

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

BIBA KAYEWICH

Even though running a marathon is an individual sport, each runner performs best when backed by a team of supporters.



MOTIVATION

We're All Runners in the Ultramarathon of Life

Life lessons from a 100-mile ultramarathon

JEFF MINICK

When my oldest son told me that he intended to run the Daytona 100, a 100-mile ultramarathon in Florida from Jacksonville to Daytona, I thought he was nuts.

A cluster of fatherly cautions popped to mind: What if you permanently damage your knees? Shouldn't you get a doctor's OK first? What if you drop dead?

But I stifled my objections. Jake's a 37-year-old attorney, happily married, and the father of seven children. In other words, he's a grown man. Stuffing a cork into my bottled-up paternal anxieties, I smiled and wished him good luck.

It so happened that on Dec. 2, the day before the race, my brothers, sisters,

and some nieces and nephews gathered in Jacksonville for a memorial service for a beloved brother-in-law. Most of that crew returned home early the next day, but two of my sisters, a couple of their grown children, and my daughter remained an extra day.

And that evening, between 11 p.m. and 1:30 a.m., I witnessed an exhibition of unforgettable life lessons.

That afternoon and evening, we were gathered at my sister's condo, where we kept getting texts from Jake's wife, Laura, and his brother, JP, on his progress. Finally, when a text announced that Jake had hit the 80-mile mark, I couldn't stand

any more of the stress and waiting. "Let's catch up with him in Daytona," I said to the friend who was with me. To the amazement of my sisters and daughter, the two of us drove off into the night, hoping to catch the last 10 miles of this ordeal.

We did catch it. And that evening, between 11 p.m. and 1:30 a.m., I witnessed an exhibition of unforgettable life lessons.

Life Lesson No. 1: Aim for the Finish Line

Unless you're one of the top few contenders in such a crazy race, your main competitor is you. Most of the runners aim at maintaining a certain pace, sure, but their main goal is simply to get to the finish line.

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EDUCATION

Raising Independent Thinkers Who Pursue the Truth

What do mandatory media literacy classes in the early school years tell us?

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

Once upon a time, Chicken Little's infamous phrase, "The sky is falling!" was the battle cry of alarm. Today, this classic signal of hysteria is in the process of being kicked to the curb, replaced by the new cry of "Fake news!"

So prevalent is the fear of fake news that some states are seeking to mandate media literacy instruction in the classroom. New Jersey is one of those states, The Hechinger Report explains, noting that media literacy instruction would extend to students in grades as young as kindergarten, because, "Experts say that many Americans, both young and old, lack the skills required to critically analyze information in a digital world."

On its surface, such instruction seems like a worthy and needed venture. Why not catch students young and teach them to correctly "access, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate information"? But a look past the surface shows that we should exercise caution when the idea of teaching media literacy arises, for such instruction may only serve to further stifle a child's ability to discern fact from fiction.

The fact that schools want to teach media literacy to students in their early school years should be our first clue that such instruction isn't all it's cracked up to be. Giving students a head start in everything from sports to algebra is par for the course these days.

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PLAY-BASED LEARNING

In his book, "In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed," Carl Honoré cites a study by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek comparing children in a play-based nursery versus an academic nursery, in which "children from the more relaxed, slower environment turned out less anxious, more eager to learn, and better able to think independently."



OKSANA KUZMINA/SHUTTERSTOCK

MOTIVATION

We're All Runners in the Ultramarathon of Life



SEAN MURPHY/GETTY IMAGES

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The winner's time was just more than 16 hours; Jake made it in under 20; the last runner arrived 11 hours later.

Each of them, and all the other participants, deserve congratulations, for this race demands more than physical conditioning and stamina. It takes grit and willpower, the mental strength to keep moving when your body is begging to stop and lie down on the grass or the pavement. Even those who dropped out of the race from injuries merit applause. They competed. They gave it a shot.

Whether we know it or not, we're all in a race of some kind or another. Some of us are fast, breezing through difficulties, while others of us are plodders, taking the hits but still moving forward. Here are some lines from Rudyard Kipling's inspirational poem "If" that apply both to the runners and to the rest of us:

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them:
"Hold on!"

Life Lesson No. 2: We Can All Use Some Help

Watching Laura and JP in action reminded me of a NASCAR pit crew working on a driver's car. Sometimes, JP ran with Jake—who covered more than 40 miles that day—and

Whether we know it or not, we're all in a race of some kind or another.

A new year means new beginnings, which also means we have yet another chance to make our dreams come true.

sometimes, Laura walked with him. The one who wasn't with Jake would drive the car down Route A1A a mile or two, pull into a parking lot or a side street, and be there when he passed, ready to hand him whatever he needed—water, energy gels, Vaseline for chafing, a change of shoes—and always clapping and calling out encouragement.

By the time my friend and I arrived, this pair had these tasks of switch-off and way stations down to a science. The van looked like a bomb had exploded on the inside, with supplies and trash scattered everywhere, but Laura and JP operated together like a machine helping their runner.

Along the way, we passed other families and friends giving similar aid to the runners they loved. In two cases, it was clear that the exhausted runner could go no farther. In other scenarios, the men and women in the race were being handed bottled water and cheered as they jogged or trudged past.

When he reached the finish line at the Ponce de Leon Inlet Lighthouse, Jake slowed, called for Laura and JP, and with his arms wrapped around them, walked the final few steps to victory.

In a later text, he wrote: "Lesson learned: never do an ultra alone."

Competent people who have your back, those with your best interests at heart, are silver and gold.

Life Lesson No. 3: Cheer On Those Who Are Trying

The participants in such a race don't run in packs, but are scattered for miles. At the time

of night when we arrived, they were bobbing along the sidewalk in the darkness with their running lights on their backs or caps, either alone or with one companion.

Each time we passed one of these strangers, Laura or JP would slow the car and call out encouragement. Other drivers and bystanders did the same for each passing contestant.

Meanwhile, several people, including his older sister, offered Jake prayers and thoughts via texts to Laura and JP. Later, he told me—and them—how much their words had meant to him.

No matter where we are in our own race, whatever that race may be, words of encouragement can keep us going.

Life Lesson No. 4: Success Means Coupling Ambition, Action

Suppose you've dreamed for years of visiting Paris? Watching a race like this one might inspire you to begin setting aside some money, obtaining a passport, and researching hotel rooms and places to visit in the City of Lights. Suppose you've long wished you played the piano? Again, this ultramarathon might inspire you to buy a keyboard or an upright, hire a teacher or use online resources, and put your fingers to the keys.

Not all of our dreams will come true. But here's one irrefutable fact: None of them will come true unless we take action, as did all these runners, and make them happen.

Marathon as Metaphor

The timeline of this ultramarathon resembles that of life itself. Dawn brings the birth of the contest and finds the runners nervous, fresh, and eager as adolescents to begin their journey. The hardships of midday reflect the struggles of our middle years, when life demands so much of our abilities and strength. Dusk, like old age, finds most of us slowing our pace. Then comes the finish line, which, if we follow this metaphor to its logical conclusion, represents both triumph and death. The race is over.

Near the end of his life, Saint Paul had such a metaphor in mind when he wrote: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Like him, and like so many others, we should see life as a marathon and not a sprint. If we want to cross that finish line having lived as complete a life as possible, our hands held high in victory, we must run the race and persevere.

A new year means new beginnings, which also means we have yet another chance to make our dreams come true. Whatever those dreams are, we can copy these runners and pursue our ambitions with all our might. We may succeed, we may fail, but like these runners, here's what truly counts: We ran the race and gave it our all.

