

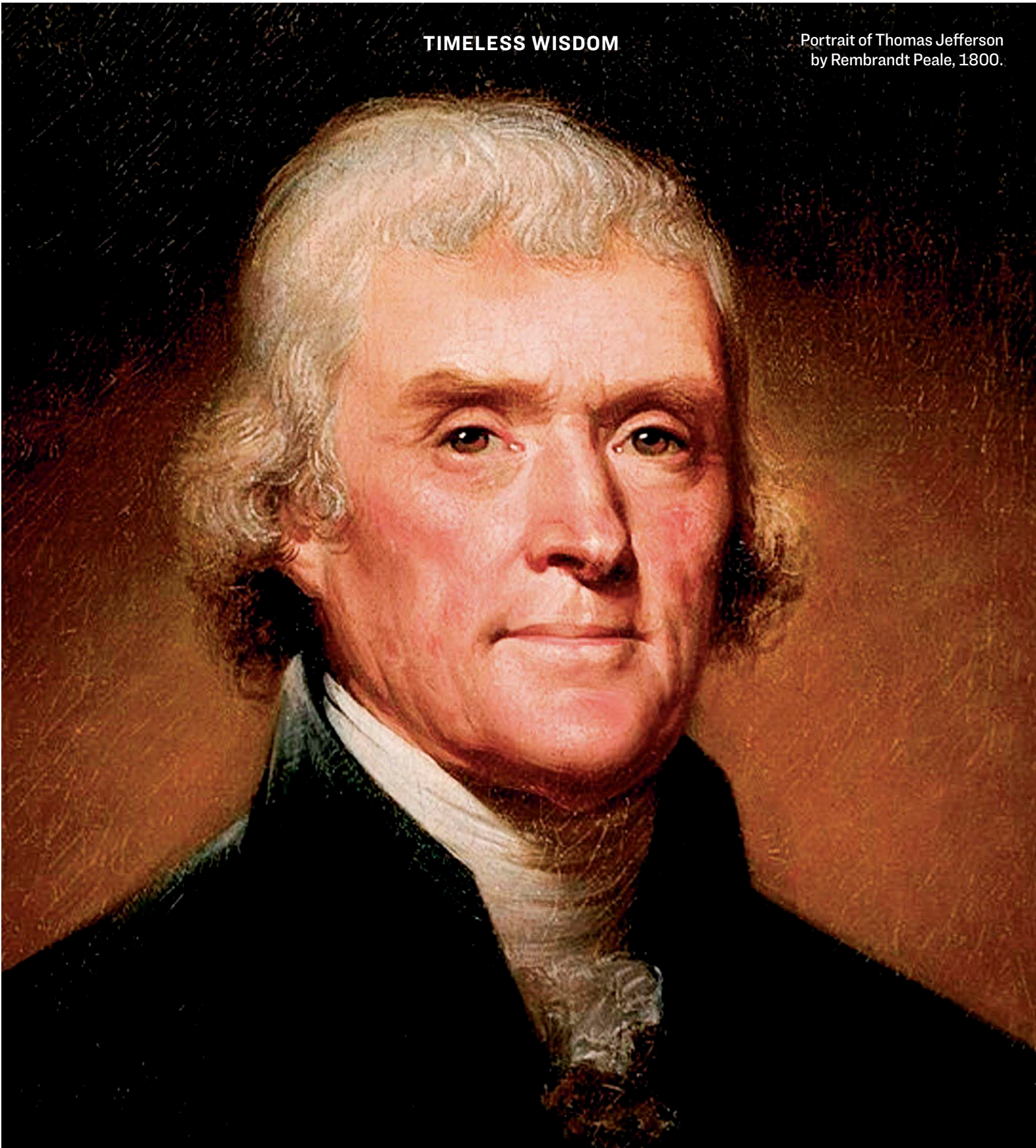
# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION

PUBLIC DOMAIN

TIMELESS WISDOM

Portrait of Thomas Jefferson  
by Rembrandt Peale, 1800.

## Thomas Jefferson's Rules for Life

In 1825, about a year before he passed away, Jefferson offered life advice in 'A Decalogue of Canons for Observation in Practical Life'

JOSHUA CHARLES

**T**oward the end of his life, Thomas Jefferson wrote several letters of advice to young people, several of whom had been named after him by admiring parents.

One was a young man named Thomas Jefferson Smith, whose father had written the aged former president in the hope he'd offer his young son some life advice. His words were powerful:

"Your affectionate and excellent father has requested that I would address to you something which might possibly have a favorable influence on the course of life you have to run, and I too, as a namesake, feel an interest in that course ... Adore God. Reverence and cherish your parents. Love your neighbor as yourself, and your country more than yourself. Be just. Be true. Murmur not at the ways of Providence. So shall the life into which you have entered,

“

**Adore God. Reverence and cherish your parents. Love your neighbor as yourself, and your country more than yourself.**

*Thomas Jefferson, to Thomas Jefferson Smith*

be the portal to one of eternal and ineffable bliss."

In short: Honor God and your parents, follow the Golden Rule, love your country more than yourself, and don't complain about the misfortunes of life. This is the path to eternal life.

In the same letter, Jefferson provided the young boy with a more practical set of advice worth pondering. He called it "A Decalogue of Canons for observation in practical life," playing off the Ten Commandments of the Bible (the "Decalogue"). The rules (with some commentary) were as follows.

**1. 'Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day'**  
No doubt this is a vice many of us struggle with—traditionally it was associated with things such as sloth (at worst), or procrastination (at best).

*Continued on Page 2*

## Onward and Upward: Some Advice for Graduates

JEFF MINICK

Congratulations! The big day is here!

You're receiving your high school diploma and are now off to college, to enter the workforce or military service, or to learn a trade such as welding or auto repair. For at least 13 years, you've advanced from kindergarten to cap-and-gown, learning the language arts, mathematics, history, and science.

Diploma in hand, you now find yourself ready to take a big step into adulthood.

Or maybe you're graduating from college. You've spent four years or more going to classes, taking tests and writing papers, and acquiring new knowledge and skills. You stand on the threshold of a world outside the cloistered halls and classrooms of your universities, hoping your degree will act as your passport to this new land.

Whether you're primed and eager to embrace this major change in your life, or whether you're shy and a little fearful of what awaits you, here are some tips to help you succeed, to ease your passage on this grand journey.

### Practice Gratitude

Make appreciation No. 1 on your post-graduation checklist.

Did Aunt Cecily send you a check for commencement? Write her a thank you note. Did Mom and Dad have your back, attend your soccer games and school plays, talk you up when you were down, and have your back when you got into a jam? Sit them down some evening and tell them face-to-face how grateful you are for their love and concern. Did a teacher, a Scout leader, or a coach inspire you to become a better person than you ever thought possible? Go to those people and tell them what they meant to you, how they helped you pursue your dreams.

Make this spoken acclamation of gratitude a lifelong habit, even in times of horrible distress. For the past six months or so, I wake each morning, pour my first cup of coffee, and thank God for another day, for my children, grandchildren, family, and friends, and then throw in a few prayers for others I know who have either requested them or who are facing trials and troubles.

*Continued on Page 3*



RYAN HOFFMAN/UNSPASH

During their 20s, young people may work a variety of jobs. No matter the work, diligence and excellence will pay off.

## TIMELESS WISDOM

# Thomas Jefferson's Rules for Life

In 1825, about a year before he passed away, Jefferson offered life advice in 'A Decalogue of Canons for Observation in Practical Life'

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Jefferson makes clear that whatever it is we know needs to be done, to the extent we can do it today, we should do so. Staying on top of our daily tasks is one of the best ways of avoiding the long-term stress caused by procrastination.

## 2. 'Never trouble another for what you can do yourself'

To many modern people, this may sound a bit harsh, as if Jefferson is suggesting we should never reach out for help. But that would be a misreading. In fact, Jefferson suggests we first take stock of what we can do ourselves, do it, and to the extent that falls short, then ask for help. In my own life, and observing the lives of many others, the sense of "earned accomplishment" is crucial to a healthy sense of identity. We're more capable of tackling the challenges of life after developing a healthy confidence in ourselves—a confidence that is secure enough to ask for help when needed.

## 3. 'Never spend your money before you have it'

My, this is timely! Americans are famously debt-ridden, as is our government. In fact, no entity in the history of the world has accumulated as much debt as the United States federal government. Likewise, Americans tend to save at a far lower rate than (for example) Germans, Chinese, and Koreans. Not only does such a habit prevent us from enjoying things we may occasionally want, but it means we have less maneuverability in a crisis. Many of us spend more money than we have to, and do not fully appreciate the extent to which we can moderate our desires, and find great wealth in being content. For those who need to work on this vice, a good first step is Jefferson's advice: only spend what you already have.

**4. 'Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap; it will be dear to you'**  
By "want," Jefferson doesn't mean "desire," but "lack." So his advice is that if we don't lack something, we shouldn't buy more of it just because it's cheap.

## 5. 'Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst and cold'

There's a famous saying from the Bible, "Pride goes before the fall." In Scripture, pride preceded the fall of God's greatest angel, Lucifer ("Light Bearer"), who afterward was known as Satan ("Adversary"). It also preceded the fall of Adam and Eve, which inflicted calamity on the human race. That's why in Christianity, and many other religious traditions, humility is so important.

Humility is not thinking of ourselves as less than we are, but thinking of ourselves as we are—understanding both our strengths, and our limitations as well. Recognizing we are creatures, not the Creator. Acknowledging that there is much more we don't know than we do know. Humility opens us up to a world of enlightenment and growth in virtue—pride makes everything in our life depend exclusively on one of the smallest of things: ourselves.

## 6. 'We never repent of having eaten too little'

Have you seen America's waistline lately? Enough said.

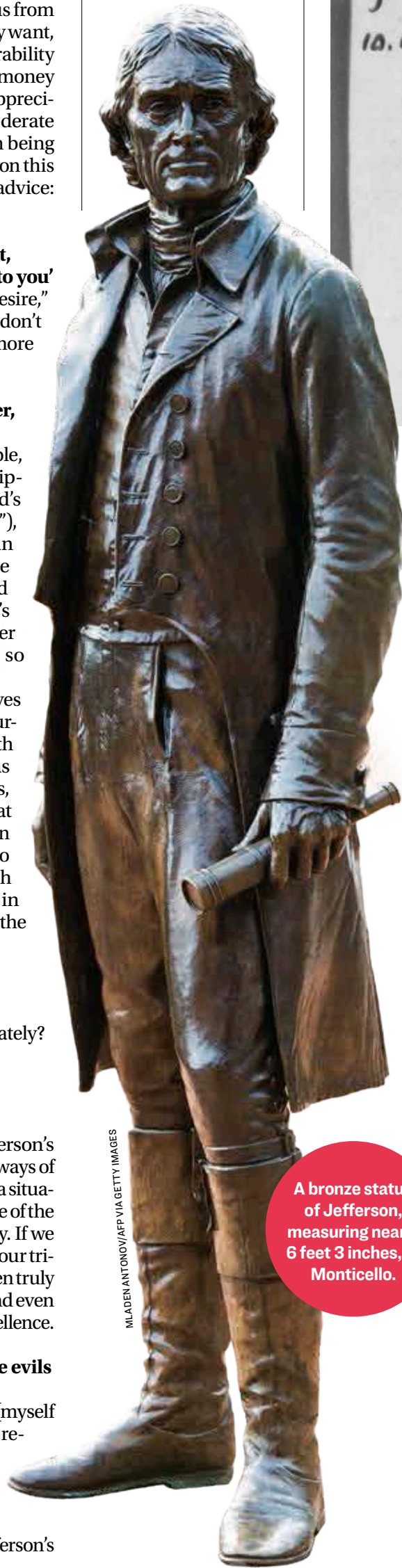
## 7. 'Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly'

I think this rule goes well with Jefferson's earlier advice to "Murmur not at the ways of Providence." Accepting the reality of a situation, no matter how unpleasant, is one of the first steps to dealing with it rationally. If we see every circumstance—especially our trials—as an opportunity for growth, then truly nothing can stop us from growing, and even our troubles become a pathway to excellence.

