

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION



BIBAKA VEWICH

FAMILY

## Raising Girls to Be Real Women

Teach them to build internal character and good relationships with advice from an American literary classic

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

I recently wrote an article providing some forgotten tips on how to raise boys to be real men. But boys aren't the only sex that we need help raising. Boys are getting sucked into the feminist vortex of our culture, but that vortex also is swallowing girls at perhaps an even greater frequency.

So how do we raise our girls to be real women, the kind who are loving, gentle, and kind, instead of brazen, brash, and self-centered?

For some insight, I turned to one of the most famous mothers in all of literature: Marmee March from Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women." In a conversation with her two oldest daughters, Meg and Jo, Marmee lays out her plan for raising and launching her daughters into the world—a plan that's a far cry from the feminist one we commonly hear today.

▲ Girls benefit from building good relationships with their parents, who act as confidants and a support structure.

**How do we raise our girls to be real women, the kind who are loving, gentle, and kind?**

Take Care of the External

Marmee's first advice revolves around external qualities, as she declares she wants her daughters to be beautiful and accomplished. These are both traits that our current society emphasizes greatly, encouraging cosmetic surgeries so girls can imitate the airbrushed models who appear on social media, or exhorting girls to get out there and break glass ceilings and outdo the men in education and achievements.

But given other clues in "Little Women," I would wager that the beauty Marmee would have us instill in today's girls is the beauty of true femininity. She would have us train our girls to dress modestly but not in a frumpy fashion, to put on a skirt or dress that is "tight enough to show you're a woman and loose enough to show you're a lady," as Academy Award-winning costume designer Edith Head once said.

Continued on Page 2

ENTERTAINMENT

## Pure Flix: Opening the Curtain on Faith-Based Films

The genesis story of the actor and family-friendly streaming service that produced 'God's Not Dead'

DAVE PAONE

"Our goal is to make films that uplift and inspire the human spirit, that ultimately bring people to higher levels of insight to who God is and the purpose that he has for their lives."

That's the mission statement of Pure Flix—the production company and on-demand streaming service behind the "God's Not Dead" film franchise—as told to The Epoch Times by one of its founders, actor David A.R. White.

Mennonite Upbringing

White was born in Dodge City, Kansas, the son of a Mennonite preacher.

"I grew up conservative. We didn't drink, dance, smoke," he said. "I saw one movie in the theater the first 18 years of my life."

At age 8, unbeknownst to his parents, a friend's family took White to see "Grease." After viewing Olivia Newton-John's wardrobe at the end of the film, he concluded, "I, for sure, thought I was going to hell."

"Entertainment didn't really exist in the Mennonite Church," he said. "Other than music. Music was very big."

Television was allowed in White's household, but his viewing was limited.

"They wouldn't allow me to watch 'Dukes of Hazzard,'" he said, although all his friends were allowed to watch. This didn't make the young White happy.

Movies fascinated White, and, upon graduation from high school, he "wanted to explore" entertainment. He attended college at Chicago's Moody Bible Institute as a communications major.

"That was the closest I could get to any entertainment," he said. "They had radio!"

All the elders in his family had graduated from Moody, and also had met their significant others there.

Continued on Page 3

COURTESY OF PURE PUBLICITY



Actor-filmmaker David A.R. White.

FAMILY

# Raising Girls to Be Real Women

Continued from Page 1

Marmee would also have us teach our girls to polish their talents—not so that they can lord them over men, but so that they can use them to help and support those around them.

## Cultivate Internal Character

Marmee moves from external characteristics to internal character, mentioning that she wants her daughters to be good and respected, to be “happy, beloved, contented,” and to avoid being “without self-respect and peace.”

Marmee knows that building character takes time, and that parents themselves need to start early to model good character and work on fighting their own flaws—in Marmee’s case, her quick temper—if they want to ensure that their daughters live good and respectable lives.

Teaching our girls to be happy and contented means not spoiling them with material goods or giving in to every demand, but rather teaching them to be grateful for what they do have.

## Steer Them Away From Materialism

In conjunction with being grateful, Marmee also teaches her girls not to be materially minded, exhorting them not to marry for money or seek to land a splendid house.

Marrying for money isn’t as much of a temptation in our day as it might have been in the 1800s, but chasing after material things is the same. Whether married or single, women are constantly told they must have it all: a good job, nice house, fancy car, and regular vacations to exotic places. If we want our daughters to be real women, then we must teach them what Marmee teaches her girls:

“Money is a needful and precious thing—and, when well used, a noble thing—but I never want you to think it is the first or only prize to strive for.”

## Pursue Good Family Relationships

While Marmee doesn’t want her girls to pursue excessive amounts of money, she does want them to pursue good relationships, particularly within the family.

“Mother is always ready to be your confidant, Father to be your friend,” she tells Meg and Jo, exhorting them to make their childhood home happy before they leave it for homes of their own someday.

Our daughters would benefit from a similar lesson. Today’s world often encourages them to make friends with and confide in anyone other than their parents. But building good relationships with Dad and Mom provides them with wise confidants and a sup-

Encourage girls to polish their talents so they can bless those around them.



BIBA KAYEWICH

**Teach her to love children and to respect men, instead of bashing both groups.**

port structure for the future, whether that future involves college, a career, or raising a family of their own.

## Teach Them to Be Marriage-Minded

The most prominent message Marmee gives her girls revolves around marriage. She notes her desire that her daughters “be well and wisely married” and encourages them to hope for and prepare themselves for such a position.

“To be loved and chosen by a good man is the best and sweetest thing which can happen to a woman; and I sincerely hope my girls may know this beautiful experience,” she says.

Even non-feminists may feel a scream rising in the throat at that declaration, for the idea that girls should just settle down and get married, even forgoing college and career, has become anathema in our day. But Marmee puts her finger on the very thing that has caused men to wonder where all the real women are: Namely, many contemporary women aren’t marriage-minded.

Raising a marriage-minded woman is a challenging task, but one of the most effective ways to do so is for parents to

model a good marriage for their daughter. Teach her to love children and to respect men, instead of bashing both groups and continually railing on all the problems each brings to women.

And finally, make sure she doesn’t view marriage with rose-colored glasses, but that she views it as a worthy calling. It’s hard work and takes a lot of loving sacrifice, but, as Marmee says, it’s a beautiful experience worth hoping for.

We live in a world far more chaotic and upside down than the one in which Marmee and her girls live. As society crumbles, it won’t be the materialistic girl who has her career and coffee order all figured out who will know how to respond when the crash comes. Instead, it will be the one with internal character, the one who has a love and interest in the most basic building block of society—the family—who will know how to begin rebuilding society gently and faithfully.

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LIDERINA/SHUTTERSTOCK



WISDOM

## Proverbs to Cherish: ‘Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder’

During the pandemic, we grew to value human connection more than ever—it’s just not the same via video, no matter how hard we try.

ANGELICA REIS

Recently, my husband had to take a job in another region for a few months. During that time, I felt more than ever the insightfulness of the proverb “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.” I used to think it was a bit of an overly affected saying, but now that I’ve experienced it fully, I no longer have that feeling.

Incredibly, this proverb has been with the Western world for more than 2,000 years. As with most proverbs, its history is fascinating and allows us not only to appreciate the long process of its passing down to us, but also the many eras of civilization it survived.