Jeff Minick lives and writes in *Front Royal, Va.* 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."



Most marathoners aim at maintaining a certain pace, but their main goal is simply to get to the finish line and complete what they set out to achieve.

MARZUFELLO/SHUTTERSTOCK



TOM WERNER/GETTY IMAGES

According to Hannah Anderson in her book "All That's Good: Recovering the Lost Art of Discernment," children can be taught how to pursue truth by teaching the importance of evidence, how to weigh arguments, and how to recognize emotions.

EDUCATION

Raising Independent Thinkers Who Pursue the Truth

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But unfortunately, head start tactics like these create a response that's exactly opposite to the knowledge and discernment schools are supposedly aiming for.

This issue is raised by author Carl Honoré in a book titled "In Praise of Slowness: Challenging the Cult of Speed." Honoré cites the work of Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, a professor of child psychology at Philadelphia's Temple University who studied two sets of preschoolers: one in a relaxed, play-based nursery school, the other in an academic one. Her findings showed "that children from the more relaxed, slower environment turned out less anxious, more eager to learn,

and better able to think independently."

Given this observation, it's natural to wonder whether the education that pushes children early on—such as media literacy courses in kindergarten—is likely to turn them into unthinking yes-men rather than people who carefully weigh a situation and then make up their own minds based on the evidence. If so, it isn't a surprise that the media literacy push is happening at such a young age, for the education system has repeatedly demonstrated that it has no room for students who think independently. The goal of schooling is to teach conformity rather than independent thought, former New York teacher of the year John Taylor Gatto once noted, enabling those in positions of authority to "harness

and manipulate a large labor force."

Schools try to tell us otherwise, of course, touting the need for "critical thinking" and extolling their commitment to teaching this subject in the classroom. The reality is that schools never do much about critical thinking, author Neil Postman tells us in his book "Building a Bridge to the 18th Century: How the Past Can Improve Our Future," citing several reasons:

"The first is that it is dangerous. Were we to allow, indeed, encourage, our children to think critically, their questioning of constituted authority would almost certainly be one result. We might even say that "critical thinking" works to undermine the idea of education as a national resource, since a free-thinking populace might reject the goals of its nation-state and disturb the smooth functioning of its institutions."

It's definitely true that our children need to know how to process the massive amounts of information society subjects us to. But rather than push media literacy courses down their throats, which only gives lip service to critical thinking, why not teach them to be independent thinkers whose main goal is to pursue truth?

Tools to Pursue Truth

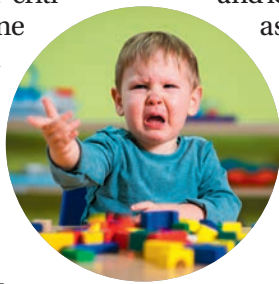
Teaching a child to pursue truth sounds almost impossible, especially since everyone seems to have their own truth these days, but there are a few simple steps we can follow in order to wade through life with discernment. Author Hannah Anderson explains these in her book "All That's Good: Recovering the Lost Art of Discernment."

The first is to teach children that "truth

must be rooted in factual reality." Others will scrutinize our opinions, Anderson writes, and we must make sure they're based upon facts that are accessible to others so that they themselves can weigh the evidence and understand how we came to our conclusions.

The second is that we must train our children to weigh the many arguments swirling around us. Just because an alleged truth came from a person we trust doesn't mean that it's true. Each argument must be tested on its own merits.

Finally, we must train children to evaluate the role their emotions play in their pursuit of truth. Failing to recognize emotions and keep them in check will lead us all astray, particularly when selecting our leaders, Anderson writes:



Children can be taught from a young age how to identify their emotions and recognize when those emotions sway their discernment of the truth.

MARKO POPLASEN/SHUTTERSTOCK

"If we don't allow truth to pierce our internal process, we run the risk of letting our feelings about another person trump the reality about their actions. We will either demonize them or be duped by them. Our aversion can keep us from embracing and enjoying the good things that they have to offer while unquestioning loyalty can blind us to falsehood and leave us open to manipulation."

Yes, our children are—and will continue to be—bombarded with all types of information and ideas. The answer isn't to stifle their discernment sensors, as media literacy classes seem likely to do, but to teach them to be independent thinkers and seekers of the truth.

Annie Holmquist is a cultural commentator hailing from America's heartland who loves classic books, architecture, music, and values. Her writings can be found at Annie's Attic on Substack.

COMICS

New Comic Creator Succeeds in Face of Mainstream Comics

'Isom' comic book's success is driven by storylines, characters, and no politics

DUSTIN BASS

Eric July, 32, has been a fan of comic books since he was a kid. His podcast "For Canon Sake" and YouTube show "YoungRippa59" often center around comics. The comics industry's creative decline, however, is typically the subject that takes center stage.

Having ingratiated himself into the world of comics and studied the reasons for this decline, he knew there was a demand for comics devoid of political or ideological agendas.

From having his own successful show to being the frontman for the metal band BackWordz, July is a creator—and his creative side has never been more pronounced than when he decided to create not just his own comic book or comic hero, but his own comic universe called "Rippaverse." The first edition of his new comic series, "Isom," came out in July (not sure if the timing was intentional to match his name).

"I had aspirations to write, but considering the market, I didn't think I would be able to do it at this age," he said during an interview on "The Sons of History" podcast. "Maybe when I was in my 40s. I think everyone had a dream of writing for Marvel or DC. That's definitely not on my list anymore." Nor should it ever be at this point.

'Isom' Far Exceeds Expectations

July had set manageable expectations for the comic's first pre-order campaign (although they may have seemed lofty at the time): He was expecting to generate about \$100,000 in sales. He had spent twice that amount just getting his company, "Rippaverse Comics," in order, which included costs for lawyers, artwork, printing, employees, and more. "Isom" sales ripped through that ceiling in the first 30 minutes.

Within 30 hours, the new comic business had hit \$1 million in sales. By the end of the campaign, it had exceeded July's expectations by more than 3,500 percent, generating more than \$3.7 million.

As much as July views the current comic industry with disdain, he's also thankful for it.

Woke Comics Create Opportunity

"I'm not oblivious at all to the fact that I owe a lot of my career to the people who do stupid things that have just turned off their customers," he said. "You watch these brands that have been straight-up hijacked by a bunch of

Eric July is the lead vocalist for rap-metal band BackWordz and author of the comic book series "Isom."



"Isom" by Eric July is a non-political superhero comic series set in the fictional universe called Rippaverse.

But mixing political correctness with traditional comics was never going to work in the long run.



people who cannot set aside their individual political beliefs. They feel like they have to beat their audience over the head. All I said was I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to beat my audience over the head. I'm just going to make good material. And that's all people want out of this medium."

July addresses this very issue in the opening pages of his first comic book. He notes that "Rippaverse Comics" was, at least in part, created "for all of the people who have watched their favorite franchises be hijacked." This hijacking within the comic book world, indeed the arts industry itself, has created an ideological monopoly within the industry, which has led to the two leading comic creators, Marvel and DC Comics, into some economic turmoil. July believes that these issues arose from having ideologically driven people make the decisions.

"I think leftists have long infiltrated the arts. A lot of people in powerful positions with control of these entertainment entities had been convinced by people, who probably had no business being in their positions, that this was the market, that this was the wave of the future, and that you gotta get in now," he said.