## 8. 'How much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened'

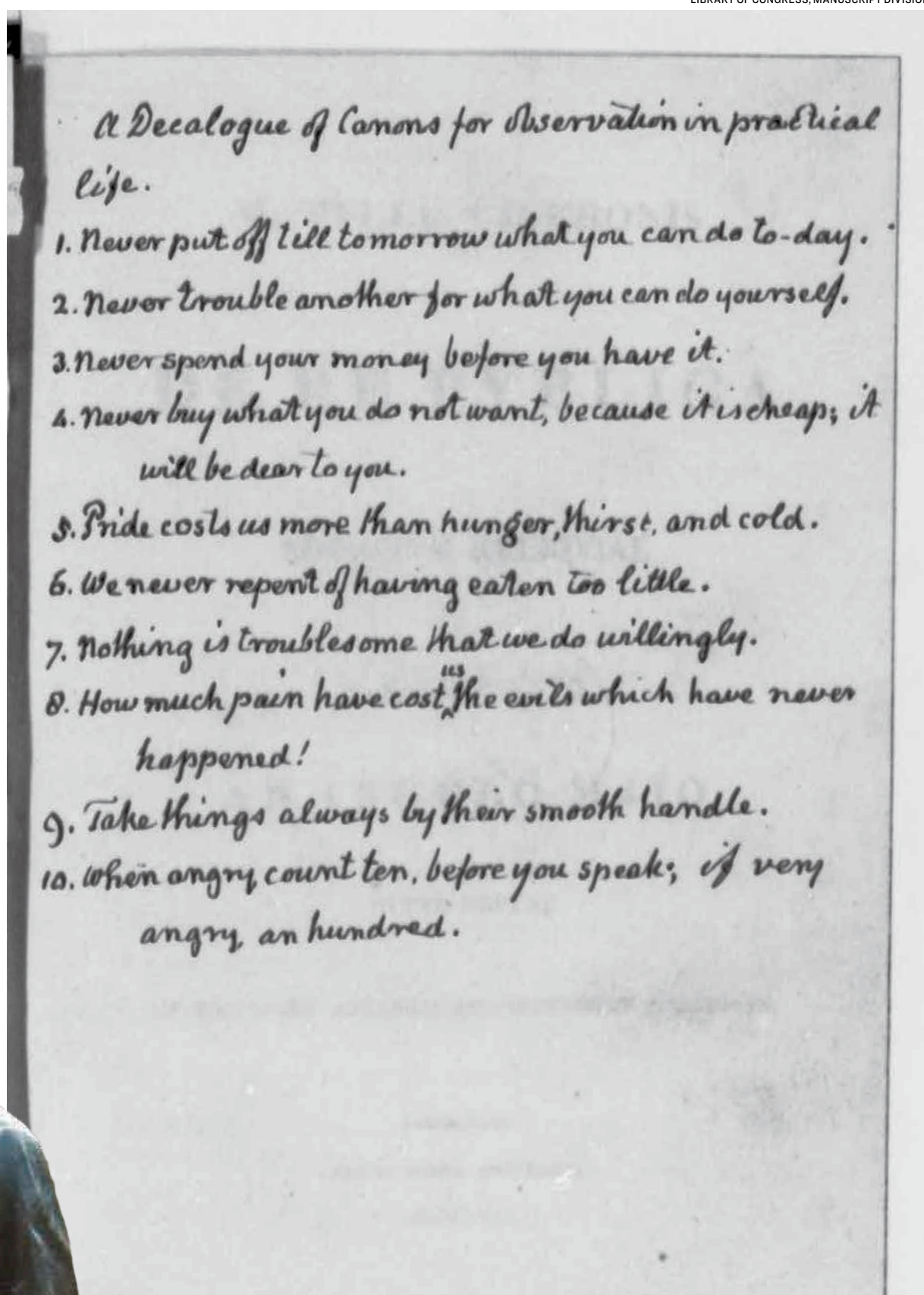
This is for the worrywarts out there (myself included). Every so often it's good to reflect on all the things we were worried would happen, and didn't. Or in the alternative, reflect on the bad things that happened, but how we overcame them. Then the truth of Jefferson's advice will sink in.

**Accepting the reality of a situation, no matter how unpleasant, is one of the first steps to dealing with it rationally.**



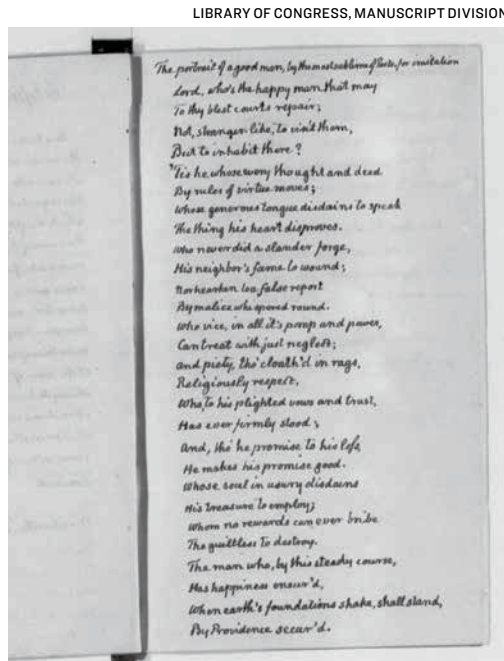
MADRYANTONOV/WIA GETTY IMAGES

A bronze statue of Jefferson, measuring nearly 6 feet 3 inches, at Monticello.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

The third and final page of Jefferson's inscriptions contained "A Decalogue of Canons for observation in practical life."



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Page 2 of Jefferson's inscriptions featured a poem.

## 9. 'Take things always by their smooth handle'

For any objective, there are easy and hard ways to achieve it. Choose the easy way—which doesn't mean no effort. It means minimal wasted effort.

## 10. 'When angry, count ten, before you speak; if very angry, a hundred'

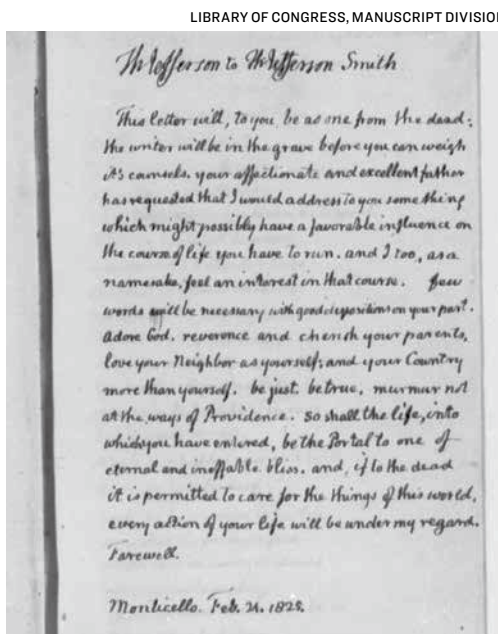
All of us know what it feels like to be angry, but then recognizing when we calm down, things are often not as bad as they seem. But even if they are as bad as they seem (or worse), getting our emotions under control is a necessary first step in being able to approach the problem rationally.

Joshua Charles is a former White House speechwriter for Vice President Mike Pence, a No. 1 New York Times best-selling author, historian, columnist, writer/ghostwriter, and public speaker. Follow him on Twitter @JoshuaTCharles or see JoshuaTCharles.com



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Mather Brown's portrait of Thomas Jefferson, 1786.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, MANUSCRIPT DIVISION

Thomas Jefferson inscribed flyleaves in Cicero's De Re Publica, published in 1823, with advice to Thomas Jefferson Smith, the son of Samuel Harrison Smith, an old friend and political ally.

# Onward and Upward: Some Advice for Graduates

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This thanksgiving kick-starts the day in a positive direction.

Don't wait, as I did, for decades to practice daily gratitude. Try it now, and you may find this appreciation of people, events, and life becomes a shield against despair and fear of failure.

## Strive for Excellence

You attended a prestigious college and majored in English literature. For two summers, you interned at publishing houses and hoped to find a position in that industry. During the spring of your senior year, you submitted a dozen applications to places such as Simon & Schuster and Random House, but no one was hiring. So instead you end up as a barista in a coffee shop, taking orders day after day for mocha lattes and cold brews. You're wondering if you're a failure, if your expensive degree has any worth or meaning, if your future is over before it's even begun.

Stop right there. Besides looking at the positives—you're working, you're paying your way—don't try to second-guess your future. You're 23 years old, and life with all its surprises is still unfolding before you, though you may not comprehend it.

During our 20s, many people, including me, work a variety of jobs. From the time I left graduate school at age 24 until I turned 30, I worked as a clerk in three bookstores, a painter in an apartment complex, an apartment manager, a dishwasher, a house parent along with my wife in a sorority, and a waiter. Some of these jobs I liked—as a waiter, I loved carrying my tips home every night—and some were less than satisfactory.

But my wife and I scrimped and saved, and soon had enough money in the bank to buy a business.

My point: Push to excel at whatever job you do. Always. Your diligence and hard work will pay off in unexpected ways. If nothing else, you can go home at night, look in the mirror, and take pride in the day.

## Accept the Normality of Fatigue

Being an adult means being tired a lot of the time. Very tired.

You're a mom with a toddler and a 6-month-old baby, and all you want to do is collapse into bed at night. You're a carpenter working 10-hour shifts four days a week who's married to that mom, and all you want to do is crash into sleep beside her.

All sorts of books and articles emphasize the importance of sleep for our health, but here's the truth: for most adults, that commodity is as hard to come by as a pot of gold. Adults are the providers, the ones responsible for paying the mortgage, clothing and feeding the children, and making the tough decisions. Long hours of sleep are rarely on the agenda.

Accept being tired as a given for grownups.

# Don't We All?

## ALLEN STARK

One day, a few years ago, after a hard day's work, I had taken the family car to the car wash and had gone to pick up my wife from work. I was sitting in the car with the window rolled down when I saw, coming across the parking lot, what society would consider a bum. He was wearing dirty clothes and a dirty ball cap, and had just come from the direction of the dumpster.

