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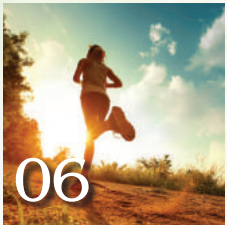
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Joyful Living Magazine is committed to embracing a lifestyle of joy and abundance. We are platform for beauty, goodness and grace. We value inspired thinking and embrace changing seasons. We honor your legacy and where you are from. Our desire is to serve and respect our community.

Our intention is to bring valuable resources as our diverse natural surroundings. We devote this magazine to you and bless your journey today, tomorrow and always. Grateful is our foundation. Love is where we live. We are Joy. We are Full. We are Living.

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Journey



BY SUZANNE LUIS

Suzanne is a counselor at the Transformation Center, I have a Lay Christian Counseling Certificate from Regent University, I also am licensed with the State of California as a Drug and Alcohol Counselor and I teach and do dream interpretation.

A few years ago I discovered a wonderful book called "The Body Keeps The Score" by Bessel Van Der Kolk it is one of the most respected book on trauma available. This book helped me understand that we have a journey to go on. If we have painful memories that we do not want to deal with, it tells us that unless we are willing to be fully integrated with the painful parts of ourselves we are like a book that is missing chapters. It is a book that does not cohesive. The word cohesion: mid 17th cent.: from Latin cohaes- 'cleaved together,' from the verb cohaerere

We all long for intimacy with others and as I have discovered intimacy with others involves being "known" we cannot be intimate with others and known if we are not able to "know" ourselves, if we cannot allow ourselves to explore the painful parts of our lives and the affect they have had on us we are condemned to a sad kind of loneliness. I

One of the more important aspects to knowing ourselves is to allow ourselves to know the child we were when we were young.

have discovered over the years in my work people that people who are afraid of emotional intimacy marry people who are afraid of emotional intimacy; and until they are willing to deal with this truth they are both feel misunderstood and alone.

One of the more important aspects to knowing ourselves is to allow ourselves to know the child we were when we were young. I have learned from people that it can be very difficult to get in touch with the little girl or boy and interestingly enough some have even found that some do not like the child that they were growing up, this happens because the child experienced pain they do not want to experience. I often have people write a letter to themselves from the child's perspective.

In the book *The Body Keeps The Score* is a quote which says: The "night sea journey" is the journey into the parts of ourselves that are split off, disavowed, unknown, unwanted, cast out, and exiled to the various subterranean worlds of consciousness. . . . The goal of this journey is to reunite us with ourselves. Such a homecoming can be surprisingly painful, even brutal. In order to undertake it, we must first agree to exile nothing. —*Stephen Cope*

Let's begin a journey together to discover if there are ways we can know and understand ourselves more fully. JL

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THE IMPORTANCE OF Exercise

My sister sent me a picture recently of my 88-year-old dad climbing on a ladder to fix the roof. We both were a little concerned about him doing that because of his age. But, let me tell you something about my dad: he has always been an active person and has worked manual jobs all of his adult life. He never joined a gym, which is great, but he was always busy doing physical things. This is why I believe that, at 88 years of age, he is still able to climb up on a ladder and work the way he does.



BY BENI JOHNSON

Beni Johnson:
To Your Health

Author of *Healthy
& Free*

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Physical exercise is a very important part of our lives. Our bodies were built by God to move. It is one of the health tools I talk about in my book, *Healthy and Free*.

Here are some reasons why it is important to exercise:

It can protect you from developing heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure. After being diagnosed with high blood pressure, I discovered in my research that exercise was one of the tools I could use to cure myself. Exercise, along with changing your diet, is also fundamental to reversing type 2 diabetes. Dr. Mercola, an osteopathic physician, writes, "Exercise is an absolutely essential factor, and without it, you're unlikely to get [diabetes] under control. It is one of the fastest and most powerful ways to lower your insulin and leptin resistance." (<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/01/07/diabetes-remission.aspx>)

Exercise also improves sleep, and they are finding that it helps curb drug and alcohol addiction. An article from Bradford Health Services explains how this is possible:

Exercise naturally and positively alters your brain chemistry. When you exercise, your body releases endorphins which create a natural high. These are the same endorphins your body released

while you abused substances. However, abuse of drugs and alcohol causes an imbalance that interferes with a person's ability to feel pleasure, happiness, and satisfaction. Dedicated physical activity during treatment and recovery will help you reintroduce natural levels of endorphins in your system. This not only helps you feel better, but reteaches your body that it is capable of regulating your own brain chemistry and mood in healthy, natural ways.