July said that worked in the short term because these entities owned trusted and loved household names, such as Superman, Batman, Captain America, and many others. But mixing political correctness with traditional comics was never going to work in the long run. He noted that even Disney has created flops with one of America's most popular and successful franchises, "Star Wars."

"You've seen in the past couple of years,

how to eventually set their own goals and break big ideas into manageable pieces.

Review the Concluding Year

Set out some snacks and pull up your photos from the past year to encourage a chat about the year that's wrapping up. Make note of both the fond memories and the challenges. Enjoy reminiscing, and celebrate overcoming difficulties and the lessons learned.

As you review, ask yourselves: What habits or goals do you want to carry over to the new year?

Brainstorm

Take out paper, pens, and whatever other creative tools would motivate the troops. Invite ideas for ways to make the coming year great.

Get everything down on paper. There are no wrong answers, and no ideas too outlandish. Perhaps there will be ideas about vacation destinations, skills to learn, home improvements to undertake, spiritual development to focus on, charitable causes to support, things to

stop doing, or fun to have.

Look for Patterns

After everyone's ideas are spent, take a look at the notes you've made. What patterns do you see? What larger categories can you define, given the ideas on the page?

Categories that may emerge might be nutrition and fitness, spiritual practice, travel, education, giving, career, home, finance, personal development, or fun.

Narrowing your jumble of ideas down into a handful of categories takes out the overwhelm and shows you what you hope to focus on.



When brainstorming ways to make the new year great, there are no wrong answers or outlandish ideas. FIZKES/SHUTTERSTOCK



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF RIPPVERSE



certainly over this past year, with some of these franchises that couldn't miss even if it was a bad movie, that they were going to make top dollar, but now that's not the case," he said. "There are some projects that have actually lost money, such as the 'Eternals' and 'Solo,' and that should never happen. You can see that they are starting to feel those economic consequences of catering to a demographic that simply wasn't there or was overstated."

Customers Over Peers

One demographic that remains, however, is the one that apparently makes up a larger portion within the industry itself. July's creation and its resulting success has caught the ire of many of them, and they have made no bones about criticizing his work, even if strictly for ideological reasons. To suggest that the criticism hasn't worked, however, would be an understatement.

"I'm not saying that all criticism is illegitimate, but often what my peers care about, the regular customer does not," he said. "A lot of folks have fallen victim, even mainstream guys, to trying to impress their peers, whether it be ideologically or even with the art itself, and they often end up broke. I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel. I'm gonna take my customers over my peers nine times out of nine."

July issued three covers of the first "Isom" comic book. It's the first in an ongoing series.

Dustin Bass is the host of EpochTV's "About the Book," a show about new books with the authors who wrote them. He is an author and co-host of "The Sons of History" podcast.

Schedule

Decide on a few priorities and get them on the calendar. Schedule when you'd like to complete things and when you'll work toward them. Make note of any daily habits that will be necessary for your aims.

Make It Fun

Think of ways to make working toward your goals fun. Celebrations at milestones, tracking charts or other devices, or sharing your progress with others can keep you motivated throughout the year.

Check In

Finally, make a point to check in together on your progress throughout the year. Revisit your ideas and categories and assess how you're doing. Such meetings will encourage family communication and bonding, as well as making adjustments or progress toward your goals.

When brainstorming ways to make the new year great, there are no wrong answers or outlandish ideas. FIZKES/SHUTTERSTOCK

(WOMAN) IZUSEK/GETTY IMAGES; (HAMBURGER) GORILLAIMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

GOALS

23 Things to Let Go in 2023



Disorder can be a stressful burden, while decluttering can bring peace.

Instead of accumulating new things in the new year, consider starting afresh by letting go of any or all of these 23 things

BARBARA DANZA

A new year inspires us to reach for new goals and strive for new aims. What if the key to having the best year yet lies not in accumulating, but in letting go? Here are 23 things to consider letting go of in 2023.

1 Jealousy
Jealousy and compassion can't exist simultaneously. If you're harboring jealousy, it's having a toxic effect on your life. Practice celebrating the good things in others' lives and turn feelings of envy into inspiration.

2 Debt
Living with debt is like living in chains. Make a strategy to get rid of your debt as quickly as possible. Think of all the ways you can earn more money and spend less while hammering away at your pile of debt. Once out of debt, set up a strategy to never get back in.

3 Judgment
Honestly assess how judgmental you are of others. Judgment can easily become a habit and can have a negative effect on your relationships and environment. Look for the good in others and cheer people on instead.

4 Clutter
If your living space is cluttered, your inner well-being is likely stifled. Disorder and too much stuff is a stressful burden. Begin looking around for items to donate and make a daily habit of decluttering your spaces. Little by little, you'll enjoy a bit more inner peace.

5 Fear
Fear has pervaded so many aspects of life in recent years. It can be debilitating. Ask yourself how fear is holding you back. Can you find the courage to face your fears and let some of them go? What would life be like if you weren't so afraid?

6 Pessimism
Winston Churchill famously said, "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." If you find yourself mostly seeing the glass as half-empty, consider adding a little hope to your outlook from time to time. Who knows what you'll allow to happen as a result!

If your living space is cluttered, your inner well-being is likely stifled.

7 Expectation
If you find yourself frequently disappointed in other people, audit your expectations of them. In fact, consider expecting nothing from others. Give of yourself generously with not one ounce of expectation in return and revel in the peace and happiness that brings.

8 Processed Foods
One of the easiest ways to improve your health and energy levels is to stay away from processed foods. Opt instead for real food that's found in nature—fruits, vegetables, meats, whole grains, nuts, seeds, etc.

9 Complaint
Complaining is something that can easily become a habit, but that brings negative energy to each endeavor or interaction. Pay attention to your frequency of complaint and try to minimize it as much as possible.

10 Resentment
Resentment eats you up inside. It's a heavy burden to carry. Find it within your heart to forgive anyone you feel resentment toward. It might seem difficult, but harboring resentment is much harder in the long run.

11 Screens
Oh, those screens. Our digital devices and the apps they host have been masterfully designed to employ every emotional trigger and psychological manipulation known to man to keep our attention. The cost of this is the attention we'd otherwise give to our real lives. How close can you get to screen-free in 2023?

12 Lies
The truth really will set you free. If you lie as a habit or if you live your life in a dis-

ingenuous way, begin to set things straight. Be truthful.

13 Self-Doubt
Most people underestimate their potential. Have confidence. Let go of your self-doubt and get to work.

14 Selfishness
Selfishness is often so deeply ingrained that it's difficult to detect. Train yourself to think of others first, be kind and generous, and let go of the inclination to be selfish.

15 Laziness
There's a difference between resting and being lazy. Rest is an investment in well-being and often follows an exertion of some sort. Laziness is avoiding responsibility. Get plenty of rest, but avoid laziness.

16 Perfection
Perfectionism is self-sabotage. It sounds noble to aim for perfection, but the elusive goal is actually a hindrance. Instead, keep your ideal outcome in mind but celebrate and focus on progress instead.

17 Procrastination
Author Gretchen Rubin said, "Nothing is more exhausting than the task that's never started." Kick procrastination to the curb and get started on those to-do lists that have been nagging you.

18 Low Standards
The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard said, "There is nothing with which every man is so afraid as getting to know how enormously much he is capable of doing and becoming." Are you setting the standards you hold yourself to too low? What might you become if you raised them?

19 Gossip
Gossip erodes trust and encourages the least likable parts of those who engage in it. Don't gossip.

20 Control
There's truly very little we can actually control in this life. Be the best person you can be in every role you play and leave the rest up to fate.