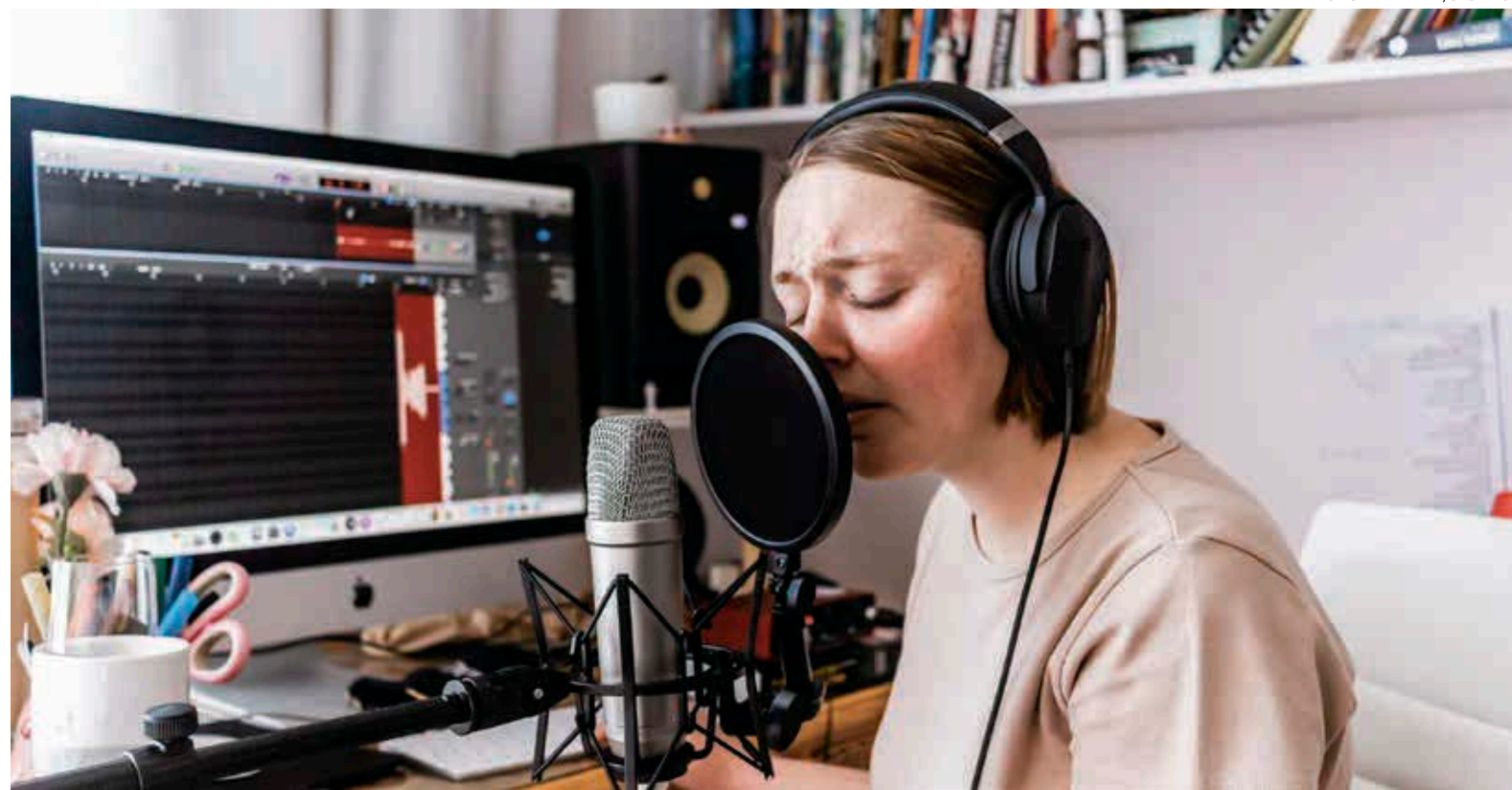
There are times when you feel generous, but then there are other times when you are just too tired and don't want to be bothered. This was one of those "don't want to be bothered" times.

I began thinking: "I hope he doesn't ask me for money. We are going out for dinner and I have just enough money."

He didn't ask. He came over next to where I was parked and sat on the steps leading up to the second level of the building. Looking over and seeing that my car window was down, he spoke. "That's a nice car."

Although his clothes were torn and dirty, he had a polite way about him.

I said thanks, stepped out of the car, and walked around to the opposite side, pretending to inspect it—for what, I don't



SINCERELY MEDIA/UNSPASH

**Push to excel at whatever job you do. Always. Your diligence and hard work will pay off in unexpected ways.**



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"Character is destiny," said ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus.

## Take Charge of Your Self

It's easy to foist off our failures on others, pointing a finger at a supervisor or a parent and blaming them for our shortcomings. I've known men and women, old as well as young, who complain of losing the game of life because a father deserted the family when they were 12 years old or who talk constantly of promotions lost because the boss simply didn't like them.

But I've also known many other people who overcame the obstacles of their past: a woman who had a terrible mother but who early in adulthood consciously decided to live her own life with joy as her foundation stone; a man imprisoned for burglary who on his release trained as a welder, reconnected with his family, and led an entirely different life; a drunk who lost a great job, gave up the bottle, and found less lucrative work but made peace with himself.

So don't play the "blame game." Legally, you are an adult, and the first mark of that stage in life is responsibility. Many of your contemporaries may spurn duty and responsibility, but you have the option of taking on this mantle while still young. Command yourself, and you've taken a giant step forward toward success.

## Achievements and Reputation

We live in a place and a time where we associate success and prestige with money and fame. The wealthy among us, our sports and movie stars, and some of our politicians receive acclaim for their wealth, power, and fame.

Far more rarely do we applaud people for the content of their character. We may recognize hypocrisy in a senator caught stealing from his campaign fund or moral failing in a movie producer mistreating women, but those who practice the virtues rarely make the evening news.

Nevertheless, I urge you to construct a moral code and refuse to violate it. Build a reputation for honesty, goodwill, and clean living. Those of us who have violated such a code, including me, know well the cost this failure exacts. Guard your reputation as you would defend a loved one.

"Character is destiny," said the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. Notice that he doesn't distinguish between a bad and a good character. If you want the respect of others, and especially if you want the re-

spect of what writer Peter Dale Wimbrow calls "the man in the glass," put character ahead of fame and riches, and see where destiny leads you.

## Joy and Happiness: The Difference

We often confuse these two terms. We'll hear people say "I just want to be happy," but those who utter these words are confused. Happiness is transitory, a fleeting byproduct of some event, a house built on sand. It depends for its existence on external circumstances—a promotion at work, a surprise birthday party, the unexpected visit of a friend—and then vanishes.

Joy rests on a more solid foundation. It is an internal state of emotional well-being that can bring us peace and deep pleasure, that is lasting, and that we can experience on a daily basis. Some find this joy in their religious beliefs, some in the work they do, and some by force of will. Whatever the case, a deep, interior sense of joy will help you celebrate your victories and carry you through your defeats.

## Make Your Life an Adventure

By this piece of advice, I don't mean you need to climb Mount Everest, join a rodeo, or parachute from an airplane.

What I do mean is that if we look at life as an adventure, we make it so. The mundane tasks of life take on a new and different meaning if we remember we are part of an incredible world. We look at our loved ones with new eyes; we experience minor disasters like a car failing to start with a jaunty insouciance, rather than filling the front yard with blue language; we look for ways around obstacles, rather than letting them stop us.

Commencement is often regarded as an ending, but the word itself means beginning. You are at the beginning of the greatest adventures, a path filled with comedy and some tragedy, a path only you will ever travel.

Writing these recommendations reminds me to live them more fully myself. So keep in mind that though we are all on our own individual journey, we have common tools at hand that make that journey more pleasurable and more meaningful.

May your futures be bright—and filled with adventures!

**As the silence continued, something inside of me said, 'Ask him if he needs any help.'**

A short time later, I learned from my wife that the man wasn't a homeless stranger wandering the streets. He was, in fact, Kenny, the janitor who worked for the office complex where my wife's address was. He was given a small room by management for his work. As I came to know Kenny, I learned that he had gone through some very troubling times. I was able to bring him food and clothing from time to time and share conversations with him. After receiving his social security check one month, about a year after our first

encounter, Kenny walked into my wife's nonprofit organization's office and handed her \$50, because he wanted to show his appreciation for all we had done for him.

Shortly thereafter, he was placed in a nursing home after having received treatment for his cancer. Within the next year, Kenny slowly began to lose his battle with cancer and asked me to become his executor, making all the decisions for his care and final days, during which time he reaffirmed his faith and made peace with his family, whom he had become estranged from over the years due to past drinking problems.

Had I been sent to minister to Kenny, or was Kenny sent to minister to a soul who had grown too comfortable in himself? Maybe God spoke to Kenny's spirit that day and said: "Go minister to that man sitting in the car. That man needs help."

Don't we all? A special note: Next time the Relay/Walk for Life comes around, put on your walking tennis shoes and join the survivors who've made it through their cancer treatment. Cancer survivors will make the first lap. I used to watch episodes of the "Survivor" television show, but when I watched my wife and other cancer survivors take that first lap, I was there cheering them on. It was the greatest survivor episode I've ever watched.

Look at life as an adventure, and it will be one.

# The Academic Abuse of Quantity Over Quality

SEAN FITZPATRICK

One of the most profound problems in the field of education is that it has become too superficial.

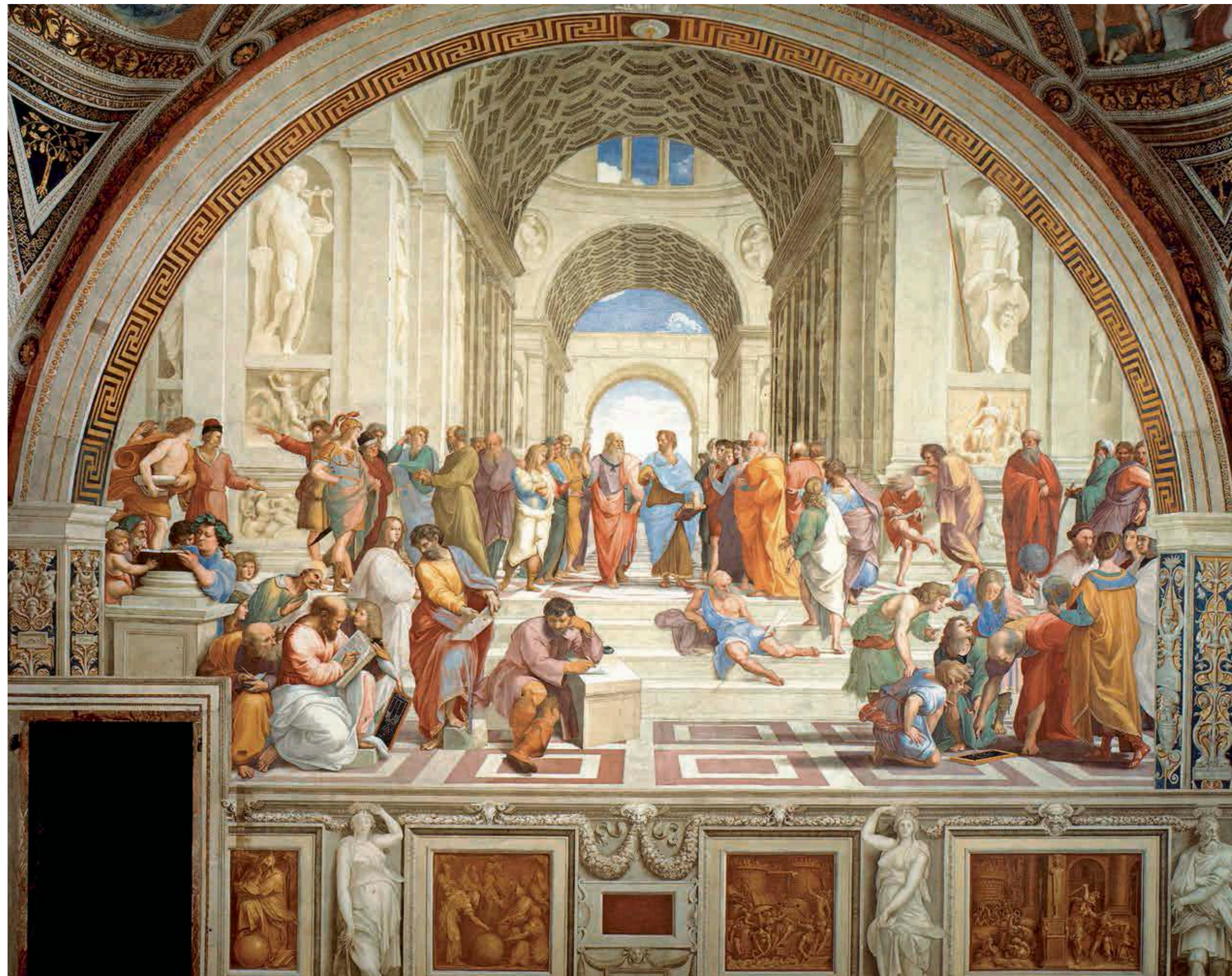
With efficiency preoccupations to “cover” as many “core” subjects as possible and equip young minds with the data of a rapidly-changing, money-driven world, skimming the surface of things through fast-moving textbooks, condensed texts, abridged works, PowerPoints interfaces, and soundbites has become something of an epidemic. The mentality has become more about sailing through the mandated material, checking the boxes, imparting the facts, and getting the grade to make the grade—teaching primarily to the test, rather than to the truth. Gone are the attitudes of the philosophical Athenian Academy, where learning was leisurely and lingered over to allow the mind to steep in goodness, truth, and beauty.

