

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



British actor John Gielgud (1904–2000) poses in costume for his lead role in the William Shakespeare play 'Hamlet' in 1936.

LIFE LESSONS

Shakespeare's Timeless Teachings

The Bard has entertained the world for centuries with tales that reveal right and wrong

TATIANA DENNING

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts.

—William Shakespeare

While I'm far from qualified to teach a course on the subject of Shakespeare, there's profound wisdom to be found in his works. And I believe they're as applicable today as they were years ago.

When I was younger, I used to think that Shakespeare was for stodgy old men in Ivy League halls, smoking pipes and pontificating on life. The language seemed

Interestingly, prison inmates have also benefited from studying Shakespeare.

difficult to comprehend, and the stories seemed written for a certain people of a certain time period.

It would take my high school English teacher, Mrs. Judith Jack, to help me develop an appreciation for Shakespeare—one that has lasted to this day.

A Teacher's Perspective

Mrs. Jack was one of the best, as well as one of the most well-loved, teachers at my small high school in Elkins, West Virginia. She had a way of breaking down and explaining things so that you could not only understand them better, but also made you want to learn more. I contacted her son T.L., who was also my high school classmate, and asked if his mother might share her thoughts on teaching Shake-

speare. She kindly agreed.

Now at the age of 80 and living in The Villages in Florida, Mrs. Jack's mind is still sharp. When asked about some of her favorite Shakespeare works, she quoted the Bard and said, "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in at this petty pace ..."

I asked Mrs. Jack how she developed such an effective way of teaching Shakespeare—not an easy feat.

"The language can be so intimidating," she said. "I could've had the students read it and say what happened here and what happened there. But I felt that if I read it and stopped to explain it along the way, it would make it more relatable."

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NATALYPAIN/SHUTTERSTOCK



The routine of home offers respite from the cares and worries of the world.

A Cradle of Civilization: The Home

JEFF MINICK

We Americans have long celebrated the idea of home. Think of Dorothy clicking her heels together in "The Wizard of Oz" while saying the magic incantation that will return her to Kansas: "There's no place like home! There's no place like home!" Remember that line from the song "Home, Sweet Home": "Be it ever

so humble, there's no place like home!"

We may romanticize home, but meanwhile, we move from one place to another more than almost any other people in the world. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the average American changes residences about 12 times during his lifetime.

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Home is where love lives.



"Procession of Characters from Shakespeare's Plays," circa 1840, unknown artist. Oil on board, 12 1/4 by 54 1/4 inches.

LIFE LESSONS

Shakespeare's Timeless Teachings

The Bard has entertained the world for centuries with tales that reveal right and wrong

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The expression that I could put in when I read Shakespeare helped the students understand."

Indeed, Mrs. Jack didn't just read Shakespeare; she recited it with such passion that it was like watching a one-woman play. I looked forward to each class, anticipating what intriguing events would unfold next.

"If you're having trouble with the language and someone explains it to you, it makes it relatable," she said.

Mrs. Jack also understood that Shakespeare's works contain timeless lessons. "As they say, if we don't learn from the past, we're doomed to repeat it," she said.

Memorizing and reciting Shakespeare's soliloquies was a required part of the class, and while not easy, the hard work paid off.

"It was my hope that by having students memorize these speeches, they would work hard and really gain something they could retain. When they did, even my poorest students felt good about themselves for putting in the hard work to memorize these," Mrs. Jack said.

I still remember many of the lines from all those years ago. And it seems I'm not the only one.

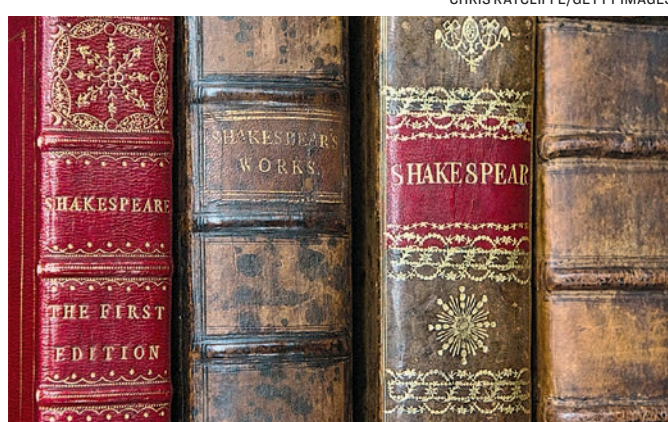
"It's funny, because when I run into former students, who are now in their 40s and 50s, they will quote me lines from Shakespeare that they had to learn in my class," Mrs. Jack said. "People relate to it, and carry good memories from the class."

It seems Shakespeare's profound words of wisdom left a deep impression on many of us.

Do the Right Thing

Shakespeare provides many lessons on the importance of doing the right thing. His flawed characters, who are consumed by vices such as ambition and revenge, often exhibit behaviors that are in stark contrast to what is just, kind, and good. They act as an affront to our sense of what's morally right, reminding us that the selfish, dark things that lurk within can easily spiral out of control and lead us down a path of ruin.

In an article in *Deseret News*, titled "What Shakespeare is still teaching us about good and evil 400 years after his death," professor Regina Schwartz of Northwestern University said, "If you watch his plays, you walk out of the theater with a deepened sense of what's right and wrong. Partially



(Above) The first four folios of William Shakespeare's work during an unveiling for auction at Christie's King Street in London on April 19, 2016.

(Above right) A copy of William Shakespeare's "The First Folio 1623" in London on July 7, 2006.



When I run into former students, who are now in their 40s and 50s, they will quote me lines from Shakespeare that they had to learn in my class.

Judith Jack, retired high school teacher

it's because his characters are so compelling—they're like us, they're greater than us and they're less than us. They're invitations to us and they're cautions to us."

According to Schwartz, Shakespeare's inspiration came from the Bible, pointing out that Hamlet's story of revenge draws on the story of Cain and Abel, while Lady Macbeth embodies the role of Eve.

The same article quotes English professor Kristen Poole: "His work is about compassion—love God, love your neighbor. Well ... what does that look like? And what does compassion look like for people you don't like?"

Interestingly, prison inmates have also benefited from studying Shakespeare. In an interview with NPR, professor Linda Bates, author of "Shakespeare Saved My Life: Ten Years in Solitary with the Bard," found that teaching Shakespeare to prisoners helped them examine their own behavior.

"The more insight you get into Shakespeare's characters, the more insight you get into your own character," one prisoner said.

One prisoner in particular, Larry Newton, said Shakespeare literally and figuratively saved his life. Bates arrived at a time when Newton was struggling with severe depression, and he said Shakespeare gave him something positive to focus on when he was considering taking his own life. He said Shakespeare also gave him a new way of looking at life.

Bates and Newton went on to create workbooks together, focusing on 13 of Shakespeare's plays. According to Bates, Newton included "a day-by-day, what he calls considerations, a point to consider in the play that involves examining the motives of the character and always bringing it right back to your own motives and your own choices."

Our Thoughts Matter

Shakespeare used his tragedies to demonstrate the importance of our thoughts. They highlight the progress of the characters' thinking and how it ultimately leads to their undoing.