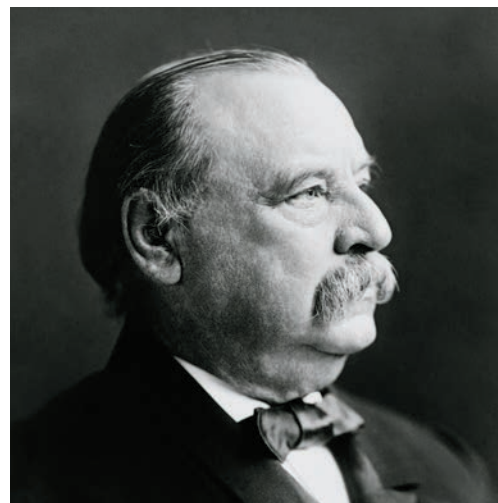
21 Worry
Those with faith in divine wisdom can set their minds at ease. Worry is a thief and almost always a complete waste of time and energy. It can be challenging, but try to set aside your worry.

22 Temper
If you have a bad temper, you'll suffer and those around you will suffer as well. You can stop this behavior. Take steps and ask for help.

23 Avoidance
Many of our bad habits boil down to avoidance. People avoid all kinds of things—difficult conversations, discomfort, responsibility, work, and even the spotlight. When you sense yourself avoiding something, dig into that and question whether you're making the best choice.



Avoiding processed foods in favor of natural foods is one of the easiest ways to improve health and energy levels.



Grover Cleveland, our 22nd and 24th president, wrote that the American people bear some responsibility for keeping national extravagance in check.



Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United States, was devoted to fiscal responsibility in government.

HISTORY

A President Who Warned Americans What Extravagant Federal Spending Would Do to Character

Grover Cleveland was a man who said what he meant and meant what he said, come hell or high water

LAWRENCE W. REED

"I favor the policy of economy, not because I wish to save money, but because I wish to save people. The men and women of this country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of the Government. Every dollar that we carelessly waste means that their life will be so much the more meager. Every dollar that we prudently save means that their life will be so much the more abundant. Economy is idealism in its most practical form."—President Calvin Coolidge, Inaugural Address, March 4, 1925.

In August 2023, when we mark the centennial of Coolidge's ascendance to the presidency upon the unexpected death of Warren Harding, we should celebrate his devotion to economy in government—and not just that he talked about it, but mainly because he delivered on it.

Federal expenditures in 1920, the year the Harding-Coolidge ticket won the election, amounted to \$6.4 billion. At Harding's passing in 1923, they were less than half that, at \$3.2 billion. Then, after more than five years of the Coolidge presidency, they were just a hair below \$3 billion. Tax rates in the 1920s were cut dramatically, federal revenues rose, and nearly half the national debt was eliminated. The budget was in surplus every single year.

Sadly, nothing like that sterling fiscal record has been seen since. Indeed, both major parties now embrace massive deficit spending as far into the future as the eye can see. The prospects of a balanced federal budget seem as remote as finding a beach in the Alps.

Coolidge was a Republican, and Republicans usually give lip service to fiscal responsibility. He just happened to be one who practiced it, too. But not so long before him, a Democratic president did as well. It certainly wasn't Woodrow Wilson, who blew the lid off the budget with massive tax and spending hikes for "progressive" programs and World War I. I refer, rather, to the last Democratic president of the 19th century, a man who vetoed more bills than all the previous chief executives combined—Grover Cleveland.

Many Americans today would undoubtedly dismiss Cleveland's warnings as 'quaint' and 'old-fashioned.'

Stand for Something

Cleveland's opposition to big government is well-documented in the pages of FEE.org (see the list of suggested readings below). His tenure is also the subject of a new and very good biography, "A Man of Iron: The Turbulent Life and Improbable Presidency of Grover Cleveland" by Troy Senik.

Cleveland won the White House in 1884 on a platform of restraining federal spending and corruption. Running for reelection in 1888, he won the popular vote but lost to Republican Benjamin Harrison in the Electoral College. A major reason he came

out of retirement to run again in 1892 was the reckless spending of the Harrison administration. He beat Harrison that year and became the only man ever elected to nonconsecutive terms (1885–89 and 1893–97).

I call to the reader's attention an article that Cleveland wrote three years after the end of his second term, in June 1901. Titled "The Waste of Public Money," it was one of half a dozen he penned for The Saturday Evening Post. In this one, he referred to "a malign condition which threatens us," an "evil" that he saw as "calamitous and destructive to our national character and integrity."

In 1901, the federal government spent half a billion dollars over the whole year, roughly equivalent in real terms to around \$12 billion today. Washington spends that much now in about half a day. Lest you think the feds were misers in 1901, ponder what Cleveland had to say in his article that year:

"Probably no one will have the hardihood to deny that the cost of our Government is excessive and wasteful, and that for this condition, the heedless neglect and indifference of our people are in some degree responsible. ... If the aggregate mass of our people are at all blameworthy on account of the present advanced stage of public prodigality, it is largely because they overlooked and tolerated its small beginnings, when at all times they should have been vigilant and uncompromising. A self-ruling people... should constantly remember that nothing multiplies itself more abundantly than national extravagance, and that neither an individual nor a popular government can easily correct or check habits of waste."

The former president didn't for a moment believe that only the politicians were to blame for excessive spending. He boldly asserted that many Americans embraced it. They were effectively bought and paid for, guilty of "accepting the bribes of selfish and personal advantage which public waste and extravagance offer."

Cleveland was often warned by advisers to moderate his stances to avoid controversy. Biographer H. Paul Jeffers quotes him as responding once to such advice by asking, "What is the use of being elected or re-elected unless you stand for something?" When he vetoed a bill to relieve drought-stricken farmers with federal money, he made it plain that "though the people support the government, the government should not support the people."

He saw his job as upholding the Constitution and keeping the federal government in its proper place, not weakening "the bonds of common brotherhood" by robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Upholding National Character

This was a man who said what he meant and meant what he said, come hell or high water. He spoke with a clarity of principle that makes a nation great, and the absence of which makes a great nation fail. He understood that no society in history that allowed itself to be bribed by its politicians ever survived such legal larceny.

In the final paragraphs of his June 1901 Saturday Evening Post article, Cleveland admonished his fellow Americans. With these words, he urged them to muster

the character to resist being bribed with their own money:

"The lessons of extravagance and paternalism must be unlearned; economy and frugality must be reinstated; and the people must exact from their representatives a watchful care for the general welfare and a stern resistance to the demands of selfish interests, if our Government is to be an enduring and beneficent protection to a patriotic and virtuous people."

Many Americans today would undoubtedly dismiss Cleveland's warnings as "quaint" and "old-fashioned." They want the government to give them stuff and they don't think much about who will pay for it. They think even less about how it corrupts the national character.

Cleveland would likely conclude that this is distressing evidence that the national character has already been deeply corrupted. And in that, I believe he would be precisely and disturbingly correct. The question each of us should ask ourselves is, "Am I part of the problem or part of the solution?"