## From Rome to England

We can trace back the earliest form of the proverb to a Roman poet named Sextus Aurelius Propertius, who lived from about 50 B.C. to 15 B.C. In a work titled “Elegies,” he writes, “Semper in absentes felicitur aestus

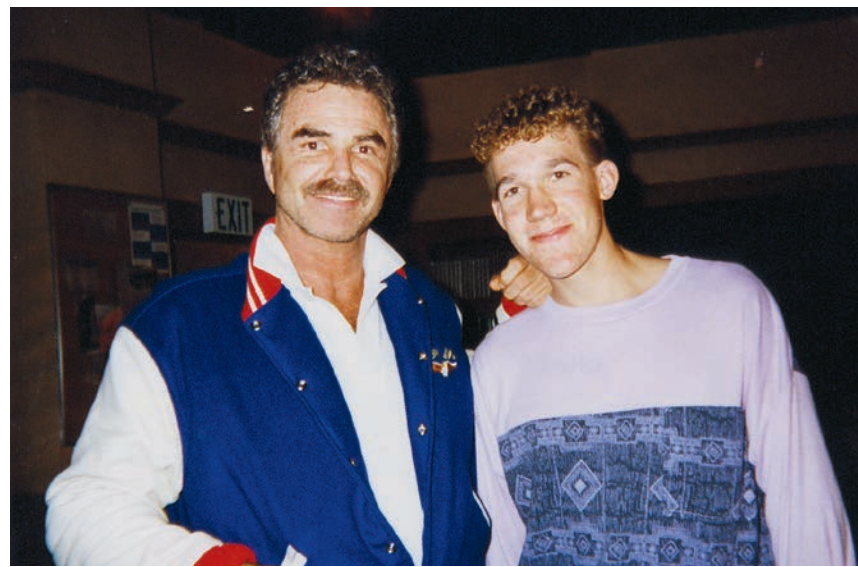
amantes,” which—in addition to sometimes being rendered in the modern form of the proverb we know—can be translated as “Passion is always warmer toward absent lovers.”

Over time, it has taken on different forms and appeared in a variety of contexts—poetry, songs, and so on. With a proverb this old, it’s hard to say exactly when it began appearing consistently in its current form. But the 1600s saw several appearances of it, in various forms, in print.

The first time it appeared in print in English may have been in 1602 as part of an anonymous poem in Francis Davison’s anthology “Poetical Rhapsody.” And in 1616, a variation of it was published in Thomas Overbury’s “Characters,” in which he writes, “Absence doth sharpen love; presence strengthens it.”

At that point, perhaps it was catching on—or, perhaps its various appearances just reflect a shared human experience—because

COURTESY OF DAVID A.R. WHITE



David A.R. White (R) as a young actor in the 1990s, with his mentor, Burt Reynolds.

ENTERTAINMENT

## Pure Flix: Opening the Curtain on Faith-Based Films

Continued from Page 1

“After one year, I basically called my dad to say, ‘Dad, I want to leave Bible school and I’m going to Hollywood to be an actor,’” White said.

## ‘Evening Shade’

White landed in Venice Beach, California, and crashed at the apartment of another actor he had met. He worked some odd jobs, including as a baggage handler at US Airways at Los Angeles International Airport and as a waiter at events at a Marriott.

Six months later, White’s big break came when he was hired as a background artist (called an “extra” at the time) for the primetime sitcom “Evening Shade” in 1991.

The series starred Burt Reynolds, who was a household name from the long list of feature films he made—most notably, “Deliverance.” The supporting cast included several other accomplished actors, including Marilu Henner (“Taxi”), Ossie Davis (“Do the Right Thing”), Hal Holbrook (“All the President’s Men”), and Charles Durning (“Dog Day Afternoon”).

“I had no idea who any of them were” at the time, White said.

During the rehearsal of a scene, he noticed what he described as a “dead spot” in the dialogue, and he ad-libbed a line.

This was a dangerous move. He was hired as an extra, and extras don’t speak on film. Once an actor has a line, his daily rate of pay goes up. Some directors, producers, and lead actors aren’t interested in ad-libbing extras, so it’s one way to get fired. Yet, it worked.

The line was kept in the episode and White stayed on as a recurring character. But that wasn’t the only result of his gutsy move.

Reynolds soon became a mentor to the inexperienced White. Now that White had a speaking role in the series, he had to join the Screen Actors Guild and pay the initiation fee of \$800, which the 19-year-old didn’t have.

“The first thing Reynolds did for him was to see to it that his pay rate for the episode was bumped up to a “three-day week,” which covered the cost.

“He was a great role model for me in the beginning,” White said of Reynolds. Never having had any formal training as an actor, he would rely on Reynolds for critiques after scenes were shot.

“He was like my Hollywood dad in a way,” White said.



“I definitely think there’s a need and a want for these films.”

David A.R. White, actor-filmmaker, Pure Flix

**They decided to form Pure Flix, which would be both a production and distribution company for faith-based films.**



COURTESY OF PURE PUBLICITY

## A Costly Mistake

Sitcoms are almost always shot in front of a live audience. One way the producers have of getting the audience to laugh is to introduce the cast a few minutes prior to the filming, putting them in a good mood and making them more likely to laugh at the jokes.

In one particular episode, the teens of the community (including White) were putting on a play in which they take on the roles of the adults.

White’s character was playing Reynolds’ character.

White was made up in a black wig and mustache, to resemble Reynolds’ recognizable look. Then he had an idea.

“I thought it would be funny if I stuck a big pillow in my stomach for the accent,” White said, because Reynolds had recently gained weight.

“At that time I had a repartee with Burt. I thought I was on solid ground,” he said.

White asked Reynolds if he could do it, and he replied, “Sure, kid. Sure.”

Reynolds introduced the cast to the studio audience, saving White for last and calling him his “discovery.”

White came out with a wig, mustache, and “the biggest pillow” he could find, looked at Reynolds, looked at his lower torso, gave it a pat, and then mimicked Reynolds’ laugh.

“He smiles but it’s this weird smile,” White said. “He ends up turning all of his rings around, putting his arm around me, and punching me in the ear in front of everybody as they’re all applauding and laughing.”

They shot the episode and Reynolds even ad-libbed a line about the size of his waistline.

“And then I got fired,” White said.

## Creating Pure Flix

In his early 20s, White began acting in faith-based, Christian films. They weren’t feature films; they were shorts for organizations such as Focus on the Family, Youth for Christ, and Concerned Women for America.

By the late 1990s, the market was successful enough for the production companies to make direct-to-video, feature-length films. In his late 20s, White and some buddies raised \$87,000 to finance a feature for this market.

When White was making his fourth faith-based feature, he met commercial producer Michael Scott and Russell Wolfe. They decided to form Pure Flix, which would be both a production and distribution company for faith-based films.

Production and distribution aren’t cheap.

Pure Flix needed to raise enough capital to make the movies and then get them seen.

“The biggest thing when raising money is finding people that will believe in your vision as well,” White said.

They found those people.

Pure Flix morphed into a streaming, video-on-demand service, which is the distribution half of the company. On the paid site, monthly or yearly subscribers can see original features and television series, which White describes as “faith and family content.”

As reported by The Epoch Times in June, the end-of-life, one-hour drama “Going Home” is one such example.

For another Pure Flix production, White needed someone to play his father. He emailed Reynolds and offered him the part. (White had apologized for his stunt more than 20 years before.) Reynolds accepted the offer, and White spent three days with him in Jupiter, Florida, recording his voiceover.

All was forgiven. Reynolds died about a year later, in 2018. Wolfe died from ALS in 2015. Liz Travis has since joined Pure Flix as a partner.

## John Schneider Studios

John Schneider is another actor-turned-producer, whose first television series, “The Dukes of Hazzard,” ran for six years starting in 1979, when Schneider was 18.

In an ironic twist, Pure Flix may have been an inspiration for John Schneider Studios and its Cineflix Digital on Demand streaming service—ironic because “The Dukes of Hazzard” was the series the young White most wanted to watch but was forbidden to.

Schneider considers himself a conservative and a Christian, and his long, successful career began to falter once those facts became public in the entertainment industry, as reported by The Epoch Times in September.

White hired Schneider for “Hidden Secrets” in 2006, thereby introducing him to do-it-yourself entertainment.

“John was in our first movie that we shot for Pure Flix,” White said. “He liked what we were doing, and he liked this idea that he could be in control.”

Schneider has since acted in several Pure Flix productions, and White anticipates more in the future.

In 2020, Sony/Affirm acquired Pure Flix and finances its current productions.

White credits the 2004 feature film “The Passion of the Christ” for illustrating the public’s “large hunger for faith-based content.”

“I definitely think there’s a need and a want for these films,” he said.

