cost is deferred. Direct taxation is therefore the only honest way of paying for debts, and ensuring the American people, as Washington said, engage in "the performance of their duty."

## Currency-Devaluation Inflation

But there is another form of taxation the government has increasingly utilized since the 1960s, namely the taxation imposed by currency-devaluation inflation.

What does this mean? It means that when the government has a debt, it covers the shortfall not by taxes directly imposed on the people, but by printing more dollars through the sale of government bonds. This increases the money supply (inflation) in such a way that more dollars are required to pursue fewer goods and services (which leads to currency devaluation).

The consequences of this are pernicious, for it not only leads to higher prices now, but it decreases the purchasing power of money that has already been earned.

Let me illustrate. Let's say that by 2010, you had managed to save up \$50,000. Earning that amount of money took time and effort. You can almost always expend more effort (at least until you are too old), but you can never get back the time it took to save that much money. And yet, what has happened to that \$50,000 since 2010? Its purchasing power has decreased more than 20 percent! That means that what you could purchase for \$50,000 in 2010 would now take you more than \$60,000! That 20 percent isn't only

Even more worrying, our birthrate has been plummeting.

effort, but also time. So where did that 20 percent go? It disappeared because of currency-devaluing inflation—the "paying" of debts by printing dollars rather than direct taxation.

This has been taking place in the United States for decades. The people are being robbed and they don't even realize it because "currency-devaluing inflation" isn't a line item on their income or their taxes. It's an invisible expense that they must and will pay, but behind their backs, as it were.

Like the frog that doesn't realize the pot of water it's in is getting hotter and hotter, the people don't realize that the policies they vote for actually cost far more than they realize.

As the necessities of life grow more expensive, this in turn creates fodder for politicians who are more than happy to run to the "rescue" once again with similar promises of largesse, whose costs are once again imposed behind (and eventually upon) the backs of the very people they claim to be helping.

By the time this happens, the correlation between cost and "benefit" has long since been obscured, while the politicians who sold it to them have already gotten the reelection they wanted. This discourages both private and public frugality, and to make matters worse, is often achieved by

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## DEAR NEXT GENERATION:

## Life Lessons I Learned From Teenagers

## → Advice from our readers to our young people

I am intrigued by the letters that subscribers write to the young generation and am moved emotionally by many of them.

For half a century, I practiced pediatrics with an emphasis on adolescents and learned many life lessons from them. So many, in fact, that today I want to spin the “What would I tell the young people today” to “What would I tell young people today that I learned from young people yesteryear.” The lessons were told to me by teens. I changed the names, contributed medical and social data to prove the verity of the lessons, and published them in a book, “Messengers in Denim: The Amazing Things Parents Can Learn From Teens.”

I have since retired from pediatrics and spent 10 years doing qualifying exams on military applicants. Most of these recruits were 17 to 19 years old with an occasional youth in his or her early 20s. These teens, like their non-military peers, also taught me some important life lessons.



What lessons can we learn from teenagers?

### Eighteen-year-old Nat, born to a single mother, was joining the Army to escape an abusive childhood. He was beaten by several of his mother's serial boyfriends.

So if you permit me, I'll tell you some true stories and let you consider if they are valuable lessons.

Eighteen-year-old Nat, born to a single mother, was joining the Army to escape an abusive childhood. He was beaten by several of his mother's serial boyfriends. When mother and the child's molester faced the judge, he reportedly told her she had to choose between her son and her boyfriend. She replied, “I'll take my boyfriend.”

Thus began Nat's experience in and out of foster homes. Mom soon became drug-dependent and spent several terms in jail, each time losing custody of Nat only to have him return to her when she was released. She was in jail and he was in a foster home as Nat neared the end of his high school junior year. He contacted his uncle who agreed to let Nat work in his sawmill in exchange for room, board, and a small salary. That summer, Nat saved enough to buy a “junker car.”

When fall came, he needed two classes to graduate from high school, so he arranged his schedule to attend school only on Tuesdays and Thursdays and be able to graduate with his class. Because he couldn't work full time, his uncle threw him out.

Nat lived in his car and spent as little of his saved money as possible. He took enough food from the school cafeteria on Fridays to last over the weekend. By the middle of Christmas vacation, he was out of money and unable to eat during that time off of school. One morning, he got out of his car and fainted in the street. He was taken to the hospital by a passerby and given fluids and food. Social service was able to contact his grandmother, who agreed to keep him until graduation if he promised to join the Army then.