Those works focus less on what the characters do and more on what they think. By following the character's journey through their complicated thought process, we not only come to understand them better, but we're also provided a window into our own thinking.

Shakespeare's works show us that we aren't just what others see or even necessarily who we think or say we are. Through his characters, we come to understand that we must first know ourselves in order to change ourselves for the better.

To quote Hamlet, "We know what we are but know not what we may be."

What We Choose Is Up to Us

Mrs. Jack said, "We have the capacity to create our own futures. We can decide what we want our futures to be. When students understand this, it can motivate them to achieve their dreams."

We're given opportunities every day to choose our path—to follow our innate moral compass or a path of wrongdoing. To quote Hamlet again, "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Shakespeare noted that man is limited in his knowledge and understanding of life and the universe.

If we choose to believe that it doesn't matter what we do while we're here or that we can just follow errant thinking and go down a bad path, we'll have wasted precious opportunities. As Cassius says in "Julius Caesar," "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves."



An engraving depicts Shakespeare (1564-1616) reciting a work before the court of Elizabeth I, circa 1600.

Examining Ourselves

The lessons contained within Shakespeare's works ask us to examine our own hearts and minds and to dig deep for what might be hidden, even from ourselves.

When our best friend gets a promotion at work, do we feel a twinge of jealousy, as Macbeth first felt? When we're faced with the choice of getting ahead or doing the right thing, what do we choose? And when someone wrongs us, do we seek revenge, as Hamlet did, or do we forgive and maintain our kindness?

What we think and what we do also directly impacts our health.

As we strive for more—more money, more things, more technology, more fame—we increase our stress and anxiety, leading to a variety of ailments, from high blood pressure to heart disease to loneliness and depression.

The lessons contained within Shakespeare's works ask us to examine our own hearts and minds.

"Shakespeare wrote some amazing comedies to make us laugh," Mrs. Jack said. "But he also wanted to remind us that life's not all a bed of roses, and it can be really tough. There are bad people in the world, and they can really mess us up if we go along with them."

Shakespeare highlighted the internal struggles inherent to the human condition, as well as the importance of being



American actor Edwin Booth as William Shakespeare's Hamlet, circa 1870.

vigilant and examining our thoughts, motives, and actions.

His stories act as cautionary tales of what can happen when we don't recognize and control harmful emotions such as anger, jealousy, and greed. They remind us to use the time we have to know ourselves better, get rid of selfishness, and strengthen the good within.

Tatiana Denning, D.O. is a preventive family medicine physician and owner of Simpura Weight Loss and Wellness. She believes in empowering her patients with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain and improve their own health through weight management, healthy habits, and disease prevention.

Time and Place

Sometimes home is where we once lived. Adults who grew up in the same house and town or city understand this idea.

A man who was born and raised in the small community of Boonville, North Carolina, surrounded by cousins and close friends, left after college to work in Baltimore. He has a house there, a wife and children, and a good job, but even at age 40, should someone ask him, "So where's home?" he may pause before replying.

His address may be in Baltimore, but a part of his heart is 400 miles south in Boonville.

So how can we tell if our place of residence is a home?

Whether we live in a farmhouse built by our great-grandparents, an apartment in Queens, a cottage in Charleston, or a

My Memories of the 9/11 Boat Evacuation



Smoke continues to rise from the destroyed World Trade Center on Sept. 15, 2001.

CHRISTINA STANTON

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, my husband and I were awakened by a huge explosion that shook our building. We ran to the terrace on the 24th floor of our apartment building just six blocks from the World Trade Center to see thick black smoke coming from the North Tower. Then a second plane came roaring overhead and struck the South Tower. The impact hurled us backward into our living room and knocked us unconscious. When we came to, we grabbed our dog and quickly evacuated our building. Barefoot and still wearing pajamas, we sought safety in nearby Battery Park. But the nightmare continued. The towers soon fell, covering us with toxic dust and debris, and heavy smoke surrounded us in a deadly cloud. We were trapped. We desperately needed to get off the island.

The Coast Guard wasn't sure how many boats would respond, but respond they did—an estimated 150 of them.

A crowd gathered along the Hudson, and we managed to board a boat headed to New Jersey. It was a large, white NY Waterway boat, a ferry service for commuters.

The ferry soon filled with Lower Manhattan residents, office employees, hotel staff, students from nearby schools, tourists, and mothers holding babies. Some appeared unscathed as if they hadn't been in the chaos at all, while others were yellow from dust, and a few red from blood. Many were crying or had a stunned, wide-eyed, panicked look on their faces.

As we left the burning city behind us, I took in the view of the harbor. Boats of all shapes and sizes were racing toward Manhattan from every direction.

Sept. 11 would prove to be the largest sea evacuation in recorded history, surpassing the Miracle at Dunkirk—the rescue of British and Allied forces from the French seaport during World War II.

Immediately after the New York attacks, subway trains were shut down, all bridges and tunnels were closed to Manhattan, and buses were suspended or rerouted. More than a million workers and residents south of Canal Street found themselves fleeing north on foot, through streets littered with dust and

debris from the collapsed buildings, or heading south and west, hoping for a water rescue.

When it came to the attention of the U.S. Coast Guard that large crowds were pooling at the coastline, they issued a radio call to assist in the rescue. Dan Roman, former director of vessel trafficking service of the U.S. Coast Guard Sector New York, said, "We made the conscious decision that we wanted the professional mariners of New York—of which there are many and who are very talented—to be that workforce to move people that day."

"Seafarers have a long tradition of selfless service to others," said Peter Johansen, former COO of NY Waterways, who was a key organizer of the boat evacuation. "When a vessel puts out a distress call, any vessel that can assist goes to their aid. The same thing happened on 9/11."

The Coast Guard wasn't sure how many boats would respond, but respond they did—an estimated 150 of them. New York Harbor quickly filled with sightseeing boats, ferries, tugboats, water taxis, dining boats, personal watercraft, fishing boats, and party boats. Some of them raced back and forth across the harbor all day, dropping off passengers in New Jersey, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and upper Manhattan.

Those evacuated were a true cross-section of New York City demographics. It's estimated that 300,000 office workers from states such as New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, along with 25,000 residents, 50,000 students, and hundreds of tourists were downtown that Tuesday morning. The spontaneous boat evacuation of 9/11 rescued 500,000 people in less than nine hours, thanks to at least 800 maritime heroes.

It's hard to believe it's been 20 years since my husband and I landed in our pajamas, barefoot, and completely yellow with dust, on the shores of New Jersey. We were able to continue on with our lives, when almost 3,000 precious souls were not. But on a day of devastating loss, we also witnessed selfless acts of true, unsung American heroes.

"When the Coast Guard sent out the message 'Calling All Boats,' the mariners did as they have always done, rescue those in danger," Johansen said. "I wouldn't want to live in a world where that didn't happen."

Christina Ray Stanton wrote an award-winning book, "Out of the Shadow of 9/11: An Inspiring Tale of Escape and Transformation." She is a licensed New York City tour guide and a sought-after speaker on 9/11. She can be reached at ChristinaRayStanton.com



Our possessions—our furniture, books, and items of sentimental value—all these contribute to feeling at home.