This article was originally published on FEE.org

Lawrence W. Reed is the Foundation for Economic Education's (FEE) president emeritus, Humphreys Family senior fellow, and Ron Manners global ambassador for liberty; he served for nearly 11 years as FEE's president (2008–2019). He is the author of the 2020 book, "Was Jesus a Socialist?" as well as "Real Heroes: Incredible True Stories of Courage, Character, and Conviction," and "Excuse Me, Professor: Challenging the Myths of Progressivism." His website is LawrenceWReed.com

For Additional Information

"Grover Cared" by Lawrence W. Reed, National Review

"Grover Cleveland: One of America's Greatest Presidents" resource list by various authors, FEE

"Calvin Coolidge's Inaugural Address Warned of the Dangers of Legalized Larceny" by Lawrence W. Reed, FEE

"What Calvin Coolidge's 'Common Sense' Vetoes of Two Farm Bills Can Teach Us About Price Controls" by Lawrence W. Reed, FEE

"Cal and the Big Cal-Amity" by Lawrence W. Reed, FEE

"Meet the Only US President Born on the 4th of July" by Lawrence W. Reed, FEE

"Media Are Still Peddling One of the Great Myths of the Great Depression" by Lawrence W. Reed, FEE

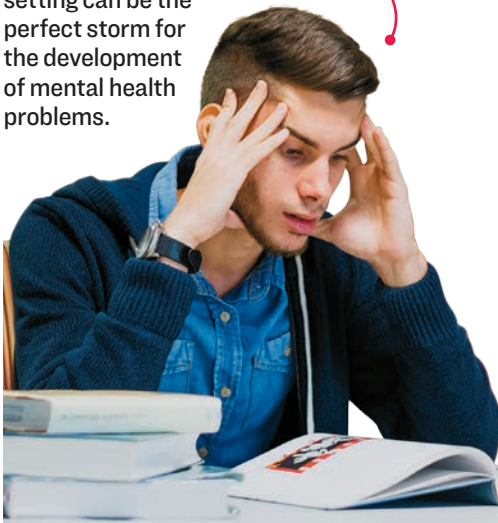
"Cleveland Passed 1888 Test of Character" by Lawrence W. Reed, Mackinac Center for Public Policy

PARENTING

As More College Students Struggle With Mental Health Issues, What Can Parents Do?

College students are under more stress than ever before, making support from family crucial

For some college students, the stress of being away from home, separation from family, and having to care for themselves in a new setting can be the perfect storm for the development of mental health problems.



VLADPHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

ERICA KOMISAR

This fall, North Carolina State University lost four students to suicide. Other colleges, such as Dartmouth, Vanderbilt, and the University of North Carolina, have reported student suicides on the rise. The epidemic of suicide attempts by young people is more than concerning—it's frightening. For college-aged students, in particular, there has been a sharp increase in suicidal ideation. In fact, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for college students.

Adolescence (age 9 to 25) is a critical period of right brain development, only second to ages 0–3. During adolescence, the brain is pruning all of the excess synapses and cells in a process as critical to mental and emotional health as the burst of growth in the early years. During this period in which the brain is being designed to become what will later be that adult's brain, stress is the most impactful on development.

College students are under more stress than ever before. In part, it has to do with parents' conscious and unconscious expectations and an educational system that

pushes them toward high achievement and intense competition. High school students are pressured to achieve perfect grades and perfect test scores on college entrance exams to even be considered for elite colleges. In addition, they're forced to think about the future in an adult-like manner for which they aren't prepared. They're also working in adult-like internships and jobs to get a leg up in the job market even before they've been able to explore their many options in university. This intense focus on the future isn't normal, or healthy, for high school and college-aged students who are developmentally focused on the present.

Unfortunately, this inability to be future-thinking also increases their chances of suicide. Suicide is an action taken by a young adult who can't see past their current adversity or distress to a brighter or more hopeful future, which makes their pain in the moment less bearable and more desperate. As adults, because we have working prefrontal cortices, we not only can see that tomorrow can be better, but we also have perspective that helps us to navigate adversity and stress.

In addition, due to the discrepant growth between the different parts of the right brain in adolescents and young adults, they're more vulnerable to breakdown. The amygdala, or the threat-sensing part of the brain, and the ventral striatum, the reward center, are growing at a more rapid rate than the prefrontal cortex, the emotional regulation part, which isn't finished growing until 25 years of age. This leads to more impulsivity, more hypersensitivity to stress, greater pain from losses of any kind and to criticism or rejection, as well as poorer judgment and ability to see things with perspective. All of these factors mean adolescents, even those in college, need to be treated with more sensitivity, empathy, and understanding rather than judgment and harsh criticism.

Environmental stress is also toxic for adolescents and young adults who are overwhelmed by technology and social media that focus on perfection, parental and personal high expectations, and a comparison culture. They're intensely aware of an unstable job market and political and economic system that makes their futures feel more uncertain, peppered with global warming, which suggests there may not be a future at all.

Adolescence is often the time when attachment disorders and the consequences of emotional insecurity that were planted in early childhood are expressed as depression, anxiety, and personality disorders. It's a weak point in development when any prior conflicts or losses are expressed. For college

students, being away from home and the stress of separation from family and having to care for themselves in a new setting can be the perfect storm for the development of mental health problems.

What Parents Can Do

So what can we, as parents, do about this crisis? It starts in the early years. Children aren't born resilient. As parents, we help them build resilience, not through toughness, but rather through tenderness, sensitivity, empathy, and our physical and emotional presence. We need to prepare our kids for a stressful adolescence by being as present as possible in the early years to lay the foundation of emotional security they'll need to withstand the stress, adversity, competition, and pressure they'll face as young adults entering college.

When they're under 3, and even throughout their childhood, we can help to regulate their distress, sadness, anger, fear, and excitement by helping them process how they're feeling without judgment, criticism, dismissal, or rejection. We also help them become resilient by providing them with a sense of safety and a sense of perspective about what's really important. We can model for them that we're imperfect and struggle, too, but emphasize that we're always focused on what's important—family and relationships—not money, status, and high achievement.

The best time to prepare our adolescents

for young adulthood is when they're young and under our roof. This doesn't mean that we can't provide them with much of the same empathy, sensitivity, and emotional processing when they head to college, but we're more limited, then, because they're often physically far away.

Ultimately, a big part of the solution to the mental health crisis among emerging young adults is to change our ways as adults, parents, and educational leaders.

A few words of advice for parents who see signs of depression or suicidal thoughts in their young adults. Look for:

- increased moodiness,
- increased and chronic sadness about the past or anxiety about the future
- hopelessness or despair about the future
- social isolation or social difficulties
- reduced physical activity
- sleep issues (too much or too little sleep, problems going to sleep, and problems staying asleep)

- eating issues (binge eating, weight gain, or extreme weight loss)
- a drop in their academic performance
- increased alcohol or drug use
- lack of motivation to engage or participate in activities at school
- roommate problems (they are living away from home, which is a secure haven, and are now forced to live in a small space with someone where there may be conflict).

If you see any of these signs in clusters, and for a prolonged period of two weeks, then don't wait to take action to help your child. Get them a therapist; in-person is great but remote can work in a world where there simply aren't enough therapists on college campuses to meet the demand. Go see your child at school if you can as soon as possible, so you can see how they are really doing. It is always harder to judge these issues from afar. If you see things that concern you, don't wait to get help.

The first step should be a well-trained psychodynamic therapist, not a CBT or DBT therapist (this is only for kids who are non-verbal and have difficulty expressing their emotions verbally). If they can talk about their feelings, then find someone who is trained to help them talk about their feelings in depth rather than just focus on symptom relief. And lastly, don't rush to a psychiatrist for medication (this should be the last resort), unless you have tried talk therapy and they are already advanced in their depression and

anxiety, in which case medication may be necessary to get them back to a place where talk therapy can have an impact.