Actor-filmmaker David A.R. White (R) on location in Thailand during the shooting of his feature film “The Encounter 2: Paradise Lost.”



Alojz Markus with the two cats that his son, Josip, brought with him when he moved back home to help his father.

## FAMILY

## Son Becomes Caregiver for Father With Parkinson's

When elderly Alojz Markus developed Parkinson's, his son sold everything and came back home

## LOUISE CHAMBERS

When his father, who has advanced Parkinson's disease, lost the ability to live by himself, a California man returned to his childhood home in Ohio, pledging to take care of his father until the end.

Josip Markus, 48, told *The Epoch Times*: "It was clear that he needed my support. My father said, 'I would rather go to a funeral home than a nursing home.'"

**'He's Slowly Declining'**

In 2006, Josip, the only son of his father, Alojz Markus, was in graduate school when he received a phone call from his dad in tears. Alojz had fallen at work when the left side of his body gave out. Josip rushed home and accompanied his father to numerous doctor's visits over several months before they received the diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

"It was devastating for him," Josip said. "Until that point, he had never lost control of his body. Ultimately, he could no longer work, and I remember he was very emotional about that."

Alojz was placed on a medication regimen that helped stabilize his symptoms. He was independent, even driving himself, for several years after that. During this time, Josip visited his father whenever he could.

However, in 2019, Josip—a globetrotting conscious living and leadership coach—realized that his father suddenly had difficulty being by himself. During their conversations, Alojz told his son that he never wanted to be put away in a nursing home.

"I'm his only family," Josip said. "My father doesn't do well with unfamiliar environments or with strangers."

Following a retreat early that year, Josip felt an intuitive calling to return to Willowick, Ohio, to be with his father, who's now 78. He sold his California home and most of his possessions and braced himself for a new way of life.

"He was my rock my whole life," he said. "Our roles were just beginning to reverse for the first time."

Parkinson's disease affects each person differently. For Alojz, it affects speech and mobility; he has trouble initiating speaking and walking and can quickly lose his balance. Josip encourages him to get out of bed every morning to start his day, prepares his meals, drives him, and assists him with various activities of daily living.

"He's slowly declining, and I gradually have to do more and more to support him," he said.

**Magical Moments**

The pair, who live close to Lake Erie, spend their afternoons walking and talking to each other at a lakefront park that's a 5-minute drive from their house. Afterward, they often visit a local Turkish restaurant to order the elderly man's favorite snack: French fries. In the evenings, they usually watch a movie or a show together.

"Sometimes, what we're watching will trigger a memory of something in his life

and he'll start sharing a story. These are precious moments for us," Josip said. "Sometimes, memories are painful for him and he starts to cry. I just listen and hold space for him to share so that he can process his feelings and grieve if he needs to. That's what our days are like."

Josip is not the only member of the household who supports his father. He brought his two cats with him when he moved from California. The eldest, Cocoa, has a soft spot for its elderly housemate and helps keep him entertained while Josip is busy working or running errands.

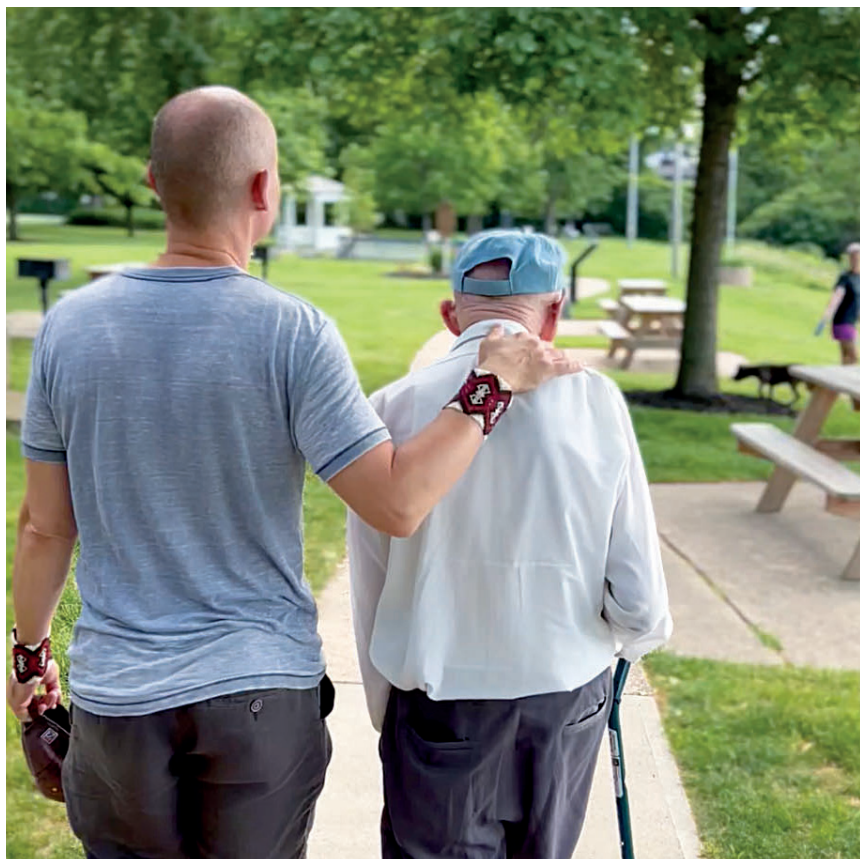
Every morning, Alojz helps feeds the cats and checks their litterbox; caring for someone else helps keep his mind off his illness. One day, a friend of Josip's who was visiting caught a magical moment between Cocoa and Alojz on camera. As the elderly man sat, the cat gently and lovingly kneaded his arm while Josip caressed his father's shoulder. The clip went viral on Instagram.

"My father was having a tough moment, either a hard time breathing or just feeling very uncomfortable," Josip said. "I strongly believe in energy healing, and by grounding myself and putting my hand on him, I could help ease his struggle."

Witnessing Josip do this, Cocoa followed suit. "It was just a very raw, vulnerable moment of real life as a caregiver," Josip told *The Epoch Times*, adding that with all the heartfelt comments he's received from people around the world, it brings him peace to know he's not alone.

**100 Percent Dependent**

Josip's role as his father's caregiver intensified in February 2022, when Alojz fell in his bedroom and broke his right humerus. He had surgery a couple of weeks later and was fitted with a metal plate and 12 screws to hold the bone together. Without



Josip Markus (L) helping his father Alojz Markus (R) to walk, as Alojz's Parkinson's has made it more difficult for him to keep his balance.

**While his father's sickness is not something he can control, he can—and does—choose to cherish their remaining time together.**



Alojz Markus (L) and his son, Josip Markus (R), who has been his in-home caretaker since 2019.

his independence, while his arm healed, the 78-year-old grew yet frailer.

"He was 100 percent dependent on me for everything," Josip said. "Every time he needed something, I came right away. That really, I believe, showed him that I would do anything for him. We saw how deep and strong the love and the bond between us is."

With his father's needs greater than ever, Josip surrendered to their situation and all the past unresolved tension between them dissolved.

He reflected: "In the beginning, we triggered each other a lot. I would annoy him, and he would annoy me, as we learned to live with each other again; two very different personalities."

As he continued to stay with his father, he navigated through the different challenges.

"Growing up, it was always, 'Do what dad says,' so it took me some time to embody being my own man and not just his son. I began to hold very clear boundaries with him," he said. "Sometimes that would make him cry, or it would be an emotional exchange, but our dynamic changed positively. Now, we have a tremendously peaceful relationship with each other."

**'I'll Do Anything for Him'**

Alojz was born in Croatia and grew up in a small, impoverished village, Roženica, close to the capital. He came to the United States in 1967 as a political refugee. Soon after Josip was born, Alojz became embroiled in a 4-year divorce battle with Josip's mother, culminating in him receiving full custody of his son.

"He worked really hard in a factory to be able to provide a living for me," Josip said. "He was my everything; he was an incredible father. He's always been very kind, very thoughtful. He loved to fix things. When something was broken, he would start to tinker and try to figure out how to fix it. That's how I've always thought of him."