A Cradle of Civilization: The Home

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I counted up the times I've picked up stakes and came up with 21 relocations.

Home Made

Despite all of this shuffling about, we create a home, in part, with the things we carry with us. We may move from an apartment in Manhattan to a townhouse in Phoenix, but we begin to make that empty and alien space into a home as soon as we unload our furniture and belongings from the moving van. The breakpoint that once belonged to a great-grandmother, a bookshelf built by an uncle, an old sofa that's just as comfort-

able as ever: They transform the new and the strange into the familiar. In my case, my books also help convert wherever I live into a home. These volumes surround me even as I write these words, old friends and new, some unvisited for years, some lying even now on the floor or table beside me, all beloved, all a part of who I am.

Home Is Where the Heart Is

Were you to visit my home today, which I rent from my daughter—I act as a caretaker as well—you might wonder about the blocks, Lincoln logs, and Playmobil figurines arranged in a village on the floor in the den. You might assume the grandchildren are here (they aren't) or

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the average American changes residences about 12 times during his lifetime.

that in my spare time, I play with the toy soldiers and cowpokes (I don't). No—when the grandkids returned to Pennsylvania a month ago, they begged me to leave the fort and village intact, and I've done so.

Those toys aren't in my way, and, as one visitor remarked, "I think it adds a certain ambiance to the place."

That comment about ambiance may well be true, but that log cabin and block fortress with its mounted riders and armed guards bring my grandchildren to mind. Every day, I remember the excitement on their faces during the village's construction and hear their voices as they tell stories about these plastic figurines.

Home is where love lives. In my home right now, love lives in the little village on the floor of the den.

while the soup's heating up on the stove. It's routine, sure, but you feel safe here in this abode of warmth and cheer, this little citadel of civilization. Here you are, alone or with loved ones, in a place of comforts as familiar to you as your face in the mirror.

And there you have it. You're home.

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 non-fiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

Faith and Love in the Time of COVID

DUSTIN BASS

My father had been in the intensive care unit (ICU) for two weeks struggling to fight off the effects of COVID-19. This was a week after he had contracted the illness. We had been contacting the nurses' station every day, even multiple times a day, to get updates. On Aug. 26, we arrived at the hospital to meet with the doctors and nurses. We wanted to know when we could possibly bring him home, as he had suddenly hit a stalemate in his progress. In fact, he was starting to regress. As my mother, brother, and I sat across the table from three doctors and two nurses, we were informed in detail that my father was worse off than we had understood. Approximately four days prior to our arrival, a secondary infection had afflicted his lungs, causing his progress to be halted and reversed. They couldn't know for sure what was causing the infection.

The only way to know for sure would be to put him on a ventilator and obtain a sample from the lungs. But doing so was out of the question for two reasons: one, his lungs were too weak for him to survive being taken off a ventilator; two, we refused to allow the use of a ventilator.

He couldn't come home because his lungs were so clogged that he wouldn't be able to survive the trip home, as an ambulance wouldn't have the amount of oxygen his lungs required.

Our notes full of questions, many provided by a nurse and friend of the family, seemed almost unnecessary in the face of such news. We asked to see the chest X-rays. We wanted to know what was being done to possibly put him on the right path—medicines, therapy, food intake, vitamin infusions. Whatever could be tried didn't seem to us a bad idea.

Isolation and Hopelessness

My father had been stuck in a room with no visitors allowed, while also not being allowed to get out of the bed. For all intents and purposes, it had been isolation. We needed to see him. He needed to see us. My parents needed to be together even if for a little while. Due to my father being in such a perilous state, the doctors agreed we could go in to see him, as long as we understood the risks, and as long as we wore the proper protective gear.

The risks were negligible. My brother and mother had gotten COVID at the same time as my father. They no longer had it. The doctors said my father no longer had it. I understood the risk, but I also understood this could possibly be the last time I saw my dad. The immense amount of protective gear—hairnet, gloves, apron, mask, face shield—wasn't a deterrent to any of us.

Before stepping out of the room with the doctors and nurses, my mother made a clear statement of faith and love. She made it clear that no matter what happened, God controlled the outcome. She saw the X-rays as clearly as the doctors did. The lungs were white when they needed to be black. She heard the report they had laid out. It was a situation on the edge of hopelessness. Her response was not a rebuttal (what do we know of the medical world?), it was a declaration (we know plenty about faith). It was a pushback, not against the medical



FEIMENG

Telling

I pray and believe that he will be staying here on earth. But I can't possibly know. Who knows when their time is up?

team, but against death.

As we walked down the corridor, every single room we passed gave the impression that it had become more of a morgue than a hospital. It appeared to be a mere holding place for those passing on to the other side. Every patient was on a ventilator, their faces expressionless. Their mouths holding in place a plastic contraption. Their bodies slightly wrenched to perhaps make room for the plastic tube, or perhaps because it was the last position their body held when they were awake. I would later tell my mother that the entrance to the floor should borrow from Dante's "Inferno" with a sign that reads: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here."

Prayer and Hope

When we arrived at my father's room, I was the first to look at him through the glass door. He had the same look in his eyes my grandfather had when he was hours from dying. A glassy, far-away look that focused on nothing. Then he and I made eye contact and something began to change. When he saw all three of us, he waved. As we put on our protective gear, I looked back and he shot me a comical peace sign and waved for me to come in. When my mother moved in front of us, his hand rapped up and down as he gave her a soft wave.

We walked in brokenhearted with the weight of the recent news and to see him in such a condition. We said hello, that we loved him, and that it was good to see him. But we knew what we needed to do more than anything: pray.

We began a firestorm of prayer, speaking healing and life, and demanding death to leave the room. We messaged friends and family. We called pastors. We left messages in Facebook prayer groups. The world—at least our world—was hitting heaven with petition after petition. As my brother later texted to my cousin and me, if Dad was going to pass away, it wouldn't be for a lack of faith and prayer.

Days prior, I had purchased him a get-well card. The moment I had released it from my hand into the mailbox, I realized I hadn't put a stamp on it. As we stood around the hospital room, talking with Dad and answering calls and texts, I noticed a stack of cards in the corner.

I sifted through the cards, and by some kind fate, mine had made it. I read the cards from friends and family and placed them along the counter in front of his bed.

We stayed for hours. By the time we left, his demeanor had changed. The glazed look in his eyes was gone. And the weighty feeling of death had lifted.

One of the doctors told my mother that it meant so much for us to come to the hospital and address our concerns. She took note of how passionate we were in our belief that God would pull him through this, and if God chose not to and he were to die, it would be our and his great wish that he do so at home with family around, and not alone in some hospital room where the only way to know he had left this earth would be to hear the sustained beep of a flatline. She said that so many of the people on her floor had no one checking on them. We were perhaps not an anomaly, but we were a rarity.

Faith and Love

My brother and I love our father more than we can express. My parents will have been married for 45 years on Sept. 17. They have been through the roughest of times together and have come through on the other side. My father has many friends and a family of seven brothers and sisters, along with nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws, and two grandchildren who love him dearly. He is a very funny man with the most patient and kind demeanor. It is a gift from God that even in his darkest moments, like these past few weeks, he has never lost his sense of humor or decency.