You can find more information on <http://bradfordhealth.com/exercise-during-addiction-recovery/>

So, where do we start? There are basically 3 types of exercise that I recommend: cardio, stretching, and weight training.

The first is cardio (cardiovascular). This type of exercise is when you get your heart rate pumping above your normal resting rate. So, running, swimming, mountain climbing or even walking can prove to be a great way to get your heart rate up. In doing this, you will support good heart health and even lose some weight in the process. Say you want to start by walking. A good rule is to walk 30-60 minutes per day, 4-6 days a week. The Heart Association tells us that we need to take 10,000 steps a day for good heart health.

The next type of exercise is stretching. Stretch-

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ing increases the blood flow to your muscles, which means improving your circulation. It conditions the muscles and joints, helping to prevent injuries and reduce recovery time. Because I work out in a gym, the first thing I do is 15-20 minutes of cardio. Then, I stretch for 15 minutes before I do any weight training. I've found that, at 62 years of age, it's very helpful. I'm able to move and bend easier when I stretch. There are videos online that show you how to stretch the right way so you don't injure yourself.

The last type of exercise, and my favorite, is weight training. When you turn 40, you start to lose muscle. The

older you get after that, the more muscle you lose. So, why is it important to keep muscle on? Muscle burns fat! So, if you are trying to lose weight, building muscle mass will help tremendously.

Keep in mind that muscle weighs more than fat, so even if the scale claims that you haven't lost a pound, you will have lost inches. Another reason to weight train is that, when you start building muscles, your brain tells your bones—your skeletal system—to get strong. So, especially for women in the menopausal years, maintaining muscle will help fight osteoporosis and related fractures.

I told my daughter years ago that the

best thing she could do for her physical body was to begin lifting weights while she was still young, because it would pay off when she got to be my age. If someone were to ask me, "what's your goal when you lift weights and build muscles?" My response would be, "I want to be a good shape when I'm 70." It's not a vain thing; it's a health thing. I was talking with a gal who was 58-years-old who wanted to know if it was too late for her. I told her, "NO! it's never too late."

So, I would encourage you to make exercise an important part of your life. It will pay off in the end. To your health! JL

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I'm no expert, but I'm beginning to recognize when marriage feels more like a boxing ring than a walk in the park. Perhaps thirty years of matrimony, a ton of marriage DVD's and hand-to-hand combat experience have all given me a clue. Most marriages take more technical knockouts than we ever imagine, as we stand starry eyed at the altar. For some of us, it may even be time to listen to the Referee, go to our respective corners and get a fresh perspective.

Mama (forgot to tell me)

There'd be Days Like This



BY BONNIE MARK

Unfortunately, many dear parents (and others) forget to warn us just how difficult it can be to “do life” with another person. I got married in the era before anyone even thought it smart to do pre-marital counseling (what were we thinking). These days, even with God in their corner, thousands of folks are giving up, throwing in their sweat-drenched towels and looking for relief from the strain of married life. In the go-to-words of our new president—sad, very sad. What’s going on here?

Hey, life is hard, and then you die? Wait a minute, that’s what the world tries to tell us. We, as Christians, have the abundant life Jesus called us to. The minute we forget this, we start a downward spiral to hopelessness and giving up. There most definitely is abundant life in Jesus, and if we aren’t experiencing this in our marriages, let’s not be too proud to ask God why and “man and woman-up” enough to address the issues.

Yes, that’s right; address the issues. Many folks try to ignore the problems and pretend life is perfect—yours truly included. But God is ever ready to show us there’s no perfect person or perfect marriage. We mustn’t be too proud to admit we need help navigating.

If we’re still breathing on the planet, we will have conflict. But I hate conflict and avoid it like the Hong Kong flu, you say. Well, the key is to learn effective, kind ways to communicate the issues without tearing

down our partner. Learning to “speak the truth in love” is HUGE! I’m absolutely still working on this one—every-single-day-of-my-life.

We often waste precious time inadvertently trying to make our partner become “just like us”. Oh, what a wonderful world it would be, right? No, wrong! The truth is, our differences, when blended together, make an efficient tool for the kingdom of God. The enemy of our souls just can’t wait to get in there and mess that one up. We must help each other become the man and woman God created us to be, enjoying who we both are. Let’s stop putting claustrophobic bindings on one another and set each other free for crying out loud. We are different for a reason

Anger and unforgiveness—these two can sneak up on us like a couple of ninjas in the dark. For many of us, we can’t even admit that we’re truly angry, and if you’re like me, you may have been raised to think that “good Christians” don’t even get mad. When we can recognize that we’re madder than a hornet, and then ask God, “Why am I so angry? What ever should I do?” He will definitely show us and then lead us to forgive those who have angered us. Carrying around this stuff is like poison to our spirits, souls and bodies.