I asked him how he managed to survive all that abuse.

“I'm a committed Christian,” he replied. “Really?” I commented. “So am I, but just how did that help?”

His answer, “Jesus taught forgiveness.” I was struck dumb and I'm sure my face showed it.

“Forgiveness,” he continued, “is the basis of mankind! Man is the only animal who can forgive.” Nat lived that truth: Forgive-



Recruits struggle to lift the front end of the log during log drills at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, in this file photo.

“You don't need to have lots of things like computers or cellphones, all you need is someone who you know cares about you.”

James

ness is the basis of mankind!

\*\*\*

James, a model child, wanted to join the Army to follow the family tradition. Dad was in Desert Storm, Granddad a Vietnam vet, and Great-Granddad served in World War II.

After we finished the interview and physical exam, I pushed back in my chair and asked: “James, what made you such an outstanding young man when so many of our nation's black men your age are in jail? Do you have any suggestions that might help other parents?”

James looked into the distance, thought for a long minute, and said: “When I was little, my mom wouldn't let me cross the street, but my cousin who lived across the street and down a couple of blocks was allowed to. I didn't think that was fair, because he was younger than me. I asked Mom about it, and she told me she cared about me too much to let anything happen to me. There was a hill just up the street and she worried I couldn't see cars coming.”

Then he took an even longer pause, looked over my head, and continued, “You don't need to have lots of things like computers or cellphones, all you need is someone who you know cares about you.”

I agreed and dared to ask, “What does your cousin do now?”

James looked at the floor. “He's in jail.”

\*\*\*

Joe was an admirable lad of 18. He played trumpet in the marching band, varsity baseball, had a GPA of 3.7, didn't smoke or drink, and had a positive attitude with a smiley face to match his personality.

His dad was imprisoned for murder since Joe was 5. He had no siblings; he lost his mother to breast cancer when he was 9, and lived with Grandma until she died right after his 15th birthday, then he moved into an apartment and lived “on his own.” He wanted to join the Navy because he thought he “needed some discipline.”

I asked how he was able to rent an apartment or sign a contract when he was still a minor.

“My uncle is a doctor—chiropractor—and helped me. He said as long as I didn't get into trouble, I could live alone. So, I just did what I should and didn't do what I knew was wrong.”

“I gave him my word and he trusted me.”

A man is as good as his word!

\*\*\*

Jason, also 18, was born to a single mother and until age 4 or 5 lived wherever his mom could dump him for the day or night. He said he had been a “really bad kid” (who could blame him!). He received counseling for his “behavior disorder” and started medication for ADHD before he started school.

At age 5, his so-called parent lost custody and Jason was adopted by a former Marine, now a cop, and his wife. They didn't believe in counseling or medication for ADHD. They believed in strict structure and that actions have consequences. Under this family's care, Jason's behavior changed. His ADHD abated, and he became a good student and a good kid. He told me that his dad was the “best dad any kid could have.”

His Marine dad and his wife knew that all love is tough love! And that actions speak louder than words.

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This next guy is no longer a teen, but he was a teenager when he learned the lesson he taught me.

Mike was a handsome 26-year-old guy wanting to join the National Guard. He spent his first 16 years in foster homes and claimed he changed homes at “least twice a year.” He didn't know for sure, but thought that he was born in a foster home. He found

a factory job at age 16, emancipated himself, left foster care, and quit school while still in 9th grade. By 18, he was into drugs, became an alcoholic, and had been imprisoned twice.

Before his 19th birthday, he impregnated his girlfriend, the daughter of a preacher, married his child's mother, and began to turn his life around. Because he had no idea who he was, he took his father-in-law's name. He stopped drinking and using drugs.

“When my son was born,” he said, “I held him in my arms and looked him all over. I couldn't believe I had helped make such a beautiful, helpless, baby boy. His eyes were staring at me. All I could think was this baby needs a dad. I looked at those eyes and told him I was his dad and I promised him I'd take care of him. And I have.”

Mike's baby was 7 years old when I met Mike; by then he had earned his GED. Mom was a stay-at-home mom and had a new baby coming. “I'll take care of him, too!” Mike boasted.