It has been a combination of faith and love during this time of COVID that has kept my family strong. Love is what brought us to that hospital to address the doctors with our concerns and is what led us down the hospital corridor into his room. Faith is what has caused us and so many others to hit their knees in prayer.

As I write this, my father is being moved from the ICU to a non-ICU room. He has now been in the hospital for three weeks. A new Texas law now allows patients to have at least one visitor, so my mother can be with him every day. I don't know what the outcome will be. I don't know if God is calling him home. I pray and believe that he will be staying here on earth. But I can't possibly know. Who knows when their time is up?

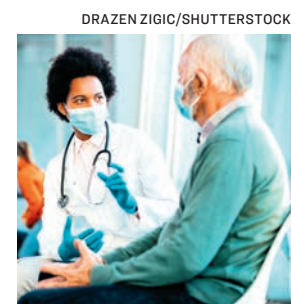
That night, on Aug. 26, my mother quoted Job: "A person's days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed."

Knowing the outcome isn't faith. Our faith is sustained in the knowledge that God hears our prayers, not that he answers every one of them. It is enough to know that he listens and cares.

Millions, perhaps billions, of people have been devastated by this pandemic. There are many who have suffered without these two great sustainers: faith and love. If there ever was a time to take account of your life and ask where your faith lies and who loves you, it's now. If there ever was a time to build or rebuild your relationship with God, it's now. If there ever was a time to mend bridges with friends and family, it's now.

Life is empty without faith and desperately lonely without love. Just as I can't predict what the outcome will be for my father, I can't predict the outcome of this pandemic.

What I can predict with certainty is that life, and even death, is manageable, even joyous, with faith in God and the love of friends and family.



DRAZEN ZIGIC/SHUTTERSTOCK

"Love is what brought us to that hospital to address the doctors with our concerns and is what led us down the hospital corridor into his room," writes author Dustin Bass.

Dustin Bass is the co-host of *The Sons of History* podcast and the creator of *the Thinking It Through YouTube* channel. He is also an author.

ARTS

Reviving China's Lost Heritage



Marilyn Yang received a gold award in the Adult Female Division of the 9th NTD International Classical Chinese Dance Competition.

The NTD International Classical Chinese Dance Competition raises the bar

CATHERINE YANG

In the past dozen years, classical Chinese dance has burst onto the world stage, intriguing and delighting audiences around the globe. The revival of this traditional art form is a departure from the modern China, under communist rule, that most people know, and the truth about China's ancient heritage continues to move audiences and motivate dancers who pursue the art.

The NTD International Classical Chinese Dance Competition, which took place from Sept. 2 to 5 in New York, is now in its ninth year, and this year's requirement has raised the bar on the ancient art form. The competition is one in a series of international cultural and arts events aimed at promoting traditional culture.

The New Standard

Competition judges Minghui and Gu Yun spoke with *The Epoch Times* about "shen dai shou," a method of movement where the "body leads the arms." They said it has become the new standard for classical Chinese dance.

"In martial arts, in opera, in other art forms that developed alongside Chinese dance, they all mention 'shen dai shou,'" said Gu, who is an alumnus of the Beijing Dance Academy and teaches at the

world-renowned Shen Yun Performing Arts.

It's a method that Shen Yun and its school, Fei Tian Academy of the Arts, have pioneered in recent years. "Shen dai shou" is a commonly used phrase in classical Chinese dance pedagogy, but no other school has incorporated it systemically into its fundamentals and training methods.

"That's because the method is an ancient one, and Chinese dance was passed down in a master-to-apprentice format throughout thousands of years of Chinese civilization, Gu said. Little was writ-



Lillian Parker is a gold award winner in the Junior Female Division of the 9th NTD International Classical Chinese Dance Competition in New York.

ten down, much was lost through word of mouth, and an apprentice trying to imitate the master may not have understood all the internal intricacies of which muscles to use.

The death blow, of course, came when communists took power in China and destroyed the Chinese people's connection to their cultural heritage.

Chinese dance was passed down in a master-to-apprentice format throughout thousands of years of Chinese civilization.

Minghui said: "Shen dai shou" is a big part of the score this time; it's become the standard. When a dancer really uses their body to dance, the exertion of force begins from the center of their body, that place below the collarbones, right over the heart. It draws attention to the mind-body-spirit connection so prevalent in traditional Chinese culture, and pairs nicely with another saying commonly used in classical Chinese dance: "Dance from the heart."

"There are many things that go into the development of one's artistry, from musicality to the development of your aesthetic sense, culture, your understanding of what it means to be a human. So when you dance, it's an expression of all of these things as you bring a character to life."

Our Love Affair With the 'Grands'

COURTESY OF CINDY LEGG

ANITA L. SHERMAN

Sunday, Sept. 12, is National Grandparents Day. It was signed into law by President Jimmy Carter in 1978.

While there were others, Marian Lucille Herndon McQuade is generally considered the main driver behind a day to honor grandparents. A West Virginia housewife, she lobbied effortlessly (along with help from her husband, Joseph McQuade) to educate people on the unique and important role that grandparents play in the lives of their grandchildren.

Married for 60 years, the McQuades had 15 children, 43 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

While not a public holiday, observing National Grandparents Day has been designated as the first Sunday after Labor Day. Marian McQuade envisioned it as a family day with small, intimate gatherings. She even recommended adopting a grandparent for a lifetime of experiences.

As a society, for several decades on this day, we have publicly affirmed the importance of grandparents and the vital role

they play in the lives of their children's children.

Quite frankly, before I researched the origins of this day, I figured it was yet another inspired greeting card marketing gimmick.

Call Me Grandma

Now that I am a grandmother, I'm glad there's a day to honor all of our grandparents out there and our counterparts, grandfathers.

I always wanted to have a grandmother I could visit and get to know, but that isn't my story. On my mother's side, my grandmother died giving birth to their 10th child, a son. She was 40. Sadly, my grandfather would have little to do with this baby, blaming him for his wife's death. My mother and her older sister raised him. As my father's side, I knew I had grandparents who were living in the Philippines. While I saw photos, I was never able to meet them. When my grandmother died after a long and full life, my father went to attend her funeral. He was very sad, and I believe he was close to his mother even though he chose to make his life

in the United States.

I have several friends who are grandmothers. We gathered recently over wine and appetizers and shared our experiences. We laughed as we are hardly the grandmothers we knew or didn't have. All of us are working and juggling schedules as our grown children are doing, and all of us beamed as we talked about our "grandbabies" or "grands."

"And we're all looking good," laughed my friend Marianne, who has 18 grandchildren from a blended marriage ranging in age from 3 months to 21 years.

For Marianne, Monday is Max day. She and this tow-headed 2-year-old toddler spend the day exploring nature, visiting dinosaur parks, reading, playing with her two labs, or cuddling up with a good read.

"I'm very flexible, but there are boundaries," she said. None of their large family arrives unannounced. With decades working as a therapist, Marianne smiled, "I let them raise their children their own way."