**Rushing through a work doesn't impart a sense of that work. It's the difference between the experience of a footpath and an interstate highway.**

This fast-food, career-oriented approach is often packaged as striving for a more traditional model of learning, often called classical education, even though this approach is far from classical. Such schools pack a catalog of very grand material into a very narrow calendar, applying these courses to students who are unprepared to appreciate them—especially in the time period allotted. Though always well-intentioned, it's rarely effective to foist too much on too young of a mind too quickly. Not only is it ineffective: It's inappropriate. One might even call it, to put it in strong terms, a type of academic abuse that might destroy the appetite and aptitude for study.

## The Leisure of Learning

I have had the privilege of teaching classical literature for 20 years. Despite what might be imagined, I don't move through the material more quickly with each passing year because I know it so well and am, therefore, able to cover more and more ground and more and more works. It's quite the opposite—I move more slowly. Every year I find that I have more to say, more to teach, and more to share about these texts so dear to me now—these old friends I have made—and every year I relish introducing them properly to a new



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group of minds and hearts. And a proper introduction takes time.

I also become a better teacher every year, and I have come to believe that reading and teaching a great work is an art best taught at a natural, comfortable pace. School, after

all, is rooted etymologically in the word for and the idea of leisure. Reading and study that is rigorous doesn't have the same life or foster the same love as reading and study that's leisurely.

Rushing through a work doesn't impart

a sense of that work. It's the difference between the experience of a footpath and an interstate highway. It's better to arrange for the intimate, positive, and even powerful experience of a single great text rather than a passing, lukewarm, and rushed overview of

several. Taking the time required to do something well is well worth it, and it's the classical mode of education.

## Quantity Versus Quality

As the late University of Kansas professor

“The School of Athens” by Raphael, 1510–1511.

John Senior wrote in his book “The Death of Christian Culture”:

“You do not improve or advance a child intellectually or morally by force-feeding mature and ... decadent ‘adult’ fare. You do not improve or advance a high school curriculum by running trial heats of college courses over it. ... In an age so concerned with civil rights, we should not overlook the rights of childhood.”

In this passage, Senior applies a sharp critique against those educational models that launch into the deep waters of academia before their students are equipped to do so with any efficiency, let alone enjoyment. They're not hard to find: reading lists, curricula, and AP courses that take on timeless works in less time than they warrant in order to cover as much ground as possible.

Classical education, on the other hand, should never be about cramming. An introduction to the great works at a young age is one thing, but well-meaning classical education is quite another. Classical education goes beyond curriculum. It also implies a traditional approach in education that's proportionate and appropriate to the age-old human realities of teaching and learning.

Attempting to do too much in too short a time fails to take that proportion and that propriety into account. It's a pedagogy that conflates quantity with quality, which isn't a sound pedagogical principle simply because it can't help but do injustice to works—and students—that deserve better. The rigors required in flying through works of great length and substance can never be calculated to provide a meaningful experience from studying those texts so hastily.

## The Wrong Measuring Stick

A large part of the current problem obtruding into classical education is the prevalent desire, even pressure, to make education a measurable quantity, with the mentality that more is better. One of the signs of this in mainstream educational models is the exaggerated importance given to the arts of mathematics over the arts of the muses. The prevalent emphasis laid on mathematics and empirical sciences in many curricula is curious, however, since there is no essential reason for its preference over more philosophic or poetic disciplines—subjects that call for meditation rather than mechanical problem solving, which is precisely the rub when the modern concern for measurable goals is applied to the traditional humanities.

Is a school's merit ever judged according to its literature program instead of its STEM program? Generally speaking, no—but why not? There are some societal trends that dictate the preoccupation with measurable and manipulative objectives, given that many fortunes are earned through engineering and technical fields. Because of this, the precise and material have overridden the imprecise and immaterial in a battle that should be balanced in education, with each side given the space and time to settle into minds and imaginations awakening to formation.

**What lies in the balance of teaching the classical works of Western Civilization is whether their experience is a slog or a joy.**

Some things are simply not measurable, and those things are often of immeasurable value. Though reactions to the utilitarian insipidity that dominates modern curricula are important, it's equally important not to overreact. A return to the classics is necessary. A revival of studying the great works is needed. But when the strategy for that return and revival is interpreted as pounding through as much excellent material as is possible—or impossible, in some cases—there's a pendulum swing into an opposite extreme of error.

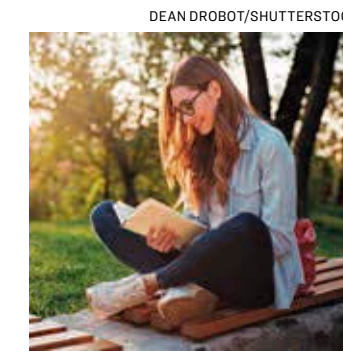
## More or Less?

Less can be more, if done well, and “cover-all-the-bases” learning can very quickly become the opposite of learning if done poorly. Again from Senior: “At Princeton ... the students in the four-year college normally took five courses per year; the exceptionally bright ones were permitted to take four, on the grounds that for them it was really worthwhile to go slow.” Though not keeping with the current “fast-track” mentality, doesn't this notion ring true on a human level?

Who actually reads “The Iliad,” “The Odyssey,” “The Oresteia,” and “The Aeneid,” as well as a little Sophocles, Plato, and Dante on the side in the span of a few short weeks? Or, if they do—unless they are of remarkable intelligence and discipline—who is able to read them meaningfully? These are works to be meditated over, to be studied and savored—not stuffed. They need space and time to proclaim themselves and sink into the mind, especially upon first contact. Flying pell-mell through the best that has been thought and said can be damaging and runs the terrible risk of making the experience burdensome or irksome to a young mind.

What lies in the balance of teaching the classical works of Western Civilization is whether their experience is a slog or a joy. Any undertaking that's challenging and hurried tends to be overbearing and unpleasant. The great books are great because they are challenging and, in approaching them, students must be given time to encounter and engage them: to enter into their world, to learn their language, and to discover their secrets. Education that moves through a classical curriculum as though it were crossing items off a list isn't allowing the curriculum to form and inform students. Such overfilled, marathonic educational programs are too aggressive—even abusive—for they make reading difficult material simply difficult instead of difficult yet delightful, and rattle young learners away from the love of learning.

Sean Fitzpatrick serves on the faculty of Gregory the Great Academy, a boarding school in Elmhurst, Pa., where he teaches humanities. His writings on education, literature, and culture have appeared in a number of journals, including *Crisis Magazine*, *Catholic Exchange*, and the *Imaginative Conservative*.



Reading a great work is best done at a slow, comfortable pace.

Classical education should never be about cramming.

## Rediscovering a Lost Tradition: Male Rites of Passage

JEFF MINICK

During his high school years, my youngest son played point guard on a homeschool basketball team in Asheville, North Carolina. His coach, Tom, was a physician and a father of four boys, two of whom were also on my son's team. He was a great coach who took no guff from the boys, ran disciplined practices, and knew the game well enough to produce winning teams during the entire time my son played for him.

**Throughout human history, young males underwent various tests marking their entry into manhood.**

For away games, Tom, as well as several other parents, would drive the team to cities like Winston-Salem and Greenville. Unlike those other moms and dads, however, he would spend his hours in the car talking to the boys about a variety of subjects: world politics, moral rectitude, and saving money, to name a few. He became well known among both parents and players for these conversations, or, as some players called them, classes. One “class” in particular that impressed my son was a discussion of the qualities they should look for in a wife. Another involved court-

ship and how to treat a woman.

Coach Tom became a major figure in my son's life, so much so that my son invited Tom and his wife to his wedding.

Looking back at those days, I realize today even more than I did then the gifts Tom was even more than a coach. He was not only teaching high school students how to play basketball: He was helping boys become men.

## Initiation Rites

Throughout human history, young males underwent various tests marking their entry into manhood. Once they had passed these tests, which often involved proving their prowess as hunters and warriors, the other men of their tribe or community welcomed them into their ranks. In the Maasai tribe of Kenya, for example, a young male was welcomed to full manhood once he had killed a lion with a spear. A warrior in the Middle Ages was first a page, then a squire, and—once he had earned his spurs—was ultimately dubbed a knight. Both Native Americans and pioneers often earned their claim to manhood by the skills they demonstrated in hunting. Later, many male teenagers marked their entrance into adulthood by working and providing for their families.

Though today we have no universal rite of passage into manhood, some rituals still mark this event. Earning a driver's license at age 16, becoming a legal adult and able to vote at 18, and being able to buy a beer in a bar at age 21 are all steps taken on the road to manhood. Of course, these same landmarks are rites of passage for girls, losing any meaning they might possess as being



In “Meditations,” Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius thanks not only his father and grandfather for the life lessons they taught him, but also many other teachers and guides.

specifically male steps toward maturity.

## The 3 Stages of Change

In “Coming of Age: The Importance of Male Rites of Passage,” husband-and-wife team Brett and Kate McKay discuss the meaning of this marker of manhood, its near-total absence from today's culture, and ways for fathers and mentors to revive such recognition of this transformation of boys to men. They write that traditional rites of passage include three distinct phases for this change: separation from a tribe or group, transition through a series of ordeals, and reincorporation into the group.

As the McKays point out, today's military

can serve as a springboard into manhood. A young male out of high school leaves his family and friends (separation), enters boot camp (transition), and after completing a series of rigorous tests, graduates and becomes a full member of the group—the Marines, Army, Air Force, Navy, or Coast Guard—with the rights and privileges that come with that distinction (reincorporation).

And this military training does work in precisely this manner. A nephew of mine, a mediocre student who spent a good deal of time in his teenage years playing video games, joined the Army shortly after high school. Now, just a few years later, he is, by any definition of the word, a man. He is a trained medic and a parachutist, as well as an infantryman; pays his own way; and is recently married and now has a child.

On the other hand, some of our young males appear lost, muddled as to the meaning of manhood and unsure when that transition occurs. Does manliness come with graduation from high school or college? With a job or profession? With marriage? The birth of a child?