Ultimately, a big part of the solution to the mental health crisis among emerging young adults is to change our ways as adults, parents, and educational leaders. We need to take a good, long look in the mirror at what we are doing to our children in projecting self-sufficiency, independence, and resilience on them before they have even developed a sense of security and safety in their environment. We are expecting too much of our kids and giving too little. We are creating a toxic culture in which they feel they have no alternatives other than to end their lives.

It's not too late for the adults to fix this, but we need to act quickly to make changes—meaning prioritizing children over everything else in our lives, including material success and work, and allowing our kids to be kids. That means rallying to take the pressure off of them, both internally and externally. Only then can we hope to turn around this epidemic of suicide in young people.

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

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."

(TOP PHOTO) ODUJA IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK; (BOTTOM PHOTO) JOSE LUIS PELAEZ INC./GETTY IMAGES



Incremental learning utilizes lots of review and lays information out in a logical sequence that fosters independent learning.

EDUCATION

An Old Textbook Has Some Things to Teach Us

When teaching your own children how to read and write, consider using some of the methods that raised the parents of ‘the Greatest Generation.’

JEFF MINICK

Recently, a New York couple, readers of *The Epoch Times*, sent me a 1914 edition of “Essentials of English: First Book.” As stated in the book’s preface, the authors, Henry Carr Pearson and Mary Frederika Kirchwey, both associated with Horace Mann School of Columbia University, intended their textbook for “use in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the elementary school.” “Essentials” is unremarkable in its physical appearance. It features a few paintings and photographs, and some drawings, but nothing comparable to the illustrations in our modern readers and grammars. Approximately 5 by 7 inches, its exterior is small, drab, and worn, so much so that it’s impossible to tell whether the original cover was green or blue.

Yet the old axiom—“Never judge a book by its cover”—holds true for this tarnished gem. If we spend some time with this little book, and, I suspect, other grade school texts from a century ago, we can take away some valuable lessons for teaching our own students and children.

Bricks Make Buildings

“Essentials of English” begins by introducing the student to the sentence, specifically to declarative and interrogative sentences. This is a logical first step, as the sentence is the marrow and bone of the English language. Throughout the rest of the book, Pearson and Kirchwey introduce students to other kinds of sentences along with plenty of practice in writing them.

Today, we call this technique incremental learning. Much as a mason builds a home brick by brick, incremental learning gives students small bits of information in a logical order, all with a final object in mind: mastery of the subject. In “Essentials of English,” students first learn the basic construction of the sentence, after which Pearson and Kirchwey in each new lesson add another piece to that puzzle—the use of capital letters for proper names, apostrophes, direct and indirect quotes, and so on.

The benefits of this method extend

beyond the subject studied. Without being directly instructed, students absorb concepts about order and logical sequences, a habit of thinking for life.

Incremental learning can also lead to independent learning. For example, the great strength of the Saxon Math program, used today by many schools and home educators, is incremental learning accompanied by lots of review. By fourth grade or so, homeschooling students using Saxon Math, as mine did, can often go from lesson to lesson teaching themselves without explanations from the parent-teacher.

‘Repetitio Est Mater Studiorum’

That’s the old Latin tag for “Repetition is the mother of studies.”

Many modern educators frown on memorization, contending that rote learning may eliminate comprehension. Others argue there’s little reason to learn a poem by heart when students can bring up the verse in an instant on their phones.

But these critics miss the point. Poetry, the times tables, historical dates—it not only exercises the brain to memorize such things, but the acquired information becomes a part of the students’ intellectual luggage, carried with them wherever they go.

In “Essentials of English,” memorization, repetition, and review are the keys to learning and retention. On page 7, for instance, fourth graders are asked to read some proverbs, or “wise sayings that have come down to us from olden times.” These include such adages as “Many hands make light work,” “A penny saved is a penny earned,”

When students memorize literature, historical dates, or the times tables, that information sticks with them the rest of their lives.



and “It takes two to make a quarrel.” After discussing the meaning of each proverb, they are asked to memorize the three “they like best,” and then write them from memory.

So it goes throughout the rest of “Essentials of English,” with oral and written drills, poems and proverbs to be learned by heart, and stories read and then retold in the student’s own words.

Like those parents and teachers of a century ago, let’s make it our goal to strike a flame in the hearts and minds of our children.

The Good Stuff

The stories and verse used by Pearson and Kirchwey constantly deepen the student’s familiarity with their culture, traditions, and the past.

Here are poems by the likes of Lord Alfred Tennyson and Oliver Wendell Holmes, maxims by the dozens, incidents and biographical sketches from American and European history, and folk tales from other countries—all with sets of questions to spark discussion and thought, accompanied by oral and written exercises.

We can follow the example set by Pearson and Kirchwey by immersing our children in their culture while teaching them how to read and write. We do so when we share fairy tales and nursery rhymes with them. When they get older and are able to read on their own, we can introduce them to the good stories, biographies, and histories that abound in the literature for young people.

Lighting a Flame

“Essentials of English” exists “to promote growth in language power by giving constant practice in the use of language under stimulating conditions” and “to stimulate the pupils to speak and write the language with freedom, clearness, and correctness.”

Proof that these old methods and textbooks like “Essentials of English” worked can be found in their progeny. In 1920, the average educational level for those 25 years and older was eighth grade. Yet from those one-room schoolhouses and basic books came the men and women who contributed so mightily to America’s explosive development in the 20th century, who served in the First World War, and who were the parents of “the Greatest Generation.” Their education had outfitted these children for citizenship.

On the last page of “Essentials of English” is a list of sayings and sentences for practice in the parts of speech. Among these is “How great a fire a little spark kindleth!” Like those parents and teachers of a century ago, let’s make it our goal to strike a flame in the hearts and minds of our children.

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. 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.”

In a Bad Mood? How to Turn It Around

A bad mood doesn’t have to mean a bad day; use these tips and tricks to turn that frown upside down.

BARBARA DANZA

We humans can be fickle when it comes to our emotional state. Sometimes we’re bothered by our environment or the actions of others, sometimes we’re stressed or worried, and sometimes we just wake up on the wrong side of the bed. Whatever the cause, sometimes we simply find ourselves stuck in a bad mood.

While a chronic negative emotional state may call for more serious attention, more often than not, a bad mood can be addressed quickly and turned around swiftly. A bad mood doesn’t have to mean a bad day; you may just turn that frown upside down. Here are a few steps to try the next time you find yourself in a bad mood.

Seek Solitude

The demands of other people, whether perceived or realized, can feel overwhelming. If you’re in a bad mood, you’re probably not bringing your best to the people around you. As soon as you can, carve out some

solitude for yourself. Perhaps a walk outside, a cup of tea, or even a nap will give you the break you need to reduce the incoming stimuli and reset your thoughts. Even if all you can get is five minutes hiding in your closet, take it. Breathe and bask in glorious solitude.

Eat, Drink, and Be Merry

A busy lifestyle can easily lead us to forget to eat or even take a sip of water. If our hunger and thirst go unanswered long enough, our bodies are sure to turn up the crank. When you find your mood off, ask yourself: “Have I eaten yet today? Am I thirsty?” Take care of your basic needs and see if a meal or a glass of water doesn’t make that crankiness subside.



Taking time every day to step away from glowing screens allows a chance to breathe fresh air, take in the sounds and smells of nature, and reset.

Go Outside

Many of us spend far too much time sitting indoors with our eyes focused on a glowing screen. Don’t let a day pass by without stepping away from your work and into the sunshine (or rain, or snow). No matter the weather, get out there, even if for a few minutes. Breathe fresh air, look around you, and take in the sounds and smells of nature. If you find yourself in a bad mood, walk out the door.