Called by her grands as "mom-mom," Sylvia has 10 grandchildren ranging in age from almost 2 to 17. A former advertising executive and membership coordinator for the local chamber, she recently reinvented herself and now works for a nonprofit peer mediation group. She's loving it.

"For me, the classics are important," she shared with us. "All my grandchildren know they are going to get a book from me, inscribed. Hopefully they will cherish and remember me."

Our daughters attended the same high school. Now, they both have two young children of their own.

"I'm old-fashioned. I'm a stickler for table manners," Sylvia said. "They need to be respectful."

Cindy, who has her own business consulting company, adores her three grandbabies and sees them at least once a week. "I was 53 when I first became a grandmother. It seemed too young to be called 'grandma,'" she said with a laugh, happy that "Gigi" is what her grandchildren call her.

For Cindy, faith is foundational. "I'm not a Catholic, but faith in God is very important to me. ... I want them to have that," she said. As such, she is helping to pay for her granddaughter's tuition at a Catholic school.

All of us are fortunate that the majority of our grandchildren reside within a 25-mile radius of our homes. Sharing our gifts as grandmothers, we agreed that courage, confidence, and creativity were all characteristics that we want to nurture in our grandbabies.

Moments to Relish

Recently, my 6-year-old granddaughter Maria played the harmonica while a hummingbird visited in the backyard. She loves discovering a raspberry, cherry tomato, or freshly plucked fig from Grandma's tree. While amused at the tiny hummingbirds, her favorite birds of choice are flamingos.

Four-year-old Piers enjoys when I sit nearby as he plays with his collection of Thomas the Tank Engine and friends. He's a fan of button-down shirts, chocolate, and my banana bread.

They are little teachers reminding us that life is beautiful, wonderful, awesome, and magical.

Three-year-old Ada likes puzzles, Paw Patrol, and anything with unicorns. Actually, she's an animal aficionado, so my gift of a wooden Noah's ark complete with two giraffes, elephants, zebras, and more was a hit. She also won't shy away from a Starbucks cake pop.

Ten-month-old Harrison is all wiggles

up when they go skipping. I will say that it is often emotional to see my babies now with babies of their own. Another generation of children is now before me that I can hug, hold, and spoil with abandon.

The official flower for National Grandparents Day is the "forget-me-not." How appropriate. I hope that they all grow up with wonderful memories of us, and that we can give to them the joy that they give to us each time we see them.

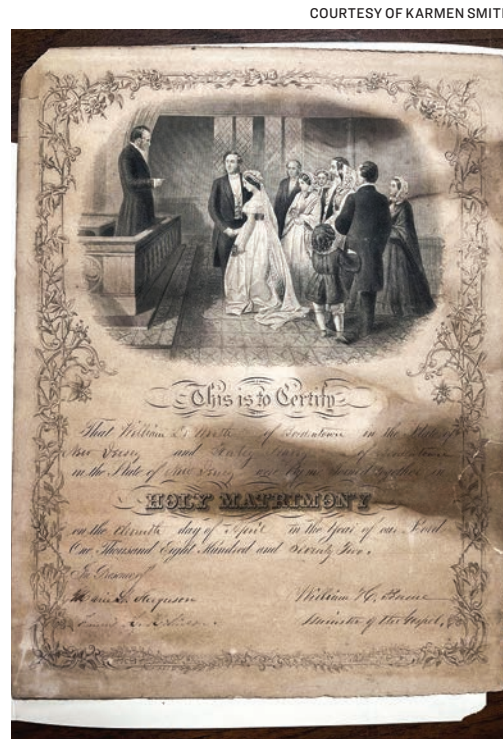
Our children, their parents, have the hard task of raising them and doing it with heart. Having been down that road, one that we are still traveling with adult children, we don't envy them.

Selfishly, we are very grateful for the gift of these "grands" and for our new journeys in life as grandmothers.

Anita L. Sherman is an award-winning journalist who has more than 20 years of experience as a writer and editor for local papers and regional publications in Virginia. She now works as a freelance writer and is working on her first novel. She is the mother of three grown children and grandmother to four, and she resides in Warrenton, Va. Anita can be reached at anitajustwrite@gmail.com



Cindy Legg loves gardening and particularly sharing the harvest with granddaughter Brooklyn.



(Left) The picture that was donated to Hope Chest Store in Bolivia, N.C. (Middle) The marriage certificate that was discovered in the back of the donated painting. (Top right) (R) Irene Cornish's great-grandfather William Tindall DeWorth. (Bottom right) Irene Cornish's great-grandmother Katey (Katharine) Havey DeWorth (first R).

Family Ties

Marriage certificate from 1875 discovered in thrift shop, given to couple's great-granddaughter

DAKSHA DEVNANI

A 146-year-old marriage certificate that was discovered in a thrift store has found its home, thanks to a plea on Facebook. On July 26, Pam Phelps, an assistant manager at Hope Chest Thrift Store in Bolivia, North Carolina, began cleaning an old donated picture of a little girl putting flowers in a black dog's collar. When she opened the back of the frame, she discovered a hidden marriage certificate for a New Jersey couple. The date of the vows was April 11, 1875. She kept it aside to show it to Karmen Smith, the executive director of Hope Harbor Home, Brunswick

County's domestic violence program and shelter, which operates three thrift stores.

The next day, when Smith visited the store, she became aware of the find.

"My brain immediately went into overdrive thinking of all the many reasons that this document would have been hidden," Smith told The Epoch Times. "My curious mind had to know the answers."

She then began her research and posted a Facebook plea with the picture of the painting and the marriage certificate.

"Alright Facebook world, I need a miracle

... How cool would it be if we could find the family of this couple?!? Let's see what we can do! Please share share share!" she wrote.

Not long after the plea went up, people began guessing the names and trying to piece everything together.

"It was then that I got a message from Connie Knox, a local genealogist with a YouTube channel focused on things such as this," Smith said. "After a weekend of research and some Ancestry.com posts, the great-granddaughter, Irene Cornish from New York Mills, New York, was found."



Irene Cornish. COURTESY OF NANCY L. FORD VIA IRENE CORNISH

Cornish, 65, who grew up in Maryland, had logged into Ancestry.com to find information about another family member when she was notified of three messages from different people telling her to check out Smith's Facebook post. Meanwhile, the staff at Ancestry.com had enhanced the image and found the names of the couple: William T. DeWorth and Katey Havey.

"They searched for those names in Ancestry and found me through my family tree," Cornish said. She immediately went to Facebook to see the post. At that moment, Cornish

couldn't believe she was looking at her great-grandparents' marriage certificate. "I was so excited that I was shaking," said Cornish, who was given the same middle name as her great-grandmother. "It felt like my family was reaching out to me in some way."

"It is wonderful to be reconnected with my great-grandparents and my heritage in this way."

The idea of "giving someone something as special as this is an incredible feeling," said Smith, for whom family has always been important.

Cornish marveled at the unique circumstances that made this happen and believes that if she hadn't visited the website at the right time, she wouldn't have known about the certificate.

However, Cornish, who was born after her great-grandparents died, is unaware of how exactly they met. She just knows about them from the stories that were passed down to her by her mother.