I wish you could have seen the glow on his face as he shook my hand to leave. “My wife and my baby saved my life!” he exclaimed.

I couldn't help adding, “The poet says, ‘The child is the father of the man!’”

“Mine sure is,” he offered.

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One young man summed up good parenting in four words. We were discussing his family history when he said: “I've got the best dad in the whole world. I always try to be just like him.”

This from a 17-year-old boy!

He pointed to a tattoo on his bicep. “Like Father, Like Son,” and said, “Dad has one just like it!”

This father-son dyad lived a tattoo they shared, “Like father, like son.”

Dad was the man he wanted his son to become!

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Each day I worked for the military, I would see 10 to 15 young men and women, and each day I saw at least one with the same story as Joe, Nat, and Mike. Kids born to single mothers; kids whose “sperm donor” walked out and Mom tried to make it on her own; kids whose parents went in and out of jail and left the kids to foster homes; and kids who were abused and hungry.

I also saw kids who came from divorced or separated parents. Some did well, others not so. And I saw a few from “old-fashioned” parents who were still married to each other. Many of them, in every group, taught me lessons in living.

But the group of kids I loved most were those who had survived in spite of all the misfortune they had had in their lives.

I'm not worried about the future of our great country, or the world, because the next generation is just putting on their uniforms.

—Dr. Parnell Donahue, Tennessee

#### 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

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The middle gate (Chumon) is the main entrance to Horyuji Temple.

#### LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

## Japan's 2nd Buddhist Temple: Horyuji

From 594 to 622, Prince Shotoku ruled Japan. He certainly lived up to his name, for “sho” means sacred and “toku” means virtue.

During his reign, he promoted Buddhism in Japan, so much so that he is popularly known as the founder of Japanese Buddhism. After his death, many even called him “Japan's Shakyamuni.” A historical figure of India, Siddhartha Gautama became known as Shakyamuni after his enlightenment, and his teachings became

the foundation for Buddhism.

The second Buddhist temple Shokoto commissioned was Horyuji, in Nara Prefecture, southern Japan. The temple is a significant part of Japan's art, architecture, and spiritual heritage.

Buddhism had only just emerged in Japan from China, via the Korean peninsula, when the wooden buildings of Horyuji Temple were built. Japan's first Buddhist temple, Shitennoji, still exists, but its buildings were later rebuilt, therefore, the temple

buildings of Horyuji, are Japan's oldest surviving Buddhist structures. Several of the Horyuji Temple buildings date from the late seventh or early eighth century, making them among the world's oldest surviving wooden buildings.

Each building in the temple complex is based on traditional Chinese Buddhist architecture adapted to Japanese tastes, marking the emergence of Japanese Buddhist architecture.

According to the UNESCO website, the

buildings were constructed using the Chinese bay system, a type of post-and-lintel construction, with ornate brackets and large columns bearing the immense weight of the tile roof.

UNESCO lists some of the temple's architectural highlights; for example, the columns' cloud-shaped brackets and the application of entasis to the columns. Entasis is a technique whereby the columns have been gently tapered for aesthetic, and often weight bearing, purposes.



1. The light of the sunset on the rooftops of one of the Horyuji Temple buildings. 2. A statue of Shotoku Taishi, created in 1121, shows the prince dressed in the court style and holding a scepter. The statue is housed in the Shoryoin, a temple dedicated to worship of the prince. 3. The Golden Hall (Kondo) of Horyuji Temple was once adorned with Buddhist murals similar in style to those of the Ajanta caves in India and Dunhuang caves in China. In 1949, a fire damaged a substantial number of the Horyuji murals. In this photograph, taken before the fire, a seventh-century mural shows Buddha Amitabha's paradise. 4. A komainu, known as a lion-dog, protects the temple and wards off evil. The komainu is similar to the Chinese guardian lion that originated in the Tang Dynasty. 5. The wooden columns at Horyuji Temple are examples of the application of entasis, where the columns are gently tapered for aesthetic effect and sometimes for weight bearing purposes. 6. A Buddhist statue displaying a mudra, a sacred hand gesture, at Horyuji Temple. 7. The Golden Hall (Kondo, L) of Horyuji Temple, and part of an ornate incense burner in the foreground. 8. The octagonal Hall of Dreams (Yumedono, R) of Horyuji Temple.



SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

HOMESCHOOLING

# The Diploma Dilemma

TRICIA FOWLER

In 1821, the first public high school was established in the United States. Since then, the pursuit of the high school diploma has been a primary goal for most Americans. Earning the accolade is celebrated as a major milestone. Parents not only anticipate their child's graduation but expect it—complete with pomp and circumstance, cap and gown, and pecuniary gifts at the graduation party.

The diploma's magical appeal to parents is undeniable. High school graduation is seen as the doorway to all the opportunities of adulthood. Without a diploma, who would be able to attend college or get any job at all, right? Through the typical high school route, millions of teens launch to become the doctors, lawyers, plumbers, and farmers of the next generation.

In 2000, when my husband and I began our family, we never gave a thought to home education and took it for granted that all our children would, of course, graduate from our local high school because that was all we knew.

ues, drug use, premarital sex, and declining academic standards we saw in public schools. I will never forget the shock of our family members as we announced our decision. We would school at home.

**Early Years**  
During those early years, other mothers were tied down by a school schedule and school activities while I juggled teaching at home and motherhood. These things weren't as life altering as I had anticipated, so we started our crazy journey happily, but never far from my mind was that ever-nearing, much-feared obstacle—no diploma. Sometimes, while nursing my younger children in the night, the thought would almost strike panic in my heart. The busy days and the joys of being with my children drove the fears away. I heard anecdotes of home-educated people as successful adults doing amazing things. Surely, the diploma wasn't as essential as I had heard.

Reading aloud was a large part of our homeschooling days, and while sharing stories, histories, biographies, and historical fictions with my kids, I found myself amazed at education throughout the ages coming alive. I saw in my mind's eye people such as Benjamin Franklin, Nathaniel Bowditch, and George Washington Carver doing amazing things without a diploma.

As my kid's primary teacher, I decided I should immerse myself in educational philosophy and learned through Charlotte Mason, Dorothy Sayers, and Harvey and Laurie Bluedorn about the true classical education. Often, I was amazed at what I

A student picks up her diploma during a graduation ceremony at Bradley-Bourbonnais Community High School on May 6, 2020, in Bradley, Ill. The high school diploma is frequently seen as the doorway to other opportunities, including college and a job.

I saw in my mind's eye people such as Benjamin Franklin, Nathaniel Bowditch, and George Washington Carver doing amazing things without a diploma.

hadn't learned in public school. My education had been a scope and sequence type that provided the bread and butter, but this new way was giving me and my kids the lobster, prime rib, and oysters Rockefeller of the educational menu.

**Launching Young Adults Into Life**

As my oldest reached junior high, she began looking at options for her adult life. Her goals were set but made with flexibility in mind. From child to child, according to academic ability and readiness, we have slowly but surely progressed.

There are as many ways to launch a home-educated student as can be imagined. We had friends who had sent their child to a four-year university without a high school diploma. It turns out that at her chosen school, good scores on a college entry test were all that was necessary. My husband had also become an administrator at a community college in the area. He began to see homeschooled students begin classes with a placement exam and without the need for a diploma. This has been the route our oldest two students have taken.

We also saw young entrepreneurs begin businesses such as taking over family farms, becoming real estate agents, and cosmetologists. Some of these students even ended their homeschool journey with graduation ceremonies put on by groups of parents. We were slowly learning how to launch these young adults into life with home education as an asset, not an obstacle.

Now we have two students in college, but I can easily remember the days of uneasiness when I imagined my grown children in the great big world without diplomas. Just the other day, one of my daughters, a student at a four-year college in Kentucky, called and said, "Mom, I see how well prepared I am for my classes because you taught us how to read great books."

My secondborn has been able to pursue music because of homeschooling and was told by her mentor that she could audition "for any school she wants" because of her talent level. My husband and I feel no need to change course or worry about life without a diploma for our younger children.

These days are radically different than those 20 years ago when my husband and I first decided to homeschool. Now the very fabric of traditional values is being torn apart starting at the local primary school. Never would I have dreamed that the history of our nation would be canceled, the sex of my children questioned, or the label of racist be stamped on so many children's heads just because of their skin color.

Many of these changes are placing conservative public school teachers and administrators in a crisis. No longer would their main task be to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic but progressive ideologies.