Phone a Friend

Sometimes we’re feeling down because we’ve had altogether too much solitude. If you’ve been riding solo for a while and can’t figure out why you’re so blue, pick up the phone and connect with a loved one. It could be someone you speak to regularly or someone you haven’t heard from in ages. Make a connection, find out how that person is doing, laugh, share your kind heart, and nurture a relationship. You may find your bad mood turned around in a jiffy.

Practice Gratitude

Often, we find ourselves experiencing a negative mental state when we’ve lost perspective. We’ve forgotten our priorities and what truly matters. The easiest way to regain a proper perspective is to

list things we’re grateful for. Take out a pen and paper or simply state them out loud; either way, list as many things as you can possibly think of.

For example, you may be grateful to be alive or for your parents, your children, the food in your cupboard, the plumbing and electricity in your home, your faith in God, or your favorite comfy pajamas. Keep going until you’re plumb out of ideas and reveling in the immense abundance you enjoy in your life.

Look Within

If we look upon the experiences of our lives as learning opportunities, then no matter what befalls us, it’s a good thing. When you’re in a bad mood, stop for a moment and look for a lesson. What is it that’s driving this negative state? What are your thoughts telling you? Is there something you can’t let go of, that you’re disappointed in, that you wish was different? Why is that thing bothering you? Is there a way you can improve yourself that would lead you to not be so bothered? How can you learn from this bad mood? Use it to improve and you’ll have a kind of superpower.

Correction

The link to Tim Carter’s book in *Dear Next Generation* in the Dec. 21 edition on page B6 was incorrect. It should be <http://go.timcarter.com/paperroute>. The *Epoch Times* regrets the error.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



Yet another highlight of this sumptuous palace: the Luca Giordano gallery. This gallery has a magnificent hall of mirrors, an important feature of the Baroque style. The painted ceiling frescoes are another essential component of the Baroque, and pay homage to the Medici.



As soon as visitors pass the doors of the Medici Riccardi Palace, they’re greeted with an elegant inner courtyard featuring prominent classical features. An internal court surrounded by an arcade is typical of Renaissance palaces, and the Medici Palace is an early example of this. At the center of this arcade stands a bronze statue of David by Donatello. Just above him lies the Medici crest, five red balls and a blue ball, which shows their influence on the Florentine Renaissance. Underneath the arcade windows, the friezes present sculptured marble medallions.



A glimpse of the Medici Riccardi Palace’s decoration after the Riccardi family renovated the interiors. This room is in the Baroque style, as shown by the beautiful gilded ceiling, hanging chandeliers, and furniture. However, the use of tapestries on the walls are a feature of the Renaissance style, showing how the Riccardi blended the Medici influence with the Baroque style.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

Palazzo Medici Riccardi: The Power and Beauty of the Medici Palace

ARIANE TRIEBSWETTER

Once ruled by the powerful Medici family, Florence hosts some of the most beautiful treasures of the Italian Renaissance. Among these is the official residence of the Medicis until 1659, known as the Palazzo Medici Riccardi, or the Medici Palace.

In 1444, Cosimo the Elder, the head of the Medici banking family, commissioned this palace as a private residence for his family. The Medici had a tremendous economic and artistic influence in Tuscany and promoted the growth of the Florentine Renaissance.

A pioneer of Italian Renaissance architecture, Michelozzo di Bartolomeo, designed the structure. The architect took inspiration from ancient Greek and Roman classical architecture, an essential component of the Renaissance style. This is especially clear in the palace’s rough-textured façade in the rusticated masonry style, a decorative technique used in Roman architecture that highlighted a building’s stone construction. The palace’s façade combines this rough texture

with an ashlar decoration (finely worked stone) and double lancet windows; these were popular features of 15th-century Tuscan palaces.

The Medici Palace was a prototype for Renaissance architecture, representing the ideals of a new era. It’s even rumored that the palace’s courtyard marble medallions inspired a young Michelangelo in his later work.

The palace also hosts gems of Renaissance art. Among these is the Magi Chapel, which hosts a colorful fresco cycle painted by Benozzo Gozzoli praising the family’s rising power. There’s also the Luca Giordano gallery, with a ceiling fresco honoring the Medici. This last one was commissioned by Marquis Gabriello Riccardi, the new owner of the palace in 1659. He retained the original architectural style of the palace while expanding it, and renovated the interiors in the richly decorative Baroque style.

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



The private chapel of the Medici the Magi Chapel. Its marble walls are covered in a rich fresco cycle by painter Benozzo Gozzoli in 1459. In the Renaissance, no decoration was left to chance. The colorful wall decorations depict the three Magi procession as well as some members of the Medici family such as Cosimo and his son, Piero the Gouty. The Magi’s entrance into the city is a symbolic representation of the Medici’s influence over Florence and represents hope for the future.



Historic England category winner: "Glastonbury Tor" by Sam Binding.



World History winner: Luke Stackpoole—Fenghuang Ancient Town, China.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Capturing History

Winners of History Hit's photo competition captured some of the world's most mesmerizing historic places

LOUISE CHAMBERS

History Hit, the famous streaming video platform founded by the award-winning British historian Dan Snow, has announced the winners of its 2022 Historic Photographer of the Year competition—and the images are outstanding.

Emblems of the past from around the globe were captured using landscape, urban, and aerial photography in novel ways or from novel perspectives. Five judges, experts in the fields of history and photography, spent three weeks narrowing 1,200 entries from UK residents down to a shortlist of 33 before choosing the three category winners.

Originality, composition, technical proficiency, historical impact, and the story behind the submission were their prime criteria.

Snow said judging the 2022 awards was a personal highlight, reflecting: "It is clear that the stunning entries that make up the shortlist are the product of patience, tech-

Emblems of the past from around the globe were captured using landscape, urban, and aerial photography in novel ways or from novel perspectives.

nical skill, and an awareness of both the past and the present. The creativity and talent on show was next to none."

Overall Winner

Steve Liddiard of Swansea, Wales, has been named the overall winner of the competition for the second consecutive year for his photo of a derelict wool mill in the Welsh countryside: a building left empty for more than 60 years, the shelves still stacked with colored wool and abandoned machinery parts.

"Nature is slowly taking over leaving a stunning mix of nature and Welsh industrial history, forever intertwined," Liddiard said, according to History Hit's overall shortlist.

Competition judge Claudia Kenyatta described Liddiard's work as "a beautiful example of nature claiming the industrial heritage of the Welsh wool industry" in a press release, while judge Rich Payne of Little Dot Studios, which owns History Hit, admired the contrast between the "artifice of the wool's colors and its natural material."

Historic England Winner

Another two-time winner, Sam Binding of Bristol, England, earned top place in the Historic England category for the second year in a row with his misty morning image of Glastonbury Tor, a stately structure on an island in the Somerset Levels.

"The low-lying Levels are prone to mist," Binding explained. "When I arrived, I was in for a very nice surprise. As the sun rose up, a wave of mist swept up and over the top of the Tor, creating an incredibly ethereal scene."

Snow praised Binding's photo for its uniqueness.

"I'm a believer in getting up and out in the cold and dark to get the perfect shot, and this photographer has done exactly that. There are millions of pictures of the

Tor every year but only one like this," he said.