According to Cornish, her great-grandmother Katey, and Katey's sister, Annie, had come to Bordentown, New Jersey, from Ireland, and they worked as domestic servants to pay back the cost of their passage to the United States.

Cornish's great-grandfather, William Tindall DeWorth, was working as a mechanic in the same place. Apart from working at the American Bridge Co. for 30 years, DeWorth had side jobs and interests, such as a ventriloquist act and a fire-eating act, and he had built a Ferris wheel that he would take to carnivals.

"I think they must have made an amazing couple," Cornish said.

Insistent on retrieving the document and meeting the people who helped connect her to this family treasure, Cornish flew down to North Carolina on Aug. 22.

She plans to make copies of the marriage certificate and share them with her relatives. As for the original marriage certificate, Cornish plans to display it in her house for a while, then donate it to the Bordentown Historical Society if they show interest.

"I would like to see it preserved in some way. It is a unique piece of New Jersey history," Cornish said.

Share your stories with us at emg.inspired@epochtimes.com, and get your daily dose of inspiration by signing up for the Epoch Inspired newsletter at TheEpochTimes.com/newsletter

TRAVEL

Life in Naples

WILHELM HOJER

Naples is the third-largest city in Italy after Rome and Milan, but during its nearly 3,000-year history, it has never been the favorite child of the Italian peninsula. Accustomed to making it on its own, it has grown robust, but it's a bit rough around the edges.

The streets are based on an ancient Greco-Roman order: Three parallel streets running east-west are intersected by a series of smaller streets running north-south, of which one is Via Duomo, where the medieval Il Duomo, also known as Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary, rises over the rooftops.

From the harbor of the Bay of Naples, you can walk down Via Duomo into the heart of the city and sit down with a coffee at Caffè del Duomo to study the public square in the cathedral's shadow.

Each afternoon, the square turns into a soccer pitch for the young boys of the neighborhood, as they kick a soccer ball against its pillars. That modern picture against an ancient backdrop is a fitting metaphor for life in Naples.

Beyond the square, the cathedral protects a chapel with the relics of one of the city's beloved patron saints, San Gennaro. The chapel is officially owned by the city and its people, rather than the church.

The border between the church and state is marked at the entrance by a large iron gate crowned by a bust of San Gennaro, and on the floor is the seal of Naples before each of the three altars. A large collection of gold, silver, and jewels, donated by the faithful as votive gifts of thanksgiving, are kept in an adjacent room.

The Greco-Roman city-states must be given the honor for giving us the public square, the marketplace, as something



In the distance, Mount Vesuvius is ever present.

more than a space for public commerce. The idea that the marketplace is the town's living room—a room for both lounging and study, for relaxation and education—has very ancient roots. The history of Socrates, for example, shows us how close the connections have been between the birth of the public marketplace and the birth of political morality and philosophy.

The Greek marketplace, the agora, was the living room for the Socratic school of philosophy. Because the marketplace is a public room that people share, it also becomes a classroom to study human behavior. Socrates didn't sit at home and write; he walked around outside and mingled with people in the agora in Athens. He wasn't even a public speaker; he was having conversations and asking questions of those he met in the marketplace. Though he was sentenced to death, his dialogues, writ-

ten down by Plato, remain with us. Even today, his perennial questions continue to be repeated in conversations in every marketplace.

The marketplace is a rich image in our culture. In his famous painting "The School of Athens," Raphael depicted Plato and Aristotle talking to each other during a daily stroll through a busy marketplace. Religion, philosophy, and political rhetoric still fight for public space today—just listen to the sounds of Naples!

To study that phenomenon further, you can leave Via Duomo and walk down Via dei Tribunali. Pick any table under the vaulted porticos before the marketplaces, order a local margherita pizza, and open your eyes and ears to that cacophony, that symphony.

Soccer fans gesticulating on their way to the stadium, priests in cassocks, traveling musicians, jugglers, street artists, busi-

nessmen calling out for customers, street sweepers, and people having political discussions all fight for their space—and the marketplace. Inside the coffee bars, the voices of the people speak either about "Maradona" or "La Madonna," for soccer and religion are the two lungs of Naples.

Those squares, some makeshift, not larger than a street, are all over the city and give us the space to be free people. Though Vesuvius may loom overhead, though death is ever-present, life is protected and celebrated in this beautiful city under the Cathedral of Naples.

Journalist Wilhelm Hojer is a Swedish native who studied philosophy and journalism at the Angelicum in Rome. In 2020 he began teaching at the classical Christian school Lindisfarne Hall on Amelia Island, where he and his wife Sally live with their son Crispin.

COURTESY OF TERI GREUEY MCGREW VIA JAMES MCGRATH



COURTESY OF JAMES MCGRATH



(Above) Craftsman James McGrath sculpted two giant bald eagles for his client, Vietnam veteran Ron Hall. (Left) James McGrath from McConnelsville, Ohio.

Ohio Man Sculpts Massive Wooden Bald Eagles to Honor Veterans

EPOCH INSPIRED STAFF

The majestic beauty of the American bald eagle never fails to inspire true patriots. A craftsman has drawn from that classic inspiration by carving two massive wooden bald eagle sculptures, which were recently honored during a flag-raising ceremony.

James McGrath, a local craftsman from McConnelsville, Ohio, sculpted the giant bald eagles, titled "Fly By" and "Freedom," for his client, Vietnam War veteran Ron Hall.

The impressive project, symbolizing the strength and freedom of the United States, was undertaken to honor veterans for their selfless service.

"These are some of the largest bald eagle carvings in the world," McGrath told The Epoch Times.

Hall and McGrath's project, which started around the Fourth of July and has since grown significantly, was conceived as a personal venture, but it didn't take long for local residents to notice the mighty sculptures slowly coming to life. Once the carvings were complete, the crowd of admirers only grew.

McGrath said he was humbled by the public's overwhelming response.

McGrath had gotten the idea to make use of a large tree stump to do an especially large carving. Hall encouraged him, telling him he had the ability and to go ahead and "just make it," so McGrath transformed the stump into a 12/12-foot soaring bald eagle stand-alone.

Carving both eagles took about a week to 10 days, with 8 hours of work each day, according to McGrath.

"A lot of people are taking interest in it. ... If it satisfies the community that much, I'm all for it," he said.

The sculptures have been attracting traffic to the area ever since. On Aug. 13, they were displayed in their full glory after being honored in a special official flag-raising ceremony.

McGrath said it was amazing to have the veteran color guard do the official flag-raising and to see how much the community loved the project.

"I think this is a wonderful addition for some people to really understand what our country is here for," Hall told WTAP-TV.

Chasing A's

Grades aren't all that matter

BERNADETTE BONANNO

Every fall, my husband Mike and I sit outside with our morning coffee and watch the neighborhood kids sprint down the street to catch the school bus. Each year, I consider writing this story and then lament the thought of digging up old regrets.

Away from home as a college freshman, I messed up academically. It took the following three years to undo the damage to my GPA (grade point average). So when I went to grad school, I resolved with unwavering determination to get a 4.0.