Oh, there’s more, so much more, to this marriage journey; every single day there’s a new lesson to glean. But for now, suffice it to say, “Love never fails” and best of all, “...but with God all things are possible” Even marriage. **JL**

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Having Grace

WHILE JUGGLING KIDS, BUSINESS AND LIFE



BY MAEGEN TAIT


I am the wife of Eddie Tait and mother to five beautiful girls. Aliah 16, Alexis 15, Allison 13, Ava 11, and Amariah 9. When I tell people I have five girls, I get many reactions. Some look as though their eyes are going to pop out of their heads like I'm crazy, some say how blessed we are, and some say I'm super woman. I honestly think every mom is super woman, if you have one child or ten. I felt God's grace and provision grow with each child. He really is a good Father and as gives an abundance of grace when we need it. "My grace is sufficient for you", which means there is always enough grace for every season and circumstance we may find ourselves in.

About seven years ago we moved to Redding, California to be a part of Bethel Church. After being here a few years my husband and I opened a Christian TaeKwonDo School. I try to take classes at Prime Martial Arts as much as I can when I'm not being a taxi driver, helping with homework, shopping, cleaning, taking care of someone who sick or emotional. I think I have been a purple belt for six months, which is

a long time and most of my kids have graduated to the next belt before me. We were blessed to have my wonderful mother move in with us this past year, which adds a unique dynamic to our home. My husband is the best and is so amazing with 7 girls in the house! He is always willing to help in any way, and yes even those girl runs to the store late at night for ice cream after he has worked from 6am-8pm. My kids are all very active in their own ways with singing, drums, dancing, sports, acting, youth and most are social butterflies. If it wasn't already busy, I decided to start studying to get my Real Estate license and write a children's book.

Every day seems to have its challenges but I can't let that defeat me. If I let defeat control me, what message would I send to my kids or to myself? I have days when I feel exhausted, over emotional, old, defeated and stressed out. Some days I feel I move at a snail's speed but that's ok because I'm moving forward not backward, and its not every day. I also have days were I can check off 10 projects and those are the days that help make up for the snail days. Yes my dreams are important but so are the rest of the 7 in this house. It's important to ask Holy Spirit who needs attention today, and listen. It may be you, or maybe it's your chance to ignite your child into his/her destiny. We all experience the not so fun days, but it's those days that I realized I have a choice. I can choose to walk with defeat or I can walk in victory. I chose victory. Ps 108:13 says, "You are the one who gives us victory and crushes our enemies". Jesus is the victor and he lives in me, so what does that make me?

My husband and I have three main guidelines in life (Are you ready because it's complicated?): Put God first, Marriage second and your children third. If we make time for all three but get the order mixed up, life can get mixed up. I'm not saying there won't be times when you need to adjust but do it together and in prayer. So I encourage you, be empowered by the Holy Spirit and let him guide your everyday. **JL**



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Failure is Not An Option



BY CYNDI BARBER

Cyndi Barber: is a Pastoral Counselor at the Transformation Center where she specializes in relationships and inner healing. She also writes monthly for iMom.com, a parenting website. Her own blog is upandovercomers.com

When children imagine their futures they see themselves through lenses of infinite possibilities. Visions of heroes, princesses, astronauts, sports giants, and ballerinas dance through their heads. Kids don't usually think of life according to what they can't do. They daydream of what they can do. Their imaginations run wild with options that have no limits.

Coming up against personal limitations and the criticisms of others are what want to stop dreams from becoming realities. Not being able to hit the ball in a little league game or falling down during a ballet recital scream "loser" and it is easy to give up on ourselves. It's tempting to give up because it's hard to get up and try again with the risk of another failure in front of us.

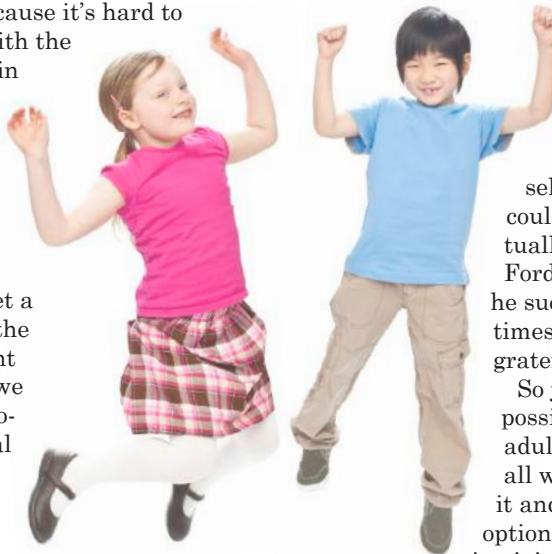
Failures are the proving ground where true champions are created. What we do when we don't get the promotion, lose the account, get fired, or get a rejection letter can be the most important moment of our life. The beliefs we take away from this moment have the potential to launch us toward greatness or cause us to landslide into mediocrity.