Fellow judge Fiona Shields described Binding's submission as "an elegant image, powerful in its simplicity, the light falling so perfectly, framing the historic monument." Judge Claudia Kenyatta of Historic England believed the photo "captures the legends, stories, and history that surround this ancient hill," and "helps people understand more about England's history and the achievements that have been made over the centuries."

World History Winner

Luke Stackpoole from Churt in Surrey, England, took first place in the World History category for his atmospheric photo of Fenghuang Ancient Town in China, a town constructed among mountains in 1704 and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List.

Stackpoole described Fenghuang as an "exceptionally well-preserved ancient town that harbors unique ethnic languages, customs, arts, as well as many distinctive architectural remains of Ming and Qing styles."

Judge Philip Mowbray claimed the most striking elements of Stackpoole's photo are the stilts of the riverside homes and their reflections, accentuated by the photographer's choice to use portrait orientation.

"Also, the way the photographer has captured both people and lit-up interiors shows the structures are still part of people's everyday lives," Mowbray said.

History Hit has published the overall shortlist, Historic England shortlist, and World History shortlist on its website.

The overall winner takes home a cash prize of 250 pounds (about \$305), while category winners receive 50 pounds each (about \$61). The Historic England category is also entitled to up to 100 pounds worth of books from the Historic England collection.



Overall Shortlist: Bella Falk: Church of Our Lady of the Angels, Pollença, Mallorca, Spain.



Overall winner: "Welsh Wool Mill" by Steve Liddiard.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

The Years

By Thomas Hall Shastid

All around us, ever floating,
Silently yet swiftly on,
Pass the years in quick succession—
Years that are forever gone.

Years that soon are past recalling,
Years of gladness or of woe;
We can never stop their fleeting
But forever they will go.

Years of sorrow passing round us,
Dark and dreary as the night,
Years of gladness quickly follow
Bringing thoughts all fair and bright.

Still the years continue passing
Swiftly as the years can be,
Till we leave our pains and sorrow;
Till we find eternity.

WHERE DO MATH TEACHERS GATHER FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE?

Another fresh new year is here,
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!

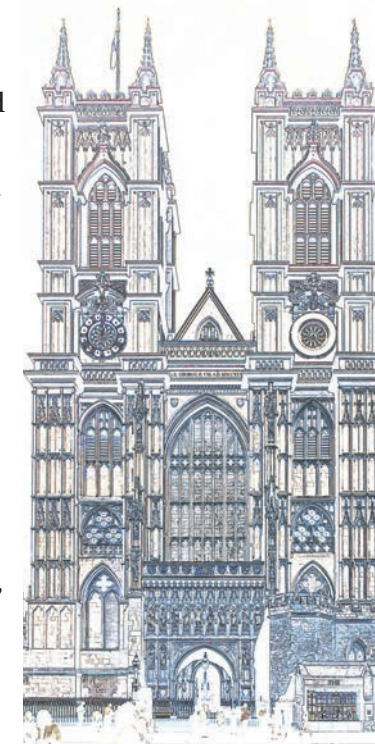
WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD (1921-1994)
AMERICAN MOTIVATIONAL WRITER

This Week in History

WESTMINSTER ABBEY OPENS

On Dec. 28, 1065, Edward the Confessor consecrated and opened the historic London church. Westminster Abbey became the site of coronations and other ceremonies of national significance in England.

The church's history goes back even further. It's said that the first Christian king of the East Saxons, Sæberht, founded the church that was later called the westminster (or monastery), and legend has it that St. Peter miraculously consecrated this church.



Today Westminster Abbey is dedicated to regular worship as well as important events.

By Aidan Danza

THE JUNCO



Juncos are small birds common in backyards.

They are known as snowbirds, because they arrive in the United States in the winter. While all juncos are quite similar, there are a variety of different species and subspecies of junco, which live in all different regions of America.

Though they are called juncos, they are just a type of sparrow. They are named for their preferred winter habitat, which includes bushes, woodlands, and fields. Junco is a Latin word, translating to "a bird of bushes and reeds."

There are four species of junco, including the yellow-eyed, the colcano, and the Guadalupe, and the dark-eyed. However, only the dark-

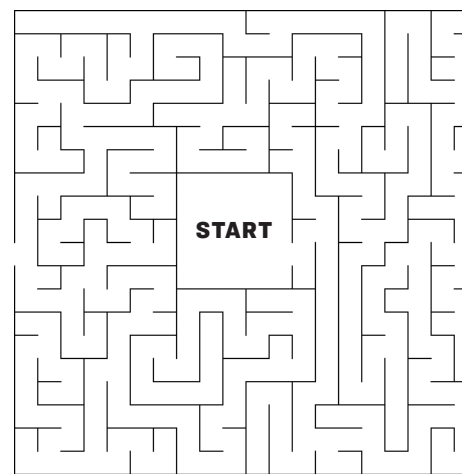
eyed and the yellow-eyed live in the United States, with the yellow-eyed living in Arizona and New Mexico. In terms of identification, the yellow-eyed junco has a bright, large yellow eye, with a black eye mask, and is gray all over, except for the back, which is a rusty red.

The dark-eyed junco is a more difficult bird to identify because of its many regional variations in plumage. There are five varieties

in total: the slate-colored, the Oregon, the pink-sided, the red-backed, and the gray-headed. The slate-colored is gray overall, with white underparts, and lives throughout the United States and Canada, though it's more common in the east. The Oregon is black-headed and rusty brown over the rest of the body, and isn't found east of the Rockies. The pink-sided has a gray head, a grayish-brown back, and

dull pink sides, and lives in the Rockies. The red-backed junco is light gray, with a small black "eye mask," a whitish throat, and a rusty patch on the upper back, living only in Arizona and New Mexico. The gray-headed junco is almost exactly the same as the red-backed junco, but it has a completely gray throat and a paler bill. It lives farther north than the gray-backed junco, in the southern Rockies.

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

5	10		
35			
2	10		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1
9 - 2 + (01 + 01)
9 + 01 + 2 x 01

Medium puzzle 1

7	13		
52			
3	13		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
8 x 13 = 7 x 13

Hard puzzle 1

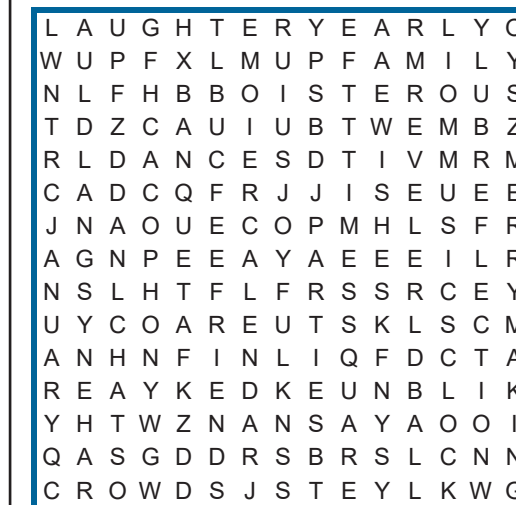
3	27		
14			
1	14		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
1 - 27 - 8 x 14



HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball
www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

WORD SEARCH: Happy New Year!



- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Auld Lang Syne | Friends |
| Ball | Hats |
| Bands | January |
| Banquet | Joyful |
| Boisterous | Kisses |
| Cacophony | Laughter |
| Calendar | Loud |
| Cheers | Merrymaking |
| Clock | Mob |
| Crowds | Music |
| Dances | Parties |
| Family | Reflection |
| Feast | Reveler |
| | Times |
| | Square |
| | Wishes |
| | Yearly |

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