There were a variety of activities to explore on and off campus, and I witnessed other grad students managing a healthy balance between studying and pursuing new interests. Being of average intelligence, I studied constantly in order to achieve my goal. With blinders on, I "chased the A." When I graduated, I had my transcript.

Don't get me wrong. Grades are important. I know this from experience with our four sons who are now, all in their 30s, realizing the benefits of graduating from college.

But some kids are motivated by excelling academically and some aren't. Grades might get you into a better college but knowing who you are and what you're naturally gifted to do has life-long benefits. This can only be discovered by spending time doing things that inherently interest you.

Undoubtedly, parents need to set up guidelines and reasonable expectations for academic achievement. Yet over the years, I've been approached by many frustrated moms and dads who fell into the same trap I did and stressed over less-than-stellar report cards. I always suggest they climb out as soon as possible!

I hovered over our oldest son's academic

performance under the guise of "a conscientious parent." In a nutshell, I wanted him to "chase the A" while he wanted to develop his many interests. In an effort to persuade him, I'd repeat the annual open house speech his well-meaning principle gave, about grades being contingent on 10 percent talent and 90 percent hard work. Can you picture me? How ridiculous!

Our boys played a lot of sports and were often team captains. Unlike their mom, they were blessed with natural athleticism.

I marveled at our third son, a goalie for the soccer team, who instilled confidence in his teammates while playing his position with patience and grace. He'd move into the path of the opposing team's ball and direct it away from the goal line. He had a unique perspective because he could see the entire field.

After two years of nitpicking, I learned to avoid the "A-Trap" and instead play "goalie" with our boys' education. I knew the importance, so I guided the field strategy while defending the goal.

Some kids are motivated by excelling academically and some aren't.

My intention was to raise them in concert with their natural predispositions instead of trying to mold them into mine or those of the media. While limiting TV and computer games as much as I could, I was fascinated with their curiosity, creativity, and ability to entertain themselves.

Many years have passed. Now we have grandkids who sprint down the street to catch the bus. This morning, while sitting on the porch, sipping our coffee, I recalled falling into the "A-Trap." My husband, who knows how to handle the past with a touch of humor, lifted his mug and said with a smile, "We'll get it all right in our next life."

Bernadette Bonanno lives in Albany, N.Y.



(Above) Frescoes by Domenichino adorn the Royal Chapel of the Treasure of San Gennaro. (Above right) Il Duomo is also known as the Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary. (Right) The central nave of the Naples Cathedral.



(Above) Soccer—one of the city's great passions. (Above right) Pizza at Sorbillo in Naples, Italy. (Right) Neapolitan coffee makes use of a signature flip coffee pot that is used on the stovetop. (Far right) Via dei Tribunali in the historic center of Napoli.





Reading and talking to infants early in their development can significantly improve their cognitive abilities.

PARENTING MATTERS

The Benefits of Reading to Toddlers and Preschoolers

PARNELL DONAHUE

Many years ago, a teen girl brought her 6-month-old baby to see me because he cried a lot and Mom was worried. We talked about the baby's symptoms, his care and diet, and I began to examine him. As I felt his belly, I asked, "Does your tummy hurt?"

Mom laughed. "Babies can't talk!" she exclaimed. "You're right," I said. "They can't, but they can hear, and they learn to talk from hearing people talk to them."

I assured Mom that baby wasn't sick and we talked about ways to comfort him. Then we had a long talk about the importance of talking and reading to babies.

Hopefully, after our discussion, she left with new ideas about talking and reading to her baby.

Children begin to learn early, even before they're born, and 90 percent of their brain growth occurs by age 3. Their personalities, learning style, and many of their values are formed by the age of 6. Parents have a major role in a child's character formation. Kids without a father in the home are more prone to deviant behavior and are slower learners than those from a two-parent home.

Shortly after seeing the young woman and her baby, I came across an article explaining that children whose caregivers talk with them not only talk earlier, but are better students, and are more successful throughout their lives than those who have little speech contact with adults. The article also said that kids who are read to as infants do better in school than those who rarely saw the inside of a book. Furthermore, reading to infants before the age of 9 months was determined to be the only difference between a group of students that graduated high school with honors and a group that didn't graduate.

I have been quoting that article for more than a half-century, and no longer have a copy, but reading to kids of any age makes sense. As a pediatrician, I have seen that old thesis proven again and again.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Council on Early Childhood in a 2014 policy statement wrote, "All families need to hear the important message that reading aloud to their children is crucial, especially in an era in which competing entertainment imperatives, such as screen time (television, cinema, video games, and computers), may limit family interactions and live language exposures of even very young children."

They also advised pediatricians to partner "with other child advocates to influence national messaging and policies that support and promote these key early shared-reading experiences."

Recently, the AAP's scientific journal, *Pediatrics*, published four articles on the importance of reading to toddlers and preschoolers. Two of the studies involved children in Dolly Parton's Imagination Li-

Children begin to learn early, even before they are born, and 90 percent of their brain growth occurs by age 3.

Early Reading Programs

To donate to or enroll your child or grandchild in one of these wonderful organizations, see the contact information below.

Reach Out and Read
89 South St., Suite 201
Boston, MA 02111
617-455-0600
ReachOutAndRead.org

The Dollywood Foundation
111 Dollywood Lane
Pigeon Forge, TN
37863
865-428-9606
ImaginationLibrary.com



Exposing children to books early will help them develop into lifelong readers.

brary and those in the Reach Out and Read program. The others were commentaries on the studies.

One study concluded that "a program combining literacy anticipatory guidance at clinic visits and more books in the home can potentially improve kindergarten readiness."

The other study in this issue showed that reading to infants and preschoolers also delays their "addiction" to screens. It went on to say that "greater screen use at 24 months was associated with lower reading at 36 months [and] 60 months."

Reading to infants and preschoolers is essential because it calms and relaxes kids, it easily becomes a bed-time ritual that makes going to bed a happy time, it has a large impact on children's later academic achievement, and it promotes important parent-child engagement during sensitive periods of development, but, best of all, it nourishes the love between reader and child.

Readers may be aware that Dolly Parton's father was illiterate, and because of this, she wanted to do all she could to help kids learn to read. She began by sending a book to every baby born in her county in east Tennessee at birth and every month until they turned 5. Soon Tennessee's governor made all Tennessee kids eligible for this excellent program.

A big thank you to Dolly Parton! She has often said she has a big, happy heart, and she demonstrated her generosity by establishing the Imagination Library in 1995. Through it, 160 million books were sent to 1.8 million children in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland.

A similar program, Reach Out and Read (ROR), was started 30 years ago by Drs. Robert Needlman and Barry Zuckerman, who observed that many of their youngest patients were missing out on opportunities for development in the critical first years of life.

Today, 34,000 pediatric clinicians at 6,400 clinical locations nationally distribute the books at their well-child visits. Every year, they reach 4.8 million children and families and distribute more than 7.4 million children's books. Fifty percent of the books go to low-income families.

Because of Dolly's Imagination Library, and the Reach Out and Read program, no child should be deprived of the benefits of being read to as an infant. I'm hopeful the baby boy I saw many years ago has his grandkids enrolled in one of these programs and reads to them every day.