In making sacrifices to raise his son, Alojz modeled unconditional love. As a caregiver for the past three-plus years, Josip has had the chance to reflect that same love back to his father. "He's the most important man in the world to me, and I'll do anything for him," he said.

"My dad was not very emotionally expressive when I was growing up, but he has become incredibly so over these past couple of years. He feels very deeply, but he's of a generation and a culture where he didn't learn how to communicate his feelings. I know that he is so grateful for my presence. He has told me that the only reason he is still alive is that I'm here supporting him."

The dedicated son, who's run his own professional coaching business since 2018, has chosen to see his role as part of a spiritual journey.

"Every aspect of navigating this caregiving journey becomes a part of who I am. My business is a reflection of me; everything that I bring to my clients is a result of the wisdom I have earned through my life experiences," he said.

For anyone experiencing a hard day, Josip advises: "Embrace it. Take a deep breath and slow down. You can choose to learn through this challenging moment by humbly asking, 'How may I be a student on this journey?'"

He added that while his father's sickness is not something he can control, he can—and does—choose to cherish their remaining time together.

"I could be resentful and angry that nobody's here to help me," he said, "but that's a very disempowering mindset. I choose to tell a powerful story, where this is one of my life's most profound spiritual experiences."

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## Honor and Shame: You Can't Have One Without the Other

A society can't experience shame without a universal acceptance of right behavior

## JEFF MINICK

Shame, it seems, has become a homonym, a word spelled and pronounced the same, but with two different meanings.

Many today regard shame as a negative emotion, a tag of accusation imposed by others or by ourselves for our faults and failures, with damaging psychological consequences.

In her book "Daring Greatly," author Brené Brown defines shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy of love or belonging." During her research, she asked people for examples of shame. A few responses were "Shame is bankruptcy," "Shame is my husband leaving me for my next-door neighbor," and "Shame is my DUI."

One of Brown's main points is that while we might carry this burden for some wrong committed—gossip about a co-worker, lying to a friend—shame should never define our personhood. It's never completely who we are. And she's right. The employer who says, "Jones, you're a mess" as opposed to "Jones, you've made a mess out of this report" is relaying two harsh but quite different messages.

Brown then offers therapeutic tactics designed to break the bonds of shame, such as confiding in a friend or treating ourselves with compassion.

"If we're going to find our way out of shame and back to each other," she writes, "vulnerability is the path and courage is the light." Agreed.

But there's another side to the coin of shame.

**An Older Sense of Shame**

Legend has it that as their sons and husbands marched off to war, Spartan mothers and wives would call out, "Come back with your shield or upon it." In other words, come back victorious or dead. Otherwise, don't come back at all.

Until quite recently, Western societies abided by a code of honor and decorum which, if broken, might rain down a torrent of shame on the offender. From the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans right up to the middle of the 20th century, in breaking the code by which your community or family abided, you risked censure and humiliation.

We see a shift in this perception of shame in comparing Brown's definition above to an entry from the 1986 edition of "Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary," which informs us that shame is "a painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety ... something that brings strong regret, censure, or reproach." In this definition, no mention is made of "believing

that we're flawed."

Evidence that this more traditional sense of shame has gone missing from our society is abundant. Those politicians and generals who created the debacle of our withdrawal from Afghanistan seemed unembarrassed by their incompetence and failure. The architects of the disastrous COVID-19 lockdowns have offered no signs of remorse for their dictates and mistakes. The organizers and performers of the drag queen story hours in our public libraries, which are aimed at preschoolers, seem unaware of committing any improprieties. If the law enforcement officers who stood by in Uvalde, Texas, while a deranged young man shot up a classroom of elementary school students have expressed sorrow or humiliation for their failure to act, we have yet to hear about it.

**The Link With Honor**

"Where there is no shame," 17th-century German poet Martin Opitz writes, "there is no honor."

We can turn that line on its head and apply it to the 21st century: "Where there is no honor, there is no shame."

Without some societal code of conduct and propriety, some universal acceptance of right behavior, there can be no shame in a culture.

In the article "Why Shoplifting Is Now De Facto Legal in California," for instance, changes in the law now mean that "stealing merchandise worth \$950 or less is just a misdemeanor, which means that law enforcement probably won't bother to investigate, and if they do, prosecutors will let it go."

The commandment "Thou shalt not steal" has gone by the boards.

And that's just one example of the strange times in which we live, this age when virtues such as integrity are ignored or mocked, when behavior that would have shocked earlier generations is celebrated.

**Time to Go Counter-Cultural**

So, how in a time and place where shame has lost its meaning do we practice the virtues?

As so many cashiers and baristas say to me these days, "No problem."

To begin, we turn our backs on the fads and fictions of today's culture. If something strikes us as noble, righteous, or good, we adopt it. If it's garbage, we toss it. "Pick the best and throw away the rest" is a good rule of thumb here.

Next, we identify and stick with positive values we already possess. If we know ourselves to be honest in our business practices, we keep that gold standard shining and polished. When temptation appears, as it always does, we deliver a good, swift kick and send it skittering to the gutter.

**Despite what we may see in the news, millions and millions of Americans still know and revere the meaning of honor and live accordingly. We aren't making this journey alone.**



In ancient Sparta, mothers emphasized fighting honorably by exhorting their sons to come back with their shield or on it.

N\_DEFENDER/SHUTTERSTOCK

If we have children or grandchildren, we follow that old proverb: "Train up a child in the way he should go." We can best do so by offering them ourselves as examples of how to live. To help us in that obligation, our libraries and bookstores contain multitudes of novels and biographies with that aim in mind. Teach our young people honor, and shame will teach itself.

And remember this: We're in good company. Despite what we may see in the news, millions and millions of Americans still know and revere the meaning of honor and live accordingly. We aren't making this journey alone.

Finally, we recognize that human beings are fallible, including ourselves. We fail, we disappoint, we make boneheaded mistakes, and we land in a bog of shame and self-pity. As Brown and others tell us, when we goof up and find ourselves embarrassed or humiliated, we make amends, seek some help if needed, and move on.

When the culture is out of whack, it's time to become a rebel. Let's live as honorably as we can.

**A Last Thought: The Deterrent of Shame Is a Sidekick of Honor**

Let's say a raw recruit is hunkered down on the front lines in Ukraine right now. A Ukrainian, a Russian, take your pick. It's nighttime, black as coal, and he and the men around him come under a heavy bombardment. The noise of the explosions is terrifying, the earth shudders and heaves, all around him soldiers are screaming in agony, and all he wants to do is turn tail and run like mad as far away from this nightmare as he can get.

But he stays in position, weapon at the ready.

And why does our soldier stay put? Is it from a sense of honor? Or is it fear of the shame of running away that pins him to the ground?

It doesn't matter. Either way, he stays the course. He holds the line. He does the right thing.

And so can we.

*Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Virginia. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust on Their Wings," and two works of nonfiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man."*



American soldiers carry on a timeless tradition of warriors honorably holding the line and defending the people. Below, Tyler Vrba from the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment Continental Color Guard stands ready to post the colors during the VE Day Observance on May 8, 2019.

US ARMY/CC BY 2.0

## Leaving the Nest After COVID

It has yet to be seen whether the social norms post-COVID will result in more vulnerable young adults, or in multiple generations living closer together

## ERICA KOMISAR

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we relate to one another and our children. It forced parents and children together in ways that are both helpful and potentially harmful. For young children and even adolescents, studies before the pandemic showed that parents spent 90 minutes per day with their children on average—not enough to create a strong and secure attachment. COVID-19 definitely brought children and parents back together in a positive manner, from sharing more meals to more parent-child play time between Zoom calls to adolescents getting to watch movies or go for long walks with their parents.

But for every silver lining, there is also a dark cloud. The dark cloud in this case is the difficulty some parents and young people are facing in separating as they go back to school, work, or return to or begin college. This has contributed to an already challenging mental health crisis for teens and young adults, who did not get to practice the separation and distancing between themselves and their parents while at home, something that is critical for a healthy transition to living on one's own. In particular, the pandemic exacerbated anxiety and depression in college students, an age

group that already had high rates of mental health issues. College campus mental health services are overwhelmed with waitlists, and it is not uncommon for struggling students to have to wait weeks before getting to speak to a therapist.