## Creating a Way

The McKays give their readers—particularly fathers—some excellent suggestions for creating rituals celebrating the attainment of manhood. Various religious faiths offer confirmations or bar mitzvahs as entryways into adulthood, and the McKays point out these ceremonies become even more significant when the parents help make them so through discussions of manliness and maturity.

The McKays also recommend we invent private ceremonies that celebrate this passage, occasions preceded by a time of training, increased responsibilities, and a bonding of father and son. These might range from an 18th birthday party of special recognition to a father-and-son camping trip. If the father is absent from the child's life, they offer a number of alternative suggestions for “personal rites of passage,” such as joining the military or Peace Corps, taking a mission trip, or undertaking other endeavors to help with a transition to manhood.

When I was living in Asheville, I knew a dad who devised a special manhood ceremony for each of his sons. He assembled their friends and their mentors, like coaches, teachers, pastors, or Scout leaders around a bonfire at his church, and there those who had influenced his son's life would speak in praise of his accomplishments and offer advice on the responsibilities and duties that now awaited him as a man. I attended two of these ceremonies and spoke at one of them, and both times the words of the older men and the shining, proud face of the young man deeply moved me.

## Others of the Tribe

Notice that in this celebration the father alone did not initiate his son into manhood. He asked other adult male mentors to take part in this ceremony of transition.

In another article, “Why Fathers Shouldn't Initiate Their Sons Into Manhood,” the McKays recommend this course of action. They point out that throughout Western literature and the films of the last century, men other than their fathers acted as guides for young males. They note, for example, the absent Odysseus didn't teach his son Telemachus the meaning and ways of manhood. Instead,



For some who join the armed forces, military boot camp serves as a transition to manhood. Above, recruits run sprints during a U.S. Navy boot camp session in Great Lakes, Ill., on Oct. 24, 2018.

his friend Mentor took the boy under his wing and instructed him, which is of course where we get the word “mentor.”

Again and again in movies, we see this same phenomenon. “Secondhand Lions” tells the story of two crusty old uncles who take in their nephew, Walter—who has no father and a negligent mother—and raise him to be a man. In “Hoosiers,” a movie about a small-town basketball team in Indiana that goes on to win the state championship, we meet newly arrived coach Norman Dale, played by Gene Hackman, who drills the team in fundamentals, disciplines them for misbehavior, and teaches them the value of hard work and team play. “We Were Soldiers” gives us Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore, played by Mel Gibson, and Sergeant

Major Plumley, played by Sam Elliott—two experienced warriors who provide the much younger men in their command with sage advice and set an example in courage for them on the battlefield.

In the opening pages of “Meditations,” Marcus Aurelius thanks his father and grandfather for the life lessons they taught him, but also includes a number of other teachers and guides to whom he's indebted for his training and education. Here is yet another sterling example of the importance of other men in the life of a boy on his journey to manhood.

## Making Men in Confusing Times

The general absence of some ritual signaling the beginning of manhood comes at a time

when young men are also awash in confusion about the meaning of manhood itself. Our culture frequently delivers contradictory messages to them. On one hand, we want them to display what were once considered feminine virtues: to become more caring, more open with their emotions, and to be more tender and kind. Yet we also want them to be tough, to carry the weights given them by duty and life without complaint, and to step up and defend others weaker than themselves.

As a result, many men in their 20s and even their 30s may not think of themselves as “real men.”

We can change this situation. If we train up our sons and grandsons to practice the virtues, to accept responsibility for their lives, and to work hard, we are giving them the compass and map that will help them find their way through a broken culture.

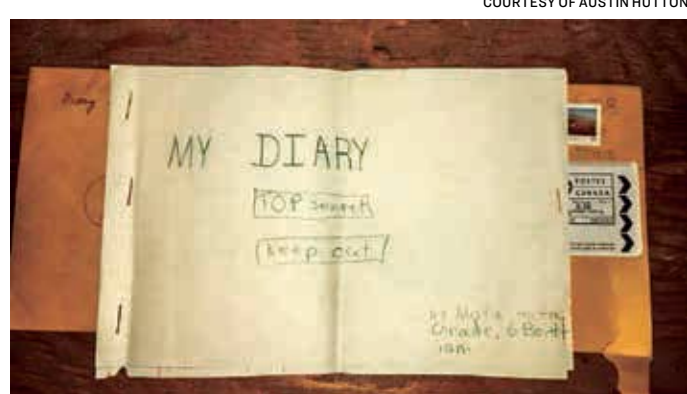
And if we then provide those same young men with some specific time and occasion when we declare them members of the manhood tribe—a road trip, a festive and meaningful party, a bonfire where they are surrounded by mentors and male friends—they will leave home and enter the world knowing they are men.

To act like men, our sons need to hear the words, “Today, you are a man.”

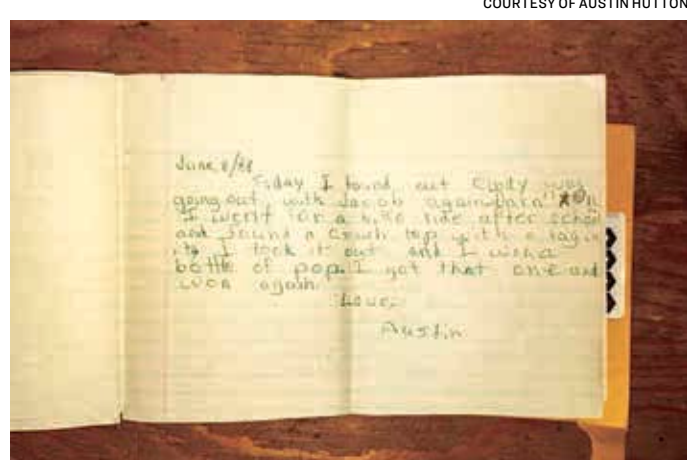
Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminarians of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust on Their Wings,” and two works of non-fiction, “Learning as 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.



COURTESY OF HUGH BRITTAIN



Austin Hutton's diary from sixth grade.



COURTESY OF AUSTIN HUTTON



COURTESY OF AUSTIN HUTTON

(Left) Former teacher Hugh Brittain, 78. (Middle) Some pages from Austin Hutton's diary, which dates back to sixth grade. (Right) Hutton with his youngest son, AJ.

## Blast From the Past

After 33 years, man is reunited with his 6th-grade diary

LOUISE BEVAN

Retired Canadian teacher, who couldn't bear to throw away unclaimed diaries from his classes' creative writing projects in the 1980s, has tracked down many of his former students.

With the help of social media, Hugh Brittain, 78, sent the time capsules, replete with preteen secrets, opinions, and ambitions, back to their original owners.

One of them was Austin Hutton, 45, who now lives in Fort St. John, British Columbia. Brittain was his sixth-grade teacher at Havelock Elementary School in New Brunswick.

Receiving his diary back from Brittain in the mail, according to Hutton, was both exciting and emotional.

"I had no idea what I'd written, what mattered to me back then," Hutton, who wrote his diary back in 1988, told CBC. "It was like getting a window on your childhood."

His diary, which bore a stark warning on the front cover with green ink—"My diary. Top secret. Keep out!"—contained fascinating snapshots of life. Hutton was mowing lawns and saving his hard-earned dollars to buy a bicycle. He even documented an early crush, writing a girl's phone number between the pages of the memoir.

The diary also reminded Hutton of a self-given nickname: "Honky Tonk Hutton," reports Alaska Highway News.

Now a father of four with a son in sixth

grade, AJ, Hutton was curious to see whether there were many similarities between his son's life and the life of his sixth-grade self.

"I was girl crazy," Hutton recalled. "I don't know if [writing the diary] changed me, but it did give me a chance to see I'm still the person I was then."

"I still like my outdoors, I still think women are wonderful, but I love my wife."

Brittain had made a habit of keeping all creative writing projects not collected by students at graduation. Staying true to his word that the diaries were private, he never once read them. Likewise, he never threw them out.

A respected and admired teacher, Brittain retired in 1995. He managed to return a number of diaries at a school reunion, reports KCTV5, but was left with 26.

The school was closed and demolished in 2016.

In early 2021, the retired teacher decided to try again. Though not very social media savvy, by his own admission, he posted a shout-out on a Beaconsfield School Days Facebook page, sharing photos of the diaries in their sealed, named manila envelopes, representing his classes of 1978, '82, '83, and '88.

Among many delighted responses, the friend of a former Havelock student reached out. Cher Raynes of Saskatchewan turned detective, contacting former students, their friends, and their relatives, amassing email addresses for a nationwide trail of Havelock graduates.

“I had no idea what I'd written, what mattered to me back then. It was like getting a window on your childhood.”

Austin Hutton

"It's like putting a puzzle together," she told CBC.

Brittain, paying the postage fees himself, sent manila envelopes to destinations across Canada, making the days of many of his former students.

Receiving his creative writing assignment from Brittain, a letter to his grown-up self, former Havelock student Ted Dakin marveled at the "simpler life" of his childhood years. "Your biggest concerns were getting to school on time, going to baseball practice, lots of chaos among the kids," he reflected.

In his letter, Dakin described his future wedding in great detail and his future wife as a "dirty blond with sparkling blue eyes."

Dakin admitted this description had been based upon a girl in his class at the time.

Dakin plans to stop by and see his former teacher on his next visit home. "I'm blown away that he would keep these all these years," he said.

Likewise, for Hutton, Brittain's impulse to keep and eventually return the diaries was as moving as the diary itself.

"I get goosebumpy thinking how he held onto them all these years, looked us up across the country, and sent them out," he said. "The joy and the love that he put into this... the kindness. It's just unbelievable."

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tually made their way to the United States.

The point I'm trying to make is for all of us—no matter how young or old we are, or where we come from—to get to know people on a personal level. Be curious, ask questions to understand viewpoints, listen, and agree to disagree. Every person is unique and every person has a story.

One organization I worked for encouraged employees during in-house training to sit with people from other departments to get to know them as well as the challenges they faced in their role at work.

Every once in a while, I still think about the two British sailors. Not too long after we met in my hometown, their ship was part of the fleet deployed to the Falkland Islands during the brief war. I often wonder if they ever made it home.

—Sigrid Alexander, Colorado

**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](mailto:NextGeneration@epochtimes.com) or mail it to:

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

DEAR NEXT GENERATION

## Be Curious, Get to Know People

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

Dear next generation,

Born in 1957, and raised in a divided Germany, I was fortunate to have lived in West Germany where the historic processing of what had happened under the Nazi regime was part of my high school curriculum. We were taught about the war, what led up to it, and the atrocities that were committed. One of the things I remember vividly to this day were the films taken by Allied soldiers during the liberation of the concentration camps. We were shown this original footage in school.

During a couple of trips to other European countries as a teenager, I ran into people who wanted nothing to do with me because I was German. While I recognized as a teenager the inhumanity of what the Nazis had engaged in, it took me many years and conversations with my American husband to come to grips with my homeland's history and not feel ashamed of being German.

I grew up in a seaport where international merchant and naval ships docked on a regular basis. You always knew there

was an international ship in the port just by observing shoppers and listening to them talk in a different language. Our parents raised my sister and me to be tolerant of other people (culture, race, religion, etc.), and school and church reiterated that as well.

At an early age, I became interested in other countries and cultures, and soaked up everything that was "different" and new. Together with family and friends, I took trips to other European countries as well as to the former Soviet Union and a couple of Asian countries. This was, of course, prior to cellphones and social media; and I still cherish those personal experiences.