Dr. Parnell Donahue is a pediatrician, military veteran, author of four books, and the blog ParentingWithDrPar.com, and host of WBOU's "Parenting Matters" show. He and his wife, Mary, have four adult children; all hold doctorates, two also are MDs. Contact him at Parenting-Matters.com

Homeschooling Through the Hard Days

BARBARA DANZA

Even the biggest proponents of homeschooling know that, like anything else in life, there will be good days and there will be bad days. When things get hard, it's helpful to have a game plan on deck to pull you through.

Whether there's sickness in the family, the boiler is on the fritz, your child is refusing to do any math ever again, or the state of the world is weighing heavily on your heart—the days that are less than magical can make any homeschool mom or dad feel like the whole experiment is a giant failure. Of course, one problem, even if it drags on for days or more, doesn't call for the suspension of all homeschooling efforts. The insecurity parents can harbor regarding their ability to homeschool tends to rear its head at the most unhelpful times.

When trouble comes, though, having a few go-to activities for the kids and mind-set habits for yourself to fall back on can turn mountains into molehills. Here are some ideas.

Reading Day

When it's all breaking down and you can tell that the day's regular lessons just aren't going to happen without massive amounts of struggle and frustration, declare it Reading Day! What is Reading Day, you might ask? Well, you may define the parameters any way you like—perhaps it involves a quick trip to the library (or simply your own bookshelf), pajamas all day, calming instrumental music in the background, lovely smelling candles, treats on hand, and screens nowhere in sight. Fundamentally, though, for the entire day, everyone is invited to ignore the regularly scheduled program and read all day. The kids read independently, you read aloud, or an audio-book plays while they craft—it all counts. For sure, there will be little sacrificed in terms of learning, but hearts and minds will be nurtured and refreshed.

Snow Day

When reading isn't going to cut it, regardless of the actual weather outside, declare it a snow day. If school can do it, so can you: "School's canceled, kids. Go outside and play!" Immediately turn whatever the problem is into a memory you'll all cherish.

Just the Basics

If your regular homeschool days are filled with math, reading, writing, history, crafts, experiments, and extracurriculars, there will definitely be days when you'll need to simply stick to the basics and skip the extras. If you find yourself with a lot on your plate, a poor night's sleep, an unexpected visitor, or anything that cuts into your homeschool plan, just cover the basics: math and language arts. Knowing your bare minimum can go a long way toward putting your mind at ease.

Break

Sometimes life throws us big curveballs. That's when you need to pause homeschooling altogether and take a break. Encourage your kids to play and craft and read to their heart's content while you take care of what you need to do. You may be surprised how educational and inspiring such free time will turn out for your children.

Review Your Purpose

When life gets you down, and especially when you doubt your ability to succeed at homeschooling your children, review the reasons you chose this route to begin with. Consider the blessings that homeschooling is affording your family. Recognize the deep connections your family enjoys.

Homeschooling is a commitment, an act of love, and an endeavor that doesn't bear fruit instantly, but may turn out to be one of the most impactful decisions you make in your life.

When the hard days come, and they will, stay the course and keep the faith.



Have a plan B in place for days when everything falls apart.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

THE City Mouse AND THE Country Mouse

Adapted by W.T. Larned from La Fontaine's Fables

A City Mouse, with ways polite,
A Country Mouse invited
To sup with him and spend the night.
Said Country Mouse: "De—lighted!"
In truth it proved a royal treat,
With everything that's good to eat

Alas! When they had just begun
To gobble their dinner,
A knock was heard that made them run.
The City Mouse seemed thinner.
And as they scampered and turned tail,
He saw the Country Mouse grow pale.

The knocking ceased. A false alarm!
The City Mouse grew braver.
"Come back!" he cried. "No, no! The farm
Where I'll not quake or quaver,
Suits me," replied the Country Mouse.
"You're welcome to your city house."

WHY DID THE FARMER BURY HIS MONEY?

JACEK SKROK/SHUTTERSTOCK

"Agriculture ... is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals, and happiness."

THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826), AMERICAN FOUNDING FATHER, THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

ESS PROFESSIONAL/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 15

(BACKGROUND, FRAME, NATURE) SHUTTERSTOCK; (THE WOLF AND THE LAMB) ANCESTRYIMAGES.COM; (THE FOX AND THE BOAR) ANCESTRYIMAGES.COM

NATURE IN STORY

HAVE YOU noticed how many stories utilize the characteristics of nature to get their points across?

Perhaps the most iconic example of this is Aesop's Fables.

These are the short tales by Aesop, an Ancient Greek slave, who, using simple animals, expounded on profound and universal ideas and morals. Here are some examples of his fables that still ring true today.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

A wolf came upon a stray lamb bathing in a stream. The wolf was hungry, but the lamb looked so pitiful there that the wolf thought he needed to justify his action.

"You there! You must be punished for muddying the stream that I was drinking!"

"But sir," said the lamb, "How could I muddy your water, while I am downstream from you?"

"You did muddy it, anyway!" said the wolf, "and, besides, you spread rumors about me last year."

"How could I?" said the lamb, "I was just born this year."

"Well, it was your brother."

"I have no brothers."

"Well, it was some of your family, anyway," said the wolf, "and I am hungry."

Then, he carried the poor lamb away for his breakfast.

The tyrant will always find an excuse for tyranny.

The unjust will not listen to the reasoning of the innocent.

THE FOX AND THE BOAR

A fox stood by a boar, who busily sharpened his tusks on a tree stump, for a long time. The fox, eager to taunt any of his acquaintances, made fun of the boar.

"Why do you sharpen your tusks like this? There is no danger that I could see. Why not have fun in this peaceful time, like I do?"

"I will not have time to do this, when an enemy comes. If my tusks are not sharp, I shall pay dearly.

Preparedness for war is the best guarantee of peace.

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: $6 + (7 \times 3) + 1 = 28$ and $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$

Easy puzzle 1	Medium puzzle 1	Hard puzzle 1
5 7 44 2 5 + - × ÷	13 17 65 1 16 + - × ÷	9 35 48 7 20 + - × ÷
Solution For Easy 1 $5 - 2 \times (2 + 9)$	Solution for Medium 1 $1 + 91 \times (81 - 22)$	Solution for Hard 1 $56 - 02 \times 2 + 6$

Down

- Beef or pork alternative (7)
- In farms near the ocean (6)
- Gaggle on a farm (5)
- Heifers' mates (5)
- This farm animal may help herd cattle (3)
- Found on an Australian farm (9)
- Farmed for bait (4)
- This farm animal may live in a stable (5)
- Wool producer (5)
- Waggle dancer (3)

Across

- Found on a Saharan farm? (6)
- Found on a very wet farm? (4)
- This "farm" might produce eggs (4)
- Andean farm animals (6)
- These animals used to help plow (4)
- Greatest (animal) Of All Time (4)
- Mouser on a farm (3)
- Animals at a Lapland farm (8)
- Milk dispensers (4)
- Cottontail (6)
- Poultry farm animal (6)
- In America, you can't farm these migratory animals (4)
- Potbellied pet on a farm (3)

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