In my practice, it has long been common for young people who left for college to experience an initial transition period of homesickness during which they call home every day. But this usually wanes after a week or two. Since the pandemic, the families I treat are experiencing an increase in contact with their young adult children, who not only call daily but often multiple times per day for emotional refueling. This has also intensified and seems to be prolonged in nature. The weaning process is more painful for kids, as well as for their parents.

In addition, parents who are now empty nesters are struggling more than usual with letting go of their children. It is normal and natural for parents to also practice separating from their children while still living together—this closeness/distance dance results in their ability to let go. Many

of the empty-nest parents that are coming to see me in my practice are struggling with deep depression and anxiety because of their children's departure to college in a way I have not seen in past years.

They miss the sweet reuniting and progressing closeness with their children that COVID-19 brought, which has made the rapid and abrupt departure even more challenging. In an AARP article published last year, University of Toledo Medical Center psychiatrist Victoria Kelly noted that empty-nest syndrome is largely about grief. These feelings of grief over children leaving home, compounded with feelings of grief over the experiences we missed out on during COVID-19, make the sense of loss even greater.

On a positive note, the transition to more togetherness during COVID-19 for parents likely helped to repair many years of being distracted and too busy to spend great amounts of quantity and quality time with children.

For many, it reignited a flame of attachment they seldom felt before this due to preparation or precocious separation from their kids at a young age, which makes it harder



DMYTRO ZINKEVICH/SHUTTERSTOCK

to give up what they have discovered in a closer relationship with their children.

As a result of this phenomenon of regression to earlier attachment and closeness, I am seeing many young adults move back home, either transferring to schools closer to home or dropping out to take gap years so they can remain close to parents or other loved ones. According to a national survey of undergraduates in the 2020-21 school year, one in four students who decided to transfer colleges did so to be closer to home.

The results of this social experiment are yet to be fully known; however, we do know that COVID-19 has shaken up the social norms or modern standards of how the separation process during adolescence and young adulthood should go. It may produce a generation of more vulnerable young adults, or it may in fact reunite the nuclear and extended family as it was originally meant to be—multi-generational living in communities, where moving far away from family is no longer desirable. While in the short run, the pandemic may have made the separation process harder and empty-nest syndrome more painful, it may also have course corrected a modern social system in which stoic independence is valued over family closeness and proximity.

*This article was originally published on the Institute for Family Studies blog.*

A recent survey of undergraduates found that 1 in 4 students who decided to transfer colleges did so to be closer to home.

*Erica Komisar, LCSW, is a psychoanalyst, parent guidance expert, and author of "Being There: Why Prioritizing Motherhood in the First Three Years Matters" and "Chicken Little The Sky Isn't Falling: Raising Resilient Adolescents in the New Age of Anxiety."*

## DEAR NEXT GENERATION

# Tips From an 87-Year-Young Patriot on How to Make Life Better

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

On Aug. 15, I turned 87 years young. Yes, I have been incredibly blessed with good health, a wonderful wife of 50 years, four terrific and successful children, and four outstanding grandchildren—also all successful.

I grew up in eastern Pennsylvania, spending summers with my maternal grandparents on a lake in Maine. I learned a primitive lifestyle living in a cabin with no electricity or indoor plumbing. I also learned to swim, fish, boat, explore, camp out, and appreciate many of God's wonders. These are some of the best memories of my incredible life.

I went to college, played a couple of sports (learning what real teamwork is), served as a captain in the Army, worked for two large corporations, and started and ran my own business. We sold our business in 1995 and built a home on the Sea of Cortez in the lower Baja of Mexico. We spent six months a year there fishing, kayaking, and learning to love the Mexican people. I kayaked over 300 miles of the Sea of Cortez coastline.

At the age of 75, I rode my bicycle from Los Angeles to Boston, and two years later rode from Portland, Maine, to Daytona Beach, Florida. Are you getting the picture of how very blessed I've been? But all of this didn't just happen. I, with the help of many others, made it happen!

Today, we live in beautiful Southern Oregon. I am humbled and privileged to be able to "give back" to my church and my community. I am blessed to be a Christian and believe in God and his Son. One of the main things in my life today is talking to others about this beautiful opportunity.

I am a very strong patriot; I wear red, white, and blue on July 4 and I'm proud of it. I truly believe that I was born in, and have lived, in the greatest country ever developed—and I have lived in the best years that this country has ever had. Today, I am disappointed in how my generation and the generation behind me have allowed our great United States of America to slip in so many important areas. But, being the eternal optimist, I also believe it's not too late to turn the tide that will help get us back on track. For this to happen, we need our younger generations to put on

some red, white, and blue—step up, and take charge!

Over the years, I have learned some very important lessons—some of them the hard way! This put me on the path of collecting "words of wisdom." They have helped me put a smile on my face and a bounce in my steps. With your permission, I'd like to share some of these with you. I would also encourage you to share them with your friends and family. Write them down, memorize them, and practice them.

- Put a smile on your face—and mean it.
- Work on maintaining a positive attitude in talk, in your walk, and everything you do. You'll find that it's contagious and will rub off on other people.
- Read and learn the history of our great country and what made it special in the first place.
- Put down the digital devices and get out there and help a friend, family member, neighbor, older person, or even a homeless person. The opportunities are endless. Every good deed you do gives that person the opportunity to "pay it forward" to someone else.

• Put love in your heart and share it with everyone—regardless of color, religion, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.

• Open up your mind and your heart to our God and his Son. Find a church home and a mentor to help you. Read and study the Bible. It's the greatest book ever written.

• Privileged or not, find a way to start "giving back" in time, talent, energy, and money. Use whatever "options" work for you at any particular moment in your life.

• On the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, and other U.S. holidays, put an American flag out in front of your house or apartment. Wear red, white, and blue! Be proud of your country and say thanks to all of those that have served to make it great.

• Happiness is not about getting all that you want. It's about enjoying all that you have!

• You can't change the past, but you can change what you do about the future.

• Don't ever forget this: It takes years to build up trust, and only seconds to destroy it.

• It's not what you have in your life, but



Wherever you are in life, use your available options to start giving back.

who you have that counts the most.

• You don't have to change friends if you understand that friends change.

• Our backgrounds and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

• People will forget what you said and what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

• Be patient! Sometimes, you have to go through tough times in order to get to the best. Work hard, work smart! Good things take time!

• Respect is one of the greatest expressions of love.

• Rather than striving to fit in, have the courage to be exactly who you are.

• Anyone can run away from problems. That's the easy route. Facing problems and working through them is what makes you strong!

• Peace is the result of training your mind to process life as it is, rather than as you think it should be.

• May your life "preach" more loudly than your lips!

• Waking up to see another day is a blessing. Don't take it for granted. Make it count and be happy that you're alive.

• If you don't leave your past in the past, it

can destroy your future. Learn from it!

• Live for what today has to offer, not what yesterday has taken away.

• Today, remind yourself that your soul is beautiful, your mind is powerful, that you have a heart of gold, and you have so much to be grateful for.

OK, as you can tell, I'm a pretty positive guy! If some of this has rubbed off on you, I hope you'll pass it along—and thank you so much for helping make this a better world! Bless you and yours!

—Hank Darlington, Oregon

**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**

They allow us to harbor humility, give others the benefit of the doubt, develop compassion, and forgive. They open our minds and hearts to allow for continual spiritual growth.

Bad thoughts, on the other hand, cloud our judgment and cut us off from divine inspiration. They stir anger and engender selfishness, jealousy, cunning, dishonesty, resentment, overreaction, and wickedness. When thoughts are very selfish, one tends to look upon others with contempt and suspicion. Bad thoughts can restrict one's ability to enjoy life, appreciate beauty, and fulfill one's greatest potential.

The elements that affect the quality of our thoughts can be complicated, but there are some simple ways we can procure our influences and, just as we do with our diet, carefully consider what we take into our minds.