As a beacon of hope, I want to hold out our homeschooling story to those who may be amazed at leave public school. It turns out that the dilemma isn't the absence of the diploma, but what your student inadvertently is indoctrinated into with one.

*Tricia Fowler is a Christian homeschooling momma in the Midwest. She currently spends much of her time teaching math, feeding sourdough, and helping with whatever is in season on the hobby farm she shares with her husband and seven children.*

PARENTING

# How to Encourage Your Child's Interests

BARBARA DANZA

Children are innately curious and creative. When given time to play, tinker, and explore, sooner or later, they develop a keen interest in something specific. The very best thing a parent can do, when that spark of interest reveals itself, is to add kindling to the fire and watch how long it'll burn.

Here are ways to encourage and support your child's interests.

**Notice**

First, of course, you need to be paying enough attention to notice an interest when it surfaces. What does your child most enjoy talking about? How does your child spend free time? What sorts of books does your child regularly choose at the library or bookstore? What is your child doing when he or she loses track of time? Notice where their true interest lies and take it from there.

**Gather All the Books**

Once an interest has been identi-

fied, seek out books. Request a stack of books on the subject from your local library. Check new and used bookstores for titles that your children can dive into. Find books that approach the subject from different angles and books that are written for different age ranges, including adults (assuming appropriate content obviously).

**Documentary Night**

Let movie night become documentary night in your home. Whatever your child is interested in, I bet you can find a documentary about it. Get the whole family fired up about this interest by making a movie night out of it, complete with popcorn and snacks.

**Field Trip**

Might a field trip be in order to learn more about your child's interest? Whether you head to the park to explore nature photography, to the local bookstore to hear a favorite author speak, or to a factory to witness how a certain candy is



JONATHAN BORBA/UNSPASH

Given time and space to explore, children often develop specific interests.

made, get out there and see firsthand what's what when it comes to this new interest.

**Roll Up Your Sleeves**

Hands-on learning is a favorite among most kids. Roll up your sleeves and get to work creating, making, and experimenting with this new interest. Ensure your child has all of the tools necessary to tinker and thoroughly explore what has captured his or her interest. You may find yourself foraging along the beach for shells, shopping the hardware store for tools, or visiting a flea market for collectible toys.

**Share With the World**

As your child learns about his or her new interest, he or she may be enticed to share newfound knowledge or creations with others. For example, a baking interest definitely calls for cupcakes delivered to the neighbors or grandparents; a photography interest will delight online friends; a writing interest may even lead to self-publishing a book. In-

clude friends over for a themed party around most of the interest. Branch out and share the delight with others.

**Take It to the Next Level**

As the spark turns from a flame to a roaring fire, it may be time to kick things up even further. Might this interest become a business venture? Would formal study or a public blog be in order? The sky's the limit when it comes to encouraging and supporting your children in their interests.

As a bonus, when children are engrossed in something, they truly enjoy and explore it from every angle, and as a result, tend to learn the more fundamental academics lessons you'd expect from school but through their interests.

Cheer them on. Comfort and strengthen them through their struggles. Let them follow their deepest interests wherever they may lead and for the greatest good they can conceive. Don't forget to marvel at the unique and wonderful genius that is specific to them. It's a blessing.



# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

## Traveling Again

by Du Fu (Chinese: 杜甫, 712–770)

I remember the temple, this route I've travelled before, I recall the bridge as I cross it again. It seems the hills and rivers have been waiting. The flowers and willows all are selfless now. The field is sleek, and vivid, thin mist shines. On soft sand, the sunlight's colour shows it's late. All the traveler's sorrow fades away. What better place to rest than this?



## WHERE DO SHEEP LIKE TO GO ON VACATION?



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“Make your vacation your vacation. That is the secret to success.”

MARK TWAIN (1835–1910), AMERICAN WRITER

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## CONSTANTINOPLE BECOMES ISTANBUL

An illustration of Constantine the Great.

On March 28, 1930, the present-day Turkish port city of Istanbul thusly changed its name. A city with a storied history, it was the capital city of both the Ottoman Empire and the Byzantine Empire. It was previously known as Constantinople, named in the fourth century after Constantine the Great, and before that, Byzantium.



The Ottoman-era Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.