The temptation is to believe, "I am not cut out for this", "Others have something more than I do", or "I will never succeed". And like driving a car, we will steer our lives toward

what we are looking at. If you get distracted and look toward that distraction you may end up driving right into it. When we "steer" our lives and focus on failure and negativity we may end up driving our lives right into that failure and making it our identity.

What we believe about ourselves is more powerful than any other hindrance around us. Our beliefs about ourselves is the force that directs our lives. I like to study the lives of great people. I like to see how they became so successful. Most people of great achievement arrived there because they didn't give up and they never identified themselves as failures. They believed they could succeed if they didn't give up. Eventually, success caught up to them. Henry Ford failed and went broke five times before he succeeded. Thomas Edison failed 1000 times before he created the light bulb. I'm so grateful they pressed on!

So just like kids daydreaming of limitless possibilities, let's do some daydreaming as adults. Let's take time each day to dream of all we could achieve if we put our minds to it and decided that giving up was not an option. It's been said that the only failure is in giving up. So let's take failure off the table and focus on limitless possibilities. What can you dream of for your life? What's really stopping you from achieving that dream? What would you do if you had nothing holding you back? JL



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Sunshine Scones



BY JENNA
INGEBRETSEN

Prep time: 10-15 minutes
Cook time: 13-15 minutes
Cool time: 3-5 minutes

**Ingredients for
Sunshine Scones**

2 cups Flour (plus 2 tbsp.)
2 tbsp. Sugar

1 tbsp. Orange peel, zested
½ tbsp. Fresh Rosemary, chopped fine
½ tsp. Salt
¼ tsp. Baking Soda
6 tbsp. Butter, cold
¼ Milk (whole milk preferred)
¼ Fresh Orange Juice
1 Egg

1 cup Craisins

**Ingredients for
Orange Honey Butter**

1/2 tbsp. Orange Juice
1 tsp. Orange Zest
1 tbsp. Honey
¼ cup Butter, softened

Directions

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees.

Combine flour, sugar, orange zest, rosemary, salt and baking soda in a mixing bowl, and stir well. Spring is a great time to use herbs like rosemary to add depth to your flavors - especially with citrus - so don't be afraid. Cut cold butter into the dry mixture, and stir until it is crumbly throughout.

In another bowl, mix the milk, orange juice, and egg, then stir in the Craisins. Slowly, mix these liquids into the crumbles, and combine until you have a soft, manageable dough.

On a clean, flat surface, sprinkle the additional flour, then turn out your dough. Press and fold the dough in a kneading motion, no more than 10 times. Then, form the dough into

a circle the size of a pie (about 8-9" diameter), and cut into 8 even wedges. (For mini scones, as pictured, create two 4" circles, and cut each into 8 even wedges, making 16 total.) Place wedges onto a greased cooking sheet, leaving at least 1" wiggle-room between each.

Bake at 400 degrees for 13-15 minutes, until golden around the edges, then remove to cool for 3-5 minutes.

While the scones cool, mix up the honey, orange juice, and orange zest. Whisk into your softened butter to create the orange honey butter. (For an added twist, use whipped cream cheese instead of butter.)

These perfect-for-spring scones are best served warm, and go great with fresh fruit. (Or with mimosas, for special occasions - shhh.) **JL**

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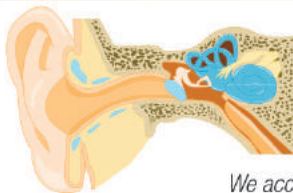
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Let Hope Arise: AN ADOPTION STORY



BY LONNIE JULIUS MARTIN

On September 26, 2008 I packed up and drove to Adopthelp in Sherman Oaks California. I was nervous, excited and eager to find out if it would be possible to adopt as a single mom. I had prayed about my decision and inquired of the Lord for His perspective. I told the Lord, I am going to start walking forward and you open or shut the door.

As I sat in the office awaiting the arrival of the attorney and social worker, I experienced a myriad of emotions. I had inquired with three other agencies that denied my application because I was single. I really felt drawn toward this agency, but was this another dead end? After the meeting I was gleefully dancing out of my chair. I was assured that I was a perfect candidate for adoption! At that moment, the door flung open . . . and so did my heart.