### Be Intentional With Media

Carefully considering which movies and television shows we watch, which books we read, which news outlets we consult, and which social media accounts we follow will greatly impact the thoughts we carry. The psychological elements inherent within all of the above can be both obvious and subtle, and the messages we ingest stay with us long after our eyes have been diverted. So it's important to keep standards high when it comes to media of all sorts and to seek out things that are truthful, beautiful, virtuous, and good.

### Take a Break From Technology

Our engagement with technology also affects our ability to manage our thoughts and maintain serenity. If we are con-

stantly bombarded with external stimuli, peace of mind will be hard to come by and we'll likely find ourselves more reactive and impulsive. Constantly distracting ourselves away from processing our thoughts and allowing ourselves to sit in stillness will hamper our ability to foster a clear and calm mind. It's beneficial to minimize our use of technology and enjoy time with nature, people in real life, and solitary quiet.

### Consider the People Around You

You've probably heard people say that you become the average of the five people you spend the most time with. It's true that the people around us will influence our notions and thoughts. We can aim to be a bright and positive influence on those around us and choose to spend our time with those that inspire the best in ourselves.

### Emphasize Beauty

A focus on beauty is a worthwhile endeavor that can greatly benefit the quality of our thoughts. There is beauty everywhere, from the wonders of nature, to traditional cultures passed down around the world, to magnificent works of art, music, and literature the greats bestowed upon us, to a baby's smile and a grandmother's hug. Beauty is outside our windows and inside our families. Seek it out, and let it be the focus your mind is mostly centered upon.

As Marcus Aurelius put it, "The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts." Take care to drive out the thoughts that do your life a disservice and foster good thoughts that allow you to reach your highest potential.

# You Are What You Think

The role of the mind in shaping character

BARBARA DANZA

They say, "You are what you eat"—referring, of course, to the importance of carefully considering which foods one chooses to take into one's body. True enough.

But a person is more than simply a material being. It could be argued that it's even more important to carefully consider which thoughts one chooses to take into one's mind, for you truly are what you think.

### The Quality of Thought

Mastering one's thoughts might seem a more challenging prospect than managing one's diet. There are many internal and external influences on our minds and our overall states of being. Still, it seems self-evident that when our thoughts are of a good, upright, true, and positive quality, we benefit ourselves and those within our sphere of influence (a sphere larger than many tend to realize).

Good thoughts are those that allow us to maintain a sense of calm and a level of composure. They are considerate of others, rational and reasonable, and devoid of ulterior motives. They allow us to recognize goodness, beauty, virtue, and truth, and give us strength to forbear. Good thoughts inspire us, foster joy, and bring about goodness in the world.

“The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts.”

Marcus Aurelius, Stoic philosopher and Roman emperor

Carefully consider the media you consume.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PHOTODISC

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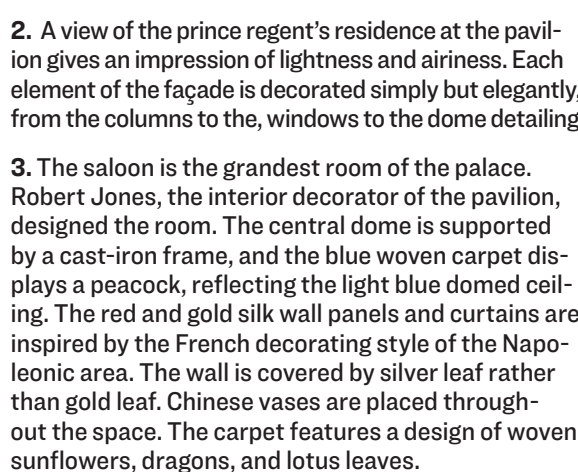
(Left) The exterior of the pavilion, featuring cast-iron onion domes, pinnacles, and pointed arches. Architect John Nash added an iron frame to architect Henry Holland's original construction to support 10 domes and 10 minarets, contributing to a unique Indo-Islamic appearance. Noticeable are the arabesques (surface decorations in Islamic architecture), columns, and ornate arched windows.

(Right) The spacious banquet room is the setting for many guests. Large candelabras on either side of the mahogany table light up an ornate silver gilt centerpiece. The floor lamps are decorated with carved dragon mounts with lotus flower-shaped shades. The impressive central chandelier, embellished with six silver dragons breathing "fire," hangs from a painted dome ceiling. Smaller chandeliers feature small birds inspired by Chinese mythology.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

# The Brighton Royal Pavilion

THE SURPRISINGLY EXOTIC VISION OF GEORGE IV



ARIANE TRIEBSWETTER

There's nothing quite like the Brighton royal pavilion in the British Isles. Situated at the heart of the seaside city of Brighton, south of London, stands what looks like an Indian palace. It's the exotic vision of George IV, and its Regency-style architecture is extraordinary.

In the mid-1780s, as prince regent, George rented a lodging house in Brighton. Architect Henry Holland converted the building into a "marine pavilion," and in 1815, architect John Nash started to transform it into an Asian palace. The prince regent lavishly decorated his seaside residence with imported Chinese wallpapers, furniture, and objects. In 1850, Queen Victoria sold the palace to the city.

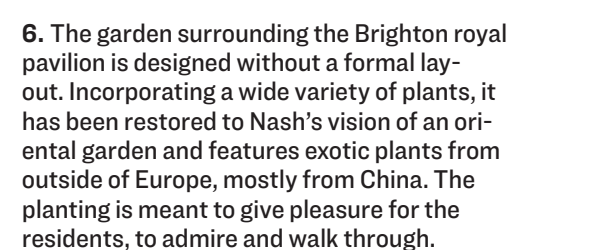
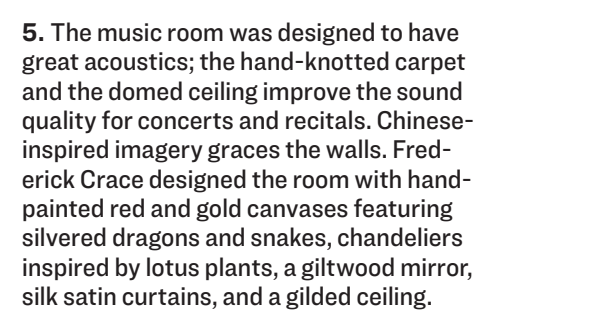
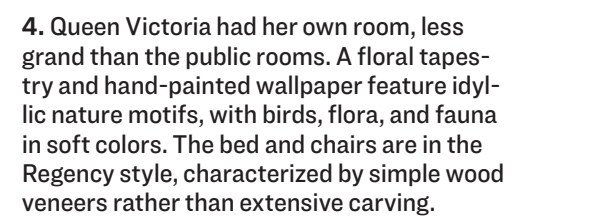
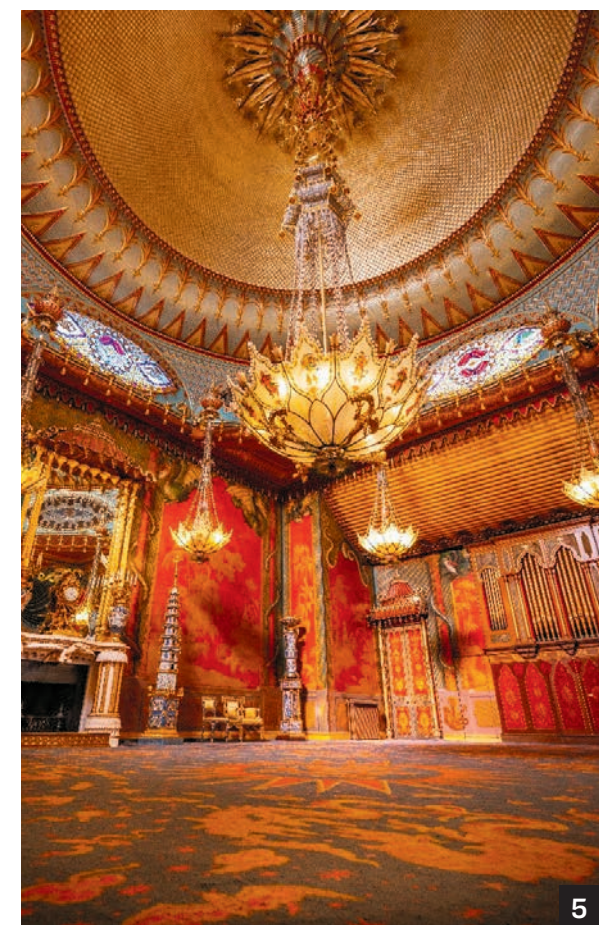
The pavilion represents the 18th-century European fascination with Asia. It was inspired by Indian Mughal architecture, common in 16th- and 17th-century northern and central India. The style is also an example of Islamic architecture, with

minarets (slender towers), pointed arches, and onion domes designed with a focus on balance and coherence. The interior is in the chinoiserie style, a Western style inspired by Chinese design, characterized by gilding, lacquering, and asymmetry, that featured heavily in the Regency style invented under George IV.