By Aidan Danza, age 14

## THE RABBIT

**R**abbits are one of the most iconic animals of Easter and springtime.

Whether we're talking about Peter Rabbit or the Easter Bunny himself, there certainly are a lot of well-known rabbits, and wild rabbits are interesting creatures.

There are 62 species of rabbits and hares in the world. They can range in size from the pygmy rabbit, which weighs less than a pound, to Darius, a Flemish giant rabbit who is 4 feet, 3 inches long.

Here in the United States, the most common rabbits are cottontails. One female cottontail usually has 3 to 4 litters (sets of babies) though she can have up to seven. Within each litter, there can be anywhere from 1 to 12 kittens (babies). These stay with their mother until they are around 4 to 5 weeks old. After the kittens leave, the mother will have another litter almost immediately.

The cottontails are most active around dusk and dawn, though they will stay up during the day and sometimes at night, as well. All rabbits are herbivorous, meaning they eat only plants.

They enjoy grasses, clover, wild strawberries, and of course garden vegetables. In the winter, they eat the bark off of trees.

Unfortunately for the rabbit, many other animals will eat it, including hawks, owls, foxes, badgers, weasels, and many more. To combat this, rabbits have a few specialized features. Firstly, their eyes can see all around them even without turning their heads, meaning they see everything around them at the same time. When they do see a potential threat, they may freeze in their position, slink away low to the ground, or flush. To flush, for a rabbit, is to run very quickly, in a zig-zag dash, to the closest safe area. The eastern cottontail can run at a speed of up to 18 miles per hour.

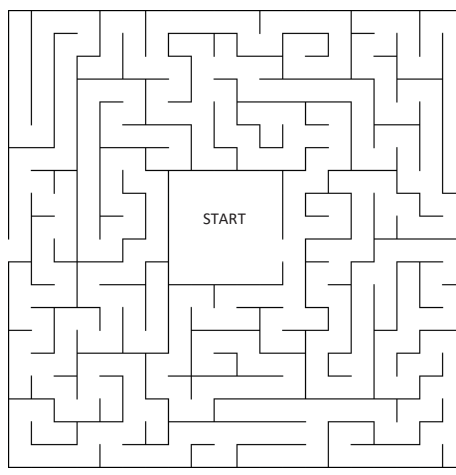


The eastern cottontail can run at a speed of up to 18 miles per hour.



Flemish giant rabbit.

## AMAZING ESCAPES!



**Easy puzzle 1**

3	7		
12			
2	3		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1  
8 - 6 = (2 - 2)

**Medium puzzle 1**

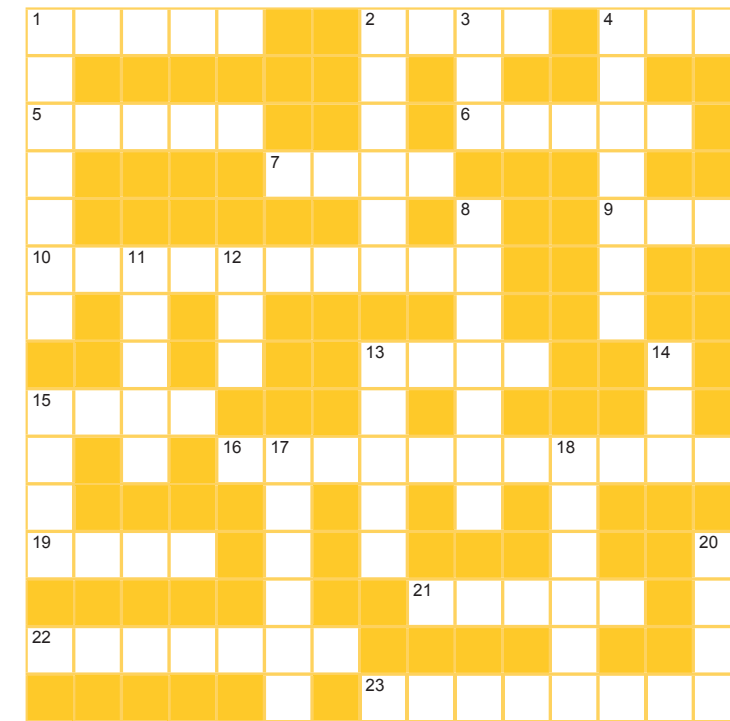
10	19		
24			
2	16		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1  
(91 - 61) x (2 - 0)