**Every person is unique and every person has a story.**

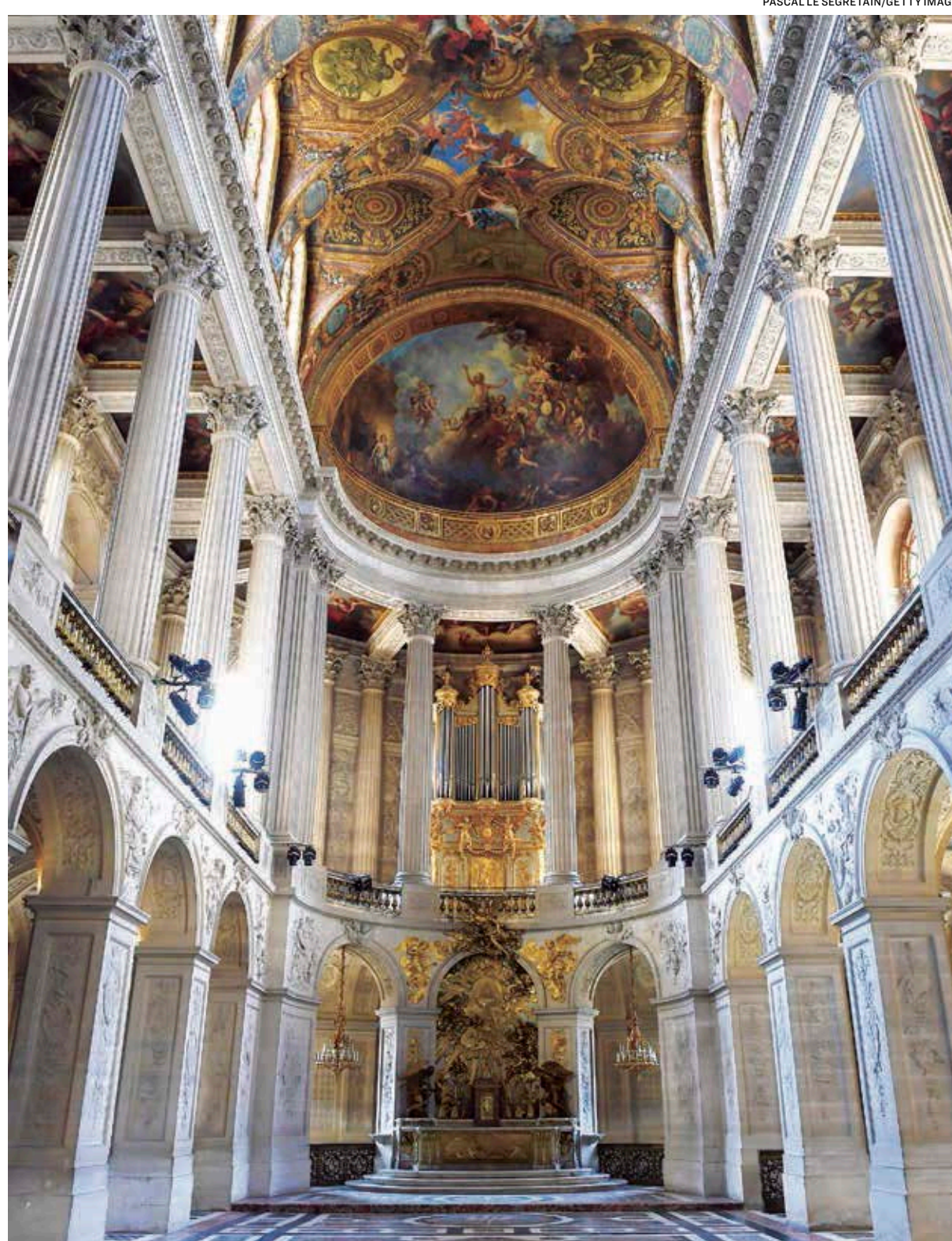
I got my library card when I was in sixth grade. One of our teachers had arranged with the head of a nearby library for a "training session" on how to access the catalog with index cards and where to find individual books on the shelf. I think

our entire class signed up for a library card that day. Anyway, I would visit my library several times a week. I checked out books on different topics—geography, psychology, history, etc.

Talking about naval ships in the port, I remember an evening with friends downtown when we met a couple of sailors from the British Royal Navy. Our group soon expanded to also include an American soldier who was stationed in my hometown. We spent hours talking about our countries, sharing what life was like for us on a daily basis, and so much more.

During my work life, I met so many different people from other backgrounds and countries. One former colleague was one of the Vietnamese boat people; his parents had fled an oppressive Vietnam and made a new life for themselves in a free country. One lady I worked with together with her family had fled the former Yugoslavia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

During a trip here in the United States, my husband and I met an older woman who, growing up in Poland, watched with her family, from a forest, while Nazi soldiers burned down their small village. She and her family hid in the woods and even-



PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES



CHRISTIAN MILEY/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



DIDIER SAULNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

## The Royal Chapel at Château de Versailles: A Divine Beacon Fit for a Sun King

A renewed sense of grandeur has returned to the Royal Chapel at Versailles, after a three-year restoration project.

In the 17th century, the Sun King, Louis XIV, personally directed the creation of this grand chapel. In doing so, he established a conduit between the heavens, the French monarchy, and hence the people of France for generations to come.

In 1687, the king's architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart began work on the chapel, and after he died, the building was completed in 1710 by his brother-in-law, the architect Robert de Cotte.

The chapel stands taller than the surround-

ing palace buildings, reminding everyone that the divine rules even the king.

The main walls, ornamented with Corinthian pilasters (architectural façade features that give the appearance of columns), form the body of the building and support the upper level, which is lined by a balustrade and 30 statues. Sixteen different sculptors carved these statues, depicting Christian figures or allegories of Christian virtues—all to inspire man.

Behind the statues, Gothic-style buttresses, topped with eternal torches, arch upward to the heavens. The buttresses support the steep, hipped slate roof typically seen in French ar-

chitecture. And touches of gold leaf highlight the ornate leadwork on the chapel roof.

Sunlight pours into the chapel through large Gothic-style windows that are a combination of clear and stained glass.

Inside the chapel, the soft vertical lines of the arches and columns gently allure the eye, leading one's attention from the chapel floor through the mid-level columns, before settling on the spectacular vaulted ceiling covered with paintings portraying the Holy Trinity.

To find out more about the restoration of the Royal Chapel at the Château de Versailles, visit [ChateauVersailles.fr](http://ChateauVersailles.fr)

1. DIDIER SAULNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



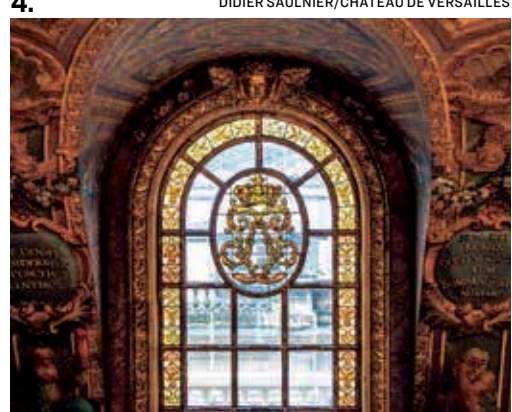
2. DIDIER SAULNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



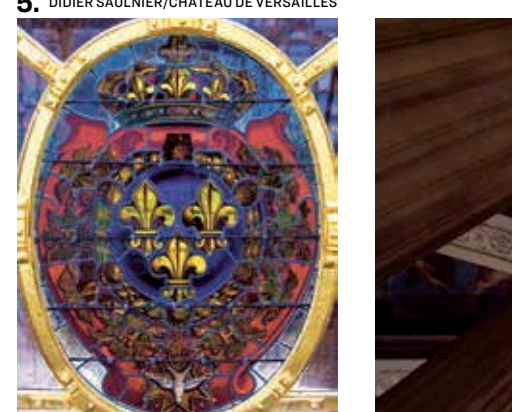
3. THOMAS GARNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



4. DIDIER SAULNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



5. DIDIER SAULNIER/CHATEAU DE VERSAILLES



6. PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES



1. A stone carver restores the stonework to its former glory.

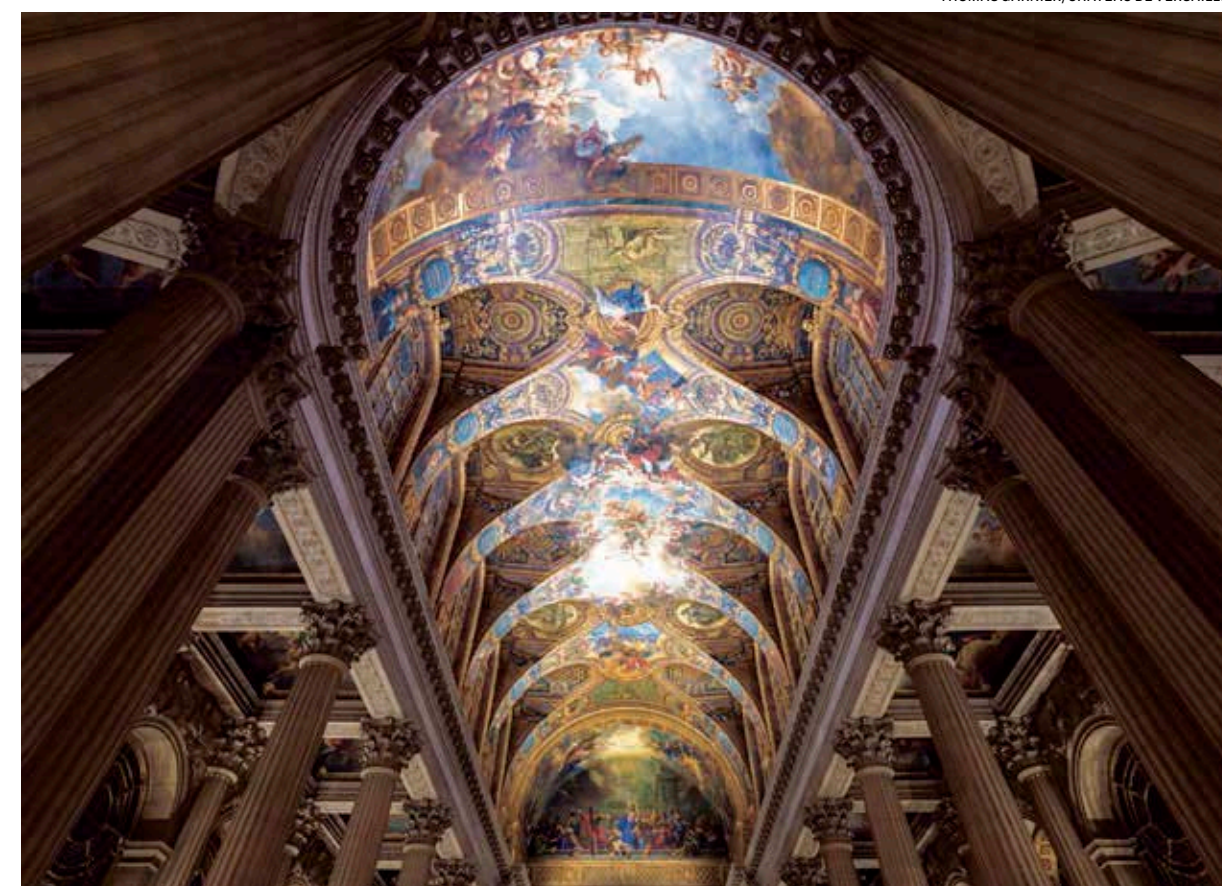
2. Craftsmen gilded the ornate leadwork back to its original state.