Decorator Frederick Crace and painter Robert Jones designed the palace's interiors. Highlights include Queen Victoria's bedroom with imported Chinese wallpaper, the music room with exotic imagery and gilding, and the saloon (a grand meeting room) with motifs such as dragons and lotus leaves.

The palace is a manifestation of 19th-century eclecticism in Regency architecture, and the interior is an example of exoticism in this style. It was recently restored according to drawings and archives.

*Ariane Triebswetter is an international freelance journalist, with a background in modern literature and classical music.*



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# How Parents Can Become Better Listeners

Active listening will make your children feel heard and understood, but there is more to it than meets the eye

BARBARA DANZA

Have you ever regretted cutting your child's long story short or dismissing a child's need to talk because you were preoccupied with something else? Have you ever grown impatient waiting for a child to finish their long-winded description of a picture they drew or all the things they know about dinosaurs because you were so very busy? Most parents aren't in the game too long before they find themselves collecting moments they're not proud of.

We parents can easily lose sight of our true priorities in the face of obligations, responsibilities, and extreme fatigue. We know, however, that being present for our children, respecting their need and desire to share with us what they're thinking and feeling, showing them that what they have to say matters to us, and choosing to give our precious time to them over finishing the laundry or returning emails is what we truly value most.

We want our children to know that we're always there for them, that they should openly share their hearts with us in safety and comfort, and that we love them. Impatience, discomfort, and, if we're honest, simple selfishness can get in our way.

There are ways to improve our listening skills, however, for the sake of our children. Here are some ideas to consider.

## Recognize the Moment

When you're rushing from one task to the next, frantically checking off your to-do list and dreaming of the moment your head may actually hit the pillow if you just get all of these things done, you may not even notice that your child is trying to share something with you. You don't want to let life pass you by like this.

Take steps to simplify your life, slow down, and notice when it's time to give your undivided attention to a child who wants to tell you all about what she just read in a book or show you the intricate details of the lego vehicle he just designed. Incorporate more simplicity and slowness to enjoy the ability to be more present with your loved ones.

## Remove Distractions

If the television is on or you're listening to something, turn it down. If you have your phone, put it away. If you're in the middle of a task, stop. Maintain eye contact with your child and give them your complete attention.



ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Pause your to-do list when you notice your child wanting to share something with you.

## See the World Through Their Eyes

Have you ever looked back at a photo or video of you with your child and realize that their perspective in that moment looked different than you recalled it. That sort of "third party" view can be helpful in recognizing your child's view of things. Remember their age, their level of curiosity, their need to learn and express themselves, and their desire to connect with you. Practice empathy and compassion as you improve your listening skills with your children.

## Be Patient

Oh, patience. What parent doesn't wish for buckets more of it? When your child is going on and on about every minute detail of every single character of their favorite superhero universe and you are wondering if this universe has any limits, stay put. Don't cut them off, don't interrupt, don't give in to the temptation to distract them with a cookie. Listen. Your intricate details of the lego vehicle he just designed. Incorporate more simplicity and slowness to enjoy the ability to be more present with your loved ones.

est in the topic of choice may not be high, but their interest. If you need to encourage yourself, appreciate how smart they are to have gathered all of this information, how joyful they are to muster this level of enthusiasm, and how lucky you are that they want nothing more than to share this with you. Be patient.

## Practice Eagerness

When your children come to you with a story,

Take steps to simplify your life, slow down, and notice when it's time to give your undivided attention to a child.



We want our children to know that we're always there for them, that they should openly share their hearts with us in safety and comfort, and that we love them.

set yourself on the edge of your seat and eagerly take in everything they're telling you. Practice resisting the opposing thoughts that are sure to surface about the dishes in the sink or the work project you're behind on. Instead aim your focus like a laser on that child and his or her story. Ask follow up questions. Simmer in the moment. Overcome the resistance.

## Resist the Urge to Critique

They may be describing a death defying plan to jump their bike over a ravine, or build a messy, glittery, expansive metropolis that is sure to knock your kitchen out of commission for a week, but dare not squash their creativity or descriptive enthusiasm with your concerns. Listen with an open mind and a desire to understand whatever they're telling you. Encourage ideas, wonder, and curiosity, and don't allow yourself to be the force that pours a bucket of cold water over it all. If you have to talk them and their bike off a cliff, that's something for another day. For now, hear them out; don't shut them down.

## Be the Example

As if you needed more reasons to listen well to your children, remember that you're modeling excellent listening skills that they're sure to mimic. The ability to be a good listener is a skill that translates across every aspect of life, not just parenting. The gift you're giving them by improving your listening skills stretches far beyond actively engaging in their conversation.

## Hide Fun Notes

Leave surprising notes around the house. Next to their toothbrushes, on their pillows, taped to a mirror, on top of a toy box; a little note from Mom or Dad can be a fun and unexpected surprise. Use simple messages like, "I love you," or "Return this note to Daddy for a hug," or, for budding readers, "If you can read this note, say 'I did it!'"

## Sing Silly Songs

Make up silly songs, like: "Mommy's cooking dinner now, EIEIO" (instead of Old MacDonald had a farm.) You see where this is going: "My kids are playing so nicely, doo dah, doo dah, It makes Mommy so happy, all the doo dah day." Sure, they may think you've lost it, but that's part of the charm.

## Allow Occasional Indulgence

Don't endorse a sugar-filled diet, but indulge in a special treat every once in a while. Freshly baked cookies, a trip to the ice cream shop, or a sweet coffee shop treat can make for enjoyable moments together that are totally worth it.

## Conspire Together to Delight Others

Activities that encourage children to think of others are winners on all fronts. Have them mail some of their artwork to Grandma, help make a special dinner for Daddy, or bring homemade food to a neighbor.

Helping them brighten someone else's day may be the best way to brighten your children's day.

# 9 Simple Ways to Brighten Your Child's Smile

When life gets heavy, here are some easy ways to lighten your children's lives

BARBARA DANZA

Life these days can seem much too serious. Our kids absorb the worry, the stress, and the heaviness that the adults around them are carrying. Fortunately, it doesn't take much to lighten things up, brighten their day, and put a smile on their faces.

Here are nine simple ideas to turn those frowns upside down. As a bonus, these things are sure to make you smile, too.

## Put a Simple Spin on Play

Rearrange their toys in an unexpected way. "What's the pink bunny doing on the ceiling fan?" "Did your teddy bear build that block castle while you were at school?" "Is that Mr. Potato Head in the fridge?"

Prepare for giggles when your kids find their favorite toys doing unexpected things around the house.

## Make Them Laugh

Tell a hilarious joke, like: "Why was 6 afraid of 7? Because 7 8 9."

Not funny enough for you? Oh, how about: "What did 0 say to 8? 'Nice belt.'" This one is sure to thrill: "Why did the bicycle fall over? Because it was two-tired."

Jokes like these can be put into lunchboxes, told at the dinner table, enjoyed during car rides, or pulled out whenever everyone could use a good laugh.