**Hard puzzle 1**

14	36		
24			
13	33		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1  
86 - 61 + 61 + 33



**Down**

- A short vacation (7)
- An African vacation (6)
- What we may ride in at our vacation destination (3)
- On vacation, you might rent one of these (7)
- Getaway time (7)

**Across**

- Vacation tours have one (5)
- You might carry snacks in one (4)
- When touring with a large group across country you might ride in this (3)
- Path through the forest (5)
- Seashore (5)
- Cruise or sail follower (4)
- You might drive this on a ferry (3)
- The family car is one (10)
- A walk along the Appalachian Trail (4)
- Some vacation spots let you ride these boats (4)
- Conductor's inquiry (11)
- Before vacation you have to do this (4)
- When on vacation, usually somebody has to do this (5)
- Check out (7)
- If we fly on vacation we ride one of these (8)
- Amtrak is one (5)
- Vacation necessity (3)
- Suite spot on vacation (5)
- Where we might visit the animals (3)
- What we ride on a cruise (4)
- Board a vessel (6)
- Going places on vacation (6)
- On some trails you can ride a mountain \_\_\_\_ (4)

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If you've seen big tech's conduct since the 2020 election, it's not hard to see how they're putting the gasoline on censorship.

After the violence on Jan. 6, they took down videos and photos, blocked or put warning labels on posts, and suspended accounts en masse.

What this has done is suppressed information, helping to shape a narrative that does not represent the full picture of what happened.

While this online censorship is not new, the pace and scale of it is, and we're afraid this is a trend that's going to continue.

We had multiple reporters and photographers

on the ground that day, taking photos and videos, getting interviews, and giving you timely updates on the events as they unfolded.

**While we can't do anything about big tech's censorship, what we can do is to bring you more and better coverage of events like these.**

**To do this though, we need your support.**

**What Our Readers Say**

*(after YouTube has completely demonetized us)*

**‘ I urge everyone to financially support you to offset the demonetization efforts by YouTube. God bless! ’**

In the overall state of media censorship and misinformation, The Epoch Times is a Godsend. My only sources for current events is The Epoch Times and your sister station NTD. Despite the big tech censorship from platforms like YouTube, I really enjoy watching your investigative presentations by Joshua Phillip as well as presentations by Roman Balmakov. Thank you for holding true to your motto, as it seems like Truth and Tradition are scarce commodities these days.

**NICK MENDOZA**

Because of the banning that Big Tech is doing to a lot of people, I would stay away from YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and some of the others. Go with free speech. I really like that you're on Censored.news. Keep up with the good work and the true facts.

**MARGIE MCMILLAN**

I truly admire your courage in reporting the truth about what is happening in the U.S. and our world, and your defiance of the big tech censors in reporting on issues that concern millions of us, including election fraud and abuse of power by big tech. I urge everyone to financially support you to offset the demonetization efforts by YouTube. God bless!

**RICHARD C**

I have heard that The Epoch Times YouTube channel has been demonetized. Consider developing a channel for media devices like Roku. I believe the quality of your content will make this successful and would allow you to sell advertising with (potentially) less censorship from tech companies.

**GEOFF BARNARD**

I just signed up and love your news. So wonderful to read truth, not the lies and spin of MSM [mainstream media]. I am sorry you were demonetized by YouTube. You are patriots!

**JULIE WIRTEL**

I was discouraged to hear that YouTube is now trying to shut you down. That makes me all the more determined to support you as an independent media voice. I'm from Canada and there is virtually no independent media voice here. We even have mail delivery people refusing to deliver The Epoch Times, as if they're somehow empowered to censor what views can be disseminated. Please keep up the amazing work you all do.

**BOB HULLEY**

We saw one of The Epoch Times' ads on YouTube about four months ago and subscribed. You got us through the election informed and sane, with coverage of what was happening we could find nowhere else. I have shamelessly re-posted your articles on my blog, forwarded to others information for which your reporters have done all the spadework and talked at least 3 other people into subscribing. Your \$1 offer is so ridiculously reasonable we are sending a contribution for your full subscription price to cover the last 4 months (and to make up for the demonetization/censorship). You're worth it!

**JESSICA RENSHAW**

Hope you guys hang strong after demonetization by YouTube. Epoch Times is awesome and [I] enjoy getting updates throughout the day.

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