3. An artist attentively gilds the lead sculptures as part of the Royal Chapel restoration project.

4. A detail of one of the elegant stained glass windows, surrounded by splendid golden frescoes.

5. The dove representing the Holy Trinity and the golden fleur-de-lis of the French monarchy are some of the rich motifs seen throughout the stained glass windows of the Royal Chapel as a reminder that the right to rule is a gift bestowed by God.

6. A detail of the ornate gilding inside the Royal Chapel.



Colonnades of Corinthian columns stretch up to the incredible painted ceiling that portrays the Holy Trinity. In the center is "God the Father in His Glory" by Antoine Coypel, in the apse is "The Resurrection" by Charles de La Fosse, and above the Royal Gallery is "The Descent of the Holy Ghost" by Jean Jouvenet.

# Moving Forward: 7 Tips for Parents

## Out of Hibernation

BARBARA DANZA

As states lift emergency restrictions put in place over a year ago, and we begin to emerge from this hibernation and get back to “normal,” we may want to recognize that a period of transition, for ourselves and our family members, may be needed. Here are some ideas that may be helpful for parents to consider.

### Take Your Time

It's just about summertime. Take advantage of the opportune timing by embracing a simple, old-fashioned summer complete with cookouts, running through the sprinkler, time at the pool or beach, trips to the library, copious amounts of ice cream, backyard campouts, and whatever else makes summer a joy to you and your family.

Allow your kids time to detox from what was likely way too much time in front of computer screens this school year and the pressures of masks, fear, isolation, and a learning environment that may not have been ideal.

### Be Kind to Yourself

Speaking of pressure, you may be surprised after all this time, how challenging socializing and a more hectic day-to-day life seem to be after “staying home” so much. Just like atrophied muscles need to be gradually worked back to full strength, so too do your socializing muscles need time to get back in shape. So, have patience with yourself, give yourself grace, and take baby steps back to being the social butterfly you once were.

### Take Lessons With You

There are certainly lessons to be gleaned from what we've all been through. Take time to process what they are for you and take them with you into the future. Perhaps your priorities in life have become clearer to you, or your career aspirations have changed, or you've been thinking about where you should raise your family. Maybe your understanding of your children's educational needs has improved. Challenging times like these can provide valuable lessons you'll want to reflect on and take with you.

### Practice Gratitude

The perspective gained after this time may

also leave you with a deeper sense of gratitude, or a need to reignite your sense of gratitude. Journaling about the things you're grateful for each morning or just before you go to bed can have a surprisingly positive impact on your outlook on life.

### Refresh Life

Any time life takes a turn, it's an opportunity to view it as a refresh. See this new chapter as a fresh start. When you make a fresh start, you usually want to keep what's good, clear out what's not, and step off on the right foot. Let go of whatever weighs you down and enjoy life refreshed.

### Reconsider Judgment

As the world intermingles more and more, maintain empathy for others and compas-



MOMA, PRODUCTION/SHUTTERSTOCK

sion in your heart. Everyone has been through this in their own way and will have different understandings about the best way to move forward, different outlooks on what the future holds, and different senses of fear and hope. Think twice before you pass judgment on others and do your best to be the kind person you want others to be.

### Seize the Day

Finally, recognize how precious the time you have is and seize the day. Make the best of your children's childhood, your time together as a family, and the opportunity to do what you've always felt compelled to do. Make the most of each day. Aim for the highest possible vision you can conjure.

A simple, old-fashioned summer provides an opportunity to detox from too much screen time and the pressures of a less than ideal learning environment.

# Teen, 16, Goes Into Tree-Tapping Business, Gets Own Brand of Maple Syrup in 100 Stores

LOUISE BEVAN

An entrepreneurial teen with a soft spot for maple syrup is inspiring others by running a thriving company at the age of 16.

High school junior Will Wanish started out tapping maple trees in his own backyard in Colfax, Wisconsin. In 2019, he used money earned working at a neighbor's dairy farm to build his first steel sugar shed.

Securing a microloan from a regional business fund, he furnished the shed with \$30,000 worth of specialized equipment, allowing him to collect sap from around 3,000 taps on 1,000 trees on land owned by his grandparents and neighbors.

This is how his company, Wanish Sugar Bush, was born. “This is all I think about,” Will told Kare 11.

It was Will's uncle who first ignited his nephew's passion for maple syrup in 2017, tending 800 trees. Will's father, Todd, was

initially skeptical, claiming, “You can go to Walmart and buy a gallon of Mrs. Butterworth's for seven bucks,” but he came around when his son branched off on his own solo venture, which soon turned into a fruitful business model.

Will's taps siphon maple sap into 300-gallon tanks, where the 100 percent pure syrup is heated, collected, and bottled after school hours. Todd and Heather, Will's parents, joke that they are the “unpaid interns.” The teen's grandfather also lends a hand; friends and neighbors pitch in when production gets busy.

“No, he's not your normal 16-year-old,” local dairy farmer Dane Suvada said.

Describing her son as “full speed all day,” Heather recalled Will never taking naps, even as a young boy. Todd added, “The blankets would fly off the bed and the feet were spinning before they even hit the ground.” Today, Will thinks nothing of working into

the small hours, often staying in the sugar shed until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning on a school night. “This is what I want to do for the rest of my career,” he said. “I don't even eat breakfast in the morning—get up and go.”

From Milwaukee to the Twin Cities of Minnesota, Will's syrup and related products have earned themselves spots on the shelves of 100 grocery stores with the help of Heather's amazing marketing skills.

Wanish Sugar Bush also sells stock through its website.

For the ambitious teen, the only way is up. Will, who is keen to work on his wood management and stay on top of advances in tapping technology, is aiming for 20,000 maple taps within 15 years.

“I want to become more known and have it become as big as possible,” he told The Chippewa Herald. “People will tell you that you work too much, but you need to start young.”



COURTESY OF WANISH SUGAR BUSH

Will Wanish got started tapping trees in his own backyard.

“We are excited for this adventure,” said Todd and Heather, both of whom look forward to many seasons of making, bottling, and selling the fruits of their son's hard labor.

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# 91-Year-Old Police Officer Inspires Arkansas Community

JENNI JULANDER

A 91-year-old Arkansas police officer is inspiring those around him with his upbeat work ethic and attitude of loving others.

After having served in law enforcement for nearly five decades, police officer L.C. “Buckshot” Smith plans to keep on working.

Despite his age, Buckshot is still on duty with the Camden Police Department, in the city where he was born and raised, reported THV-11 News.

Buckshot told the TV station that when people ask him when he is going to retire, he tells them, “When the good Lord says so.”

After 46 years with the Ouachita County Sheriff's Office, Buckshot retired. However, it didn't last long, as four months later, he was back at work to join the Camden police, the report stated.

“I feel like, I live longer at my age to keep on working,” Buckshot told the outlet.

The elderly hero isn't only motivated to work to stay active. Rather, he says it is his passion to serve people.

“I love people. I love to help people,” he said.

The nonagenarian officer is a bit of a community grandfather, the kind of man who knows everyone, and everyone knows him.

Mike Sherman, a Camden resident and a good friend of Buckshot, according to THV-11 News, said: “The thing with Buckshot is he's been around so long,



COURTESY OF ELAINE THOMAS

Smith turns 92 this month.

when someone says I know everybody, Buckshot knows everybody.”

Buckshot, who turns 92 this month, attributes his health and longevity to staying active and eating well.

“I eat a lot of vegetables,” he said. “I don't eat too much fast food.”

Buckshot's work ethic is also an inspiration to the other police officers, particularly the young recruits at the Camden Police Department.

“This gun and this badge don't make a police officer. You got to want to do it,” Buckshot told THV-11 News.

According to the report, Lt. Jamario Bush, who has been with the Camden Police Department for eight years, himself “looks up to” Buckshot.

Bush said Buckshot actively talks to the new recruits, giving them a “life lesson on how to get into police work and how to stay in police work.”

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# A Job, a Fresh Start—and Hope

A Texas community pulls through for a man who was homeless for four years

LOUISE BEVAN

A Texas community came through for a homeless man in need after a social media post shared his story.

Kenneth Smith went from sitting outside an Outback Steakhouse to busing tables for the same restaurant—but most importantly, he found hope.

It all started with a gift card.

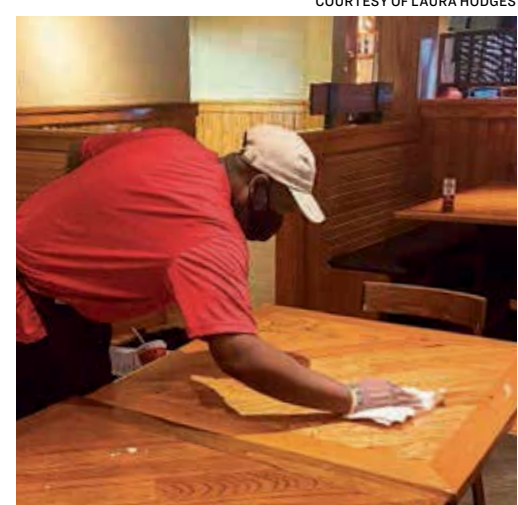
A concerned customer saw Smith dozing in a chair outside the eatery, approached him, and asked if he was OK. Smith admitted he wasn't.

“I've been homeless for a good four years,” he later told NBC. He'd been left wondering, “How am I going to get a meal? Who am I going to turn to? Who can I ask?”

The sympathetic customer handed him a \$100 gift card for the restaurant.

Thus, swapping his chair outside for a booth inside, Smith got to chatting with the venue's partner, Laura Hodges, a mother of three, who was moved by his story. She said she didn't want him to go hungry.

Hodges gave him continued sustenance



COURTESY OF LAURA HODGES

Kenneth Smith.

for close to five months—until he got an idea and asked Hodges for a job. When one became available, she didn't hesitate.

Since early March, Smith has been busing tables six days a week.

It's a chance, he said, to change his life for the better. “This is a whole new beginning that God has blessed me with,” he told ABC, “so I'm trying to get on this right good track that He wants me to stay on.”

Knowing Smith's need to be still greater, Hodges took to social media and posted on the Fort Worth Foodies Facebook page, querying about affordable lodging.

“I've recently employed a homeless gentleman,” she posted. “He is wonderful and works very hard ... He is just trying to get a fresh start.”

Netizens responded and surpassed her expectations, donating cash, a bicycle, and clothes for Smith. They even paid for six weeks at an extended-stay hotel close to the steakhouse, along with groceries and kitchen supplies.

“All they wanted to do was throw assistance out there and resources in any way that they possibly could,” Hodges said. “I'm blown away by the generosity of people. It's absolutely amazing.”

Smith's new job has since sparked a dream: He hopes to run his own food service one day. For now, though, he is saving for a car and, eventually, a home.

“I sometimes walk out them doors and glance at the chairs,” said Smith. “I be like, ‘Man, I used to sit in those chairs.’”

“God is good. If He can do it for me, He can do it for anybody else.”