## Invite Creativity

Set out an invitation to create something in a common area of your home. Prepare some shiny new stickers. Lay out colorful paper. Cue up a YouTube instructional video. With some very minor preparation, you can have a simple and fun craft project ready to go when your little ones come home from school, when they wake up in the morning, or as the focal point of a weekend at home.

Too complicated? Even the simple act of setting out paper, crayons, scissors, and glue would be a joyful invitation to a child that loves to craft. I have yet to meet one that doesn't.

## Amp Up a Meal

Another, another sandwich, an-

other chicken dinner—if your meals have become predictable or monotonous, tweak them just a little to the delight of your family. Add colorful fruit slices as a topping for cereal, have lunch outside for an instant picnic, or serve dinner in the dining room on your fancy china.

By changing the presentation, the setting, or by adding a new ingredient to your regular standbys, you can easily make mealtime a surprising delight.

Helping them brighten someone else's day may be the best way to brighten your children's day.

## Lead an Adventure

Get outside and explore. Grab a notebook or a clipboard, some pencils and paper, perhaps binoculars, and head out the door. Let the wonders of your neighborhood be the subject of your exploration and jot down what you find out there.

Ask questions, like: "What shapes are the clouds?" "What sounds do we hear?" "What does the temperature feel like?" "What animals do we see?" "What smells do we smell?"

Let your children revel in the simple wonders that are right at their doorstep.



Try adding a joke into the kids' lunchboxes for an unexpected dose of fun.



# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES



## A GREAT ROMAN POET IS BORN



The bust of Virgil at the entrance to his tomb in Naples, Italy.

On Oct. 15, 70 B.C., arguably the most influential Roman poet to have ever lived was born. Virgil, author of the epic poem "The Aeneid," was born to a prosperous farmer near Mantua (present-day Italy). His father provided him with an excellent education studying philosophy and rhetoric. "The Aeneid" has influenced much of Western literature and tells the story of Aeneas, the pious founder of Rome who follows the directions of divine guidance to bring civilization to the world.



"Virgil Reading the Aeneid to Augustus, Octavia, and Livia," 1790-1793, by JeanBaptiste Wicar. Art Institute of Chicago.

## The Gift to Sing

By James Weldon Johnson

Sometimes the mist overhangs my path,  
And blackening clouds about me cling;  
But, oh, I have a magic way  
To turn the gloom to cheerful day—  
I softly sing.

And if the way grows darker still,  
Shadowed by Sorrow's somber wing,  
With glad defiance in my throat,  
I pierce the darkness with a note,  
And sing, and sing.

I brood not over the broken past,  
Nor dread whatever time may bring;  
No nights are dark, no days are long,  
While in my heart there swells a song,  
And I can sing.



VOI STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry, and see a fine picture every day of his life, in order that worldly cares may not obliterate the sense of the beautiful which God has implanted in the human soul.



JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749-1832), GERMAN WRITER AND STATESMAN

TOSTPHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK



ROOM 76/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza

# THE BIRD ORCHESTRA

The spring dawn chorus is one of the world's most beautiful natural events.

Across the district, songbirds decide to sing their varying songs. They are all together in no particular melody; they aren't exactly an orchestra, just a cacophony of mutually conflicting and enhancing voices.

Close to home, the warblers and thrushes are the stars of the singing show. The warblers' songs can range from light, bubbly, and buzzing (like a blackpoll warbler), to almost a mourning, echoing call (like a hooded warbler), with every sort of song in between (a yellow-rumped warbler). The thrushes' songs are completely different, with clear notes and sometimes a questioning quality. The American Robin is probably the most prominent of these, with its song being the backbone of the dawn chorus, at least in the suburbs, where it is extremely common, while the reclusive Veery is among the birds that regularly duets with itself.

Why birds sing so early in the morning, but we thank them for doing so. There are 10,000 species of birds, of which about 5,000 are passerines, or perching birds. These birds are the birds that we usually call songbirds, and they include birds from the smallest sparrow to the largest raven. The other 5,000 species' voice boxes (called a syrinx in birds) aren't as refined as the passerines' syrinx, but they can still sing quite well. Once we begin to explore the passerine birds, however, the non-passerine song begins to sound a bit simple. The passerine syrinx is a miraculously intricate instrument, enabling each species to refine its song in many different ways. Perhaps the most interesting is self-harmony: A bird can actually sing two different songs simultaneously and perform a duet with itself. Other passerines can sing for an extraordinarily long time. The Eurasian skylark can actually sing for 18 minutes straight, taking breaths while singing.

To pick out a voice in the crowd isn't difficult, but to stay with it is, as so many other songs enter the ears. In the spring, it happens anywhere where there are enough songbirds. Even to this day, it isn't really known why birds sing so early in the morning, but we thank them for doing so.



ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Prepare for giggles when your kids find their favorite toys doing unexpected things around the house.

## Put a Simple Spin on Play

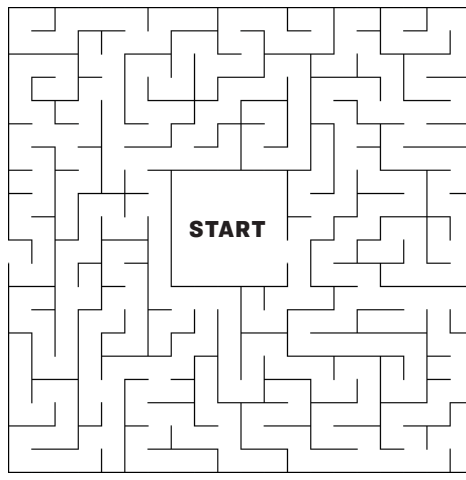
Rearrange their toys in an unexpected way. "What's the pink bunny doing on the ceiling fan?" "Did your teddy bear build that block castle while you were at school?" "Is that Mr. Potato Head in the fridge?"

Prepare for giggles when your kids find their favorite toys doing unexpected things around the house.

## Make Them Laugh

Tell a hilarious joke, like: "Why was 6 afraid of 7? Because 7 8 9."

# 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



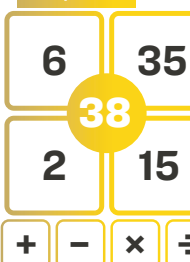
Solution For Easy 1  
2 + 9 = (9 + 2)

Medium puzzle 1



Solution for Medium 1  
1 + 9 = (6 - 5)

Hard puzzle 1



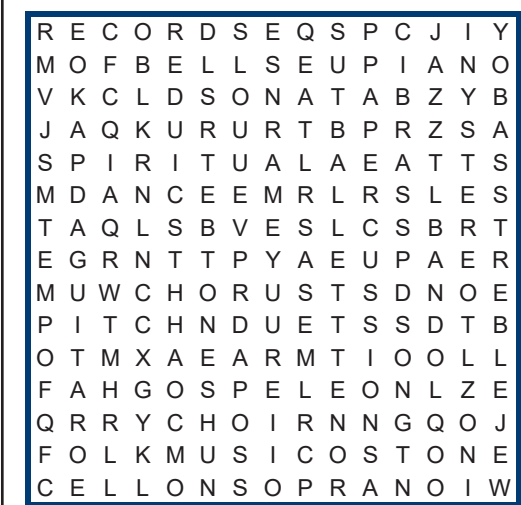
Solution for Hard 1  
2 + 9 = 9 + 9

## HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball



www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

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- |        |            |         |           |
|--------|------------|---------|-----------|
| Alto   | Flute      |         |           |
| Ballet | Folk music |         |           |
| Band   | Gospel     |         |           |
| Bass   | Guitar     |         |           |
| Beat   | Hymn       |         |           |
| Bells  | Instrument |         |           |
| Brass  | Jazz       |         |           |
| Cello  | March      | Quartet | Spiritual |
| Choir  | Note       | Records | Stereo    |
| Chorus | Opera      | Rock    | Tempo     |
| Dance  | Organ      | Solo    | Tenor     |
| Drums  | Percussion | Sonata  | Tone      |
| Duet   | Piano      | Song    | Treble    |
| Ear    | Pitch      | Soprano | Tunes     |



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