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# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

## Sunshine

by Thomas Hall Shastid

Thou dancing sunbeams through the happy day  
Dost cheer me on my onward path through life,  
You show to me more clear my stumbling way  
And lighter make my almost ceaseless strife.  
Thou art to me a greater friend indeed,  
Than others I have loved up to this hour;—  
They are oft but a wildly growing weed—  
But thou art like a shining summer flow'r.  
The world could not exist if not for thee,  
The Ice-King would possession then obtain;  
The light and beauty from all things would flee,  
And naught but lasting, dark'n'g chaos reign.  
But now we have the cheerful, glittering light  
That keeps the universe alive and bright.

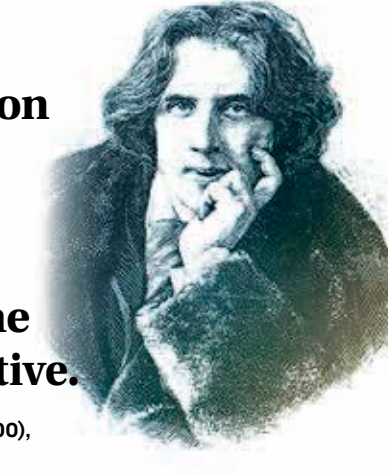
WHAT FALLS BUT NEVER HITS THE GROUND?

THE TEMPERATURE

TORYHEMISTRY/SHUTTERSTOCK

“Conversation about the weather is the last refuge of the unimaginative.”

OSCAR WILDE (1854–1900), IRISH WRITER



ARCHIVE PHOTOS/GETTY IMAGES



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# This Week in History

## THE HOMESTEAD ACT

On May 20, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act into law. This consequential legislation led to the expansion of the American West and allowed all citizens, including former slaves, women, and immigrants, to become landowners. Under this Act, Americans were granted 160-acre plots of land for a very small fee.

Lincoln explained the purpose of the Homestead Act in a speech on July 4, 1861, saying it was “to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial burdens from all shoulders and to give everyone an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life.”



A family poses with their wagon in Loup Valley, Neb., on their way to their new homestead, in this file photo.

(PHOTO) MP/GETTY IMAGES, (ILLUSTRATION) ARTMARI/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 14

# CLOUD WATCHING TO PREDICT THE WEATHER

Who needs a modern, weather app when you can just peek at the sky to predict the weather. The key is in the clouds.

## HIGH CLOUDS (45,000–16,500 feet)

### CIRRUS

Cirrus clouds are very high clouds that are thin and wispy. When they are scattered about the sky, they signal good weather, but when there are more of them, this denotes that warmer, stickier weather is coming.

### CIRROSTRATUS

Cirrostratus are also thin and wispy, but in a different way. While cirrus clouds are often separated from each other, cirrostratus clouds often blanket the sky. Often, they indicate that rain or snow will come between 12 and 24 hours.

### CIRROCUMULUS

Cirrocumulus clouds cover most of the sky and are usually patchy. They look like small grains or ripples. These clouds mean fair weather in most of the world, but in the tropics, they signal an approaching hurricane.

## MIDDLE CLOUDS (20,000–6,500 feet)

### ALTOCUMULUS

Altostratus clouds are whiteish to gray in color and dot the sky. One part of the cloud is often darker than the other. They signal fair weather but, if they are observed on a particularly humid day, they could mean a thunderstorm will come later in the afternoon.

### ALTOSTRATUS

Altostratus clouds are grayish-blue clouds that cover the whole sky with no gaps. The sunlight emitted through the clouds isn't sufficient to cast shadows. Altostratus clouds are a sign of rain coming.

### NIMBOSTRATUS

Nimbostratus clouds are dark gray clouds that are very thick and cover the whole sky. Usually, they are so thick that sunlight doesn't filter through. They are one of the rain clouds, and when you see them, rain is falling or will fall very soon.

## LOW CLOUDS (below 6,500 feet)

### STRATOCUMULUS

Stratocumulus clouds are low, puffy, patchy clouds that are gray to white in color. They forecast fair weather for the moment, but may signal a storm might be on the way.

### STRATUS

Stratus clouds are very plain clouds that have no features, no patchy parts, and no gaps. They are present on overcast days but only ever produce mist or drizzle. They can signal a coming storm, though.

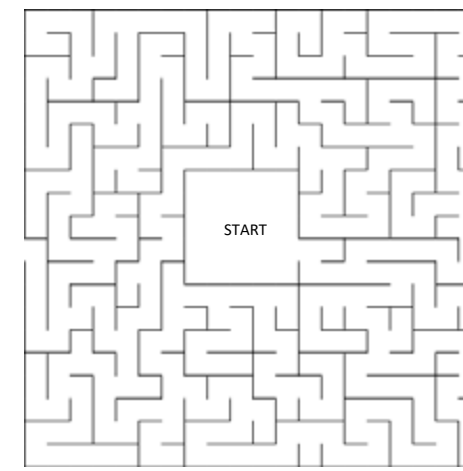
### CUMULONIMBUS

Cumulonimbus clouds are towering, dark gray clouds. They are formed when warm and wet air rises very high into the atmosphere. They build for a while, and finally, all the energy contained in these clouds is released in the form of a short period of very heavy rain and thunderstorms.

### CUMULUS

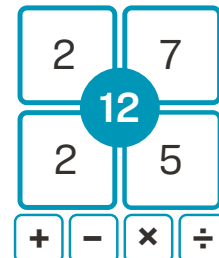
Cumulus clouds look like cotton balls in the sky. They are often the clouds we look for shapes in. Cumulus clouds forecast a fair, sunny, nice day.

# AMAZING ESCAPES!



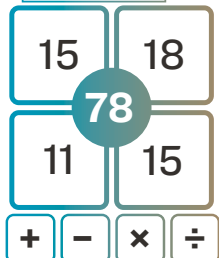
USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, - AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one “unique” solution but, there may also be “equivalent” solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1 + (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1



Solution For Easy 1  
2 - 2 + 5 = 12

Medium puzzle 1

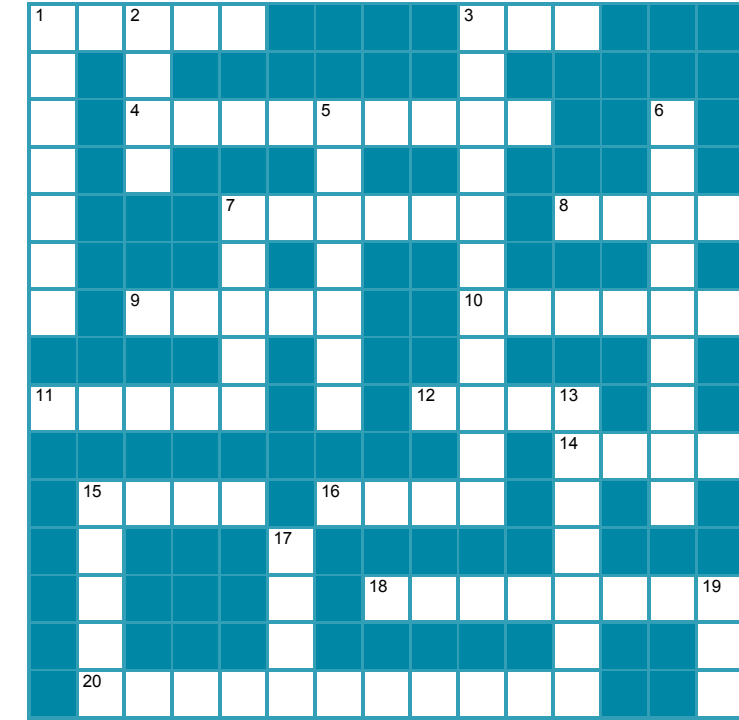


Solution for Medium 1  
81 + 91 + (11 - 91)  
(91 - 91) + (11 + 91)

Hard puzzle 1



Solution for Hard 1  
32 - 95 + 2 + 2  
92 - 2 + 2 + 92

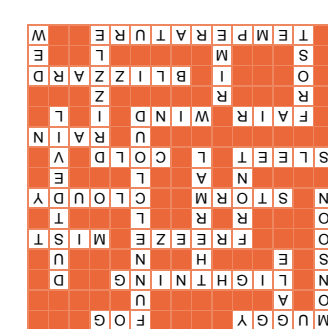


## Across

- Hot and damp (5)
- Makes it hard to see (3)
- Fast as \_\_\_\_\_! (9)
- Will still harm spring plantings (6)
- Not quite rain (4)
- Springtime weather event (5)
- Not sunny (6)

## Down

- Rainy season (7)
- Battering wind (4)
- Source of a tornado (11)
- Temperature-related (7)
- Dirty whirlwind (4,5)
- Weather change line (5)
- Almost rain (7)
- May kill spring veggies (5)
- Frost (4)
- Morning moisture (3)



- Really cold rain (5)
- Some springtime mornings (4)
- Spring plantings need this! (4)
- Not cloudy, but not sunny either (4)
- Air force (4)
- Winter storm (8)
- It goes up and down (11)



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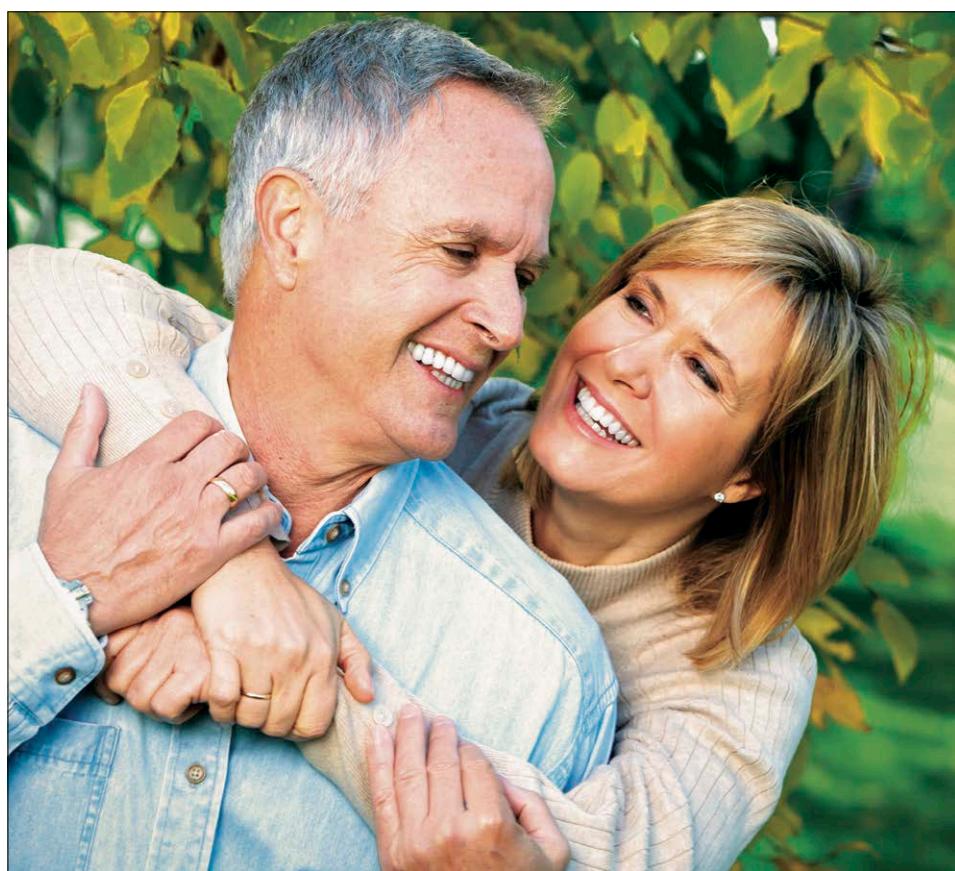
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