I went home and began the necessary paperwork preparations involved in adoption. It was a long tedious process but as I moved forward, I felt the Lord illuminating my next step. I bought a journal and began writing letters to the little person that would one day call me mommy. I was falling in love with just the idea of holding that sweet little baby someday, whoever it was.

On April 1, 2009, seven short months after signing up with the agency, I received "the phone call" I will never forget hearing the words, "Lonnie you have been chosen by one of our birth moms, she is a single teen mom from the mid-west, she is having a baby boy and her due date is June 27th. Would you like to proceed with placement?" It took me a moment to gather the thoughts that flooded my head and the waves of emotion that washed over my heart. Yes! yes please. Yet another door flung open! June was two months away! There was so much to do! Would I be ready? What was I thinking?? My mind raced and

then I felt in my spirit the Lord say, I will open or shut each door . . . keep walking.

On June 23, 2009 I boarded a plane bound for Chicago. How strange it was to have an empty car seat, diaper bag and just a hope in my heart. At 4am on June 24, 2009, 2 days short of exactly 9 months from when I had walked into the agency, I met my child's birthmother in the delivery room. She graciously invited me to be by her side during his birth. At 12:10pm Gavin James Julius entered the world. He was perfect. As he let out his first cry and took his first breath, I remember the nurse saying, "Who gets him?" and his birth mom responded with, "She does. That's his mom." To this day that sentence gives me chills and brings tears to my eyes. What a brave girl. What a beautiful gift. What a faithful God.

Seven years later I am married to a man who is very much "dad" to my son. Gavin is a healthy active boy who is proud to be adopted. Every year on his birthday I tell him the story of how God gave him to me through this beautiful strong young lady. We look at scrapbooks filled with pictures taken during our time with his birth mom. The adoption is open, yet they have never met, when God opens the door we will be open to taking that step. God built our family one step at a time. I just kept walking . . .

If adoption is on your heart, let hope arise. If you want to be a mom or create a family, let hope arise. If you trust God's faithfulness, let hope arise. Say a prayer, take a step and let hope arise. **JL**

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BY JOHN W. NICHOLS

The Empty Nest

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Ask a child and his face lights up as the responses flow—cowboy, doctor, fireman, president, or policeman. Ask a teen nearing the end of high school and that innocent question triggers another response. Navigating the quagmire of colleges, applications, entrance essays, and majors is terrifying.

Helping our teens make wise choices toward a career is an important responsibility.

Some teens seem to know their path and require little input. My oldest daughter had a crayon, pencil, or paint brush in her hand throughout childhood. She sketched for fun. As high school neared completion, she amassed an impressive portfolio, applied to a prestigious design school, gained acceptance to the Graphics Design program, and never looked back.

My second daughter was unsure of her path. She attended the requisite campus visits and reluctantly submitted applications. Sensing her hesitation I opened discussions on options such as working for a year or attending community college. As the admissions cutoff dates drew near and my anxiety increased, I suggested that watching cartoons until age thirty was not a viable occupation. That gem of wisdom was of no value to the proceedings.

I needed to guide her without telling her what to do, and I was running low on patience and ideas. God offers wisdom for the asking so I asked. Prayer works. My next steps came into focus.

What did I discover? How can a parent help a teen find her path?

1. Pay attention and take notes.

Become a student of your teen. Note areas where she excels. Is writing essays an effortless task? Is solving math problems a cinch? Is she interested in the outdoors? Does she have many friends or few? Does she like crowds or quiet settings? How does she handle setbacks? She needs the observations you can offer from the vantage point of wisdom and experience.

While my daughter struggled with her choices I compiled a list of her qualities. I answered questions like, "What do I see in her? Where does she excel?" I recognized that she is considerate, accepting, and helpful to her friends. She supports the underdog

and models loyalty to any cause she adopts. Planning and organizing are second nature, and expressing her ideas through writing comes easy. Above all she operates with a servant's heart.

I pointed out her uniqueness, that God crafted her with purpose. Her qualities and interests opened a wide horizon of career options.

2. Don't live vicariously through your teen.

This is her life. I want her to gain experience and become an independent and competent decision maker. Not every choice she makes will align with mine, but she needs freedom to spread her wings and learn to fly. I can advise and listen but ultimately she must choose her path.

3. Explore together.

Be open about your career choice, why you made it, what you enjoy, and what you dislike about it. Investigate the requirements for jobs she may be considering and if possible arrange career shadowing days. The more exposure I can give my teen to real world scenarios, the quicker she will become excited about (or cross off) certain choices.

Keep the dialogue low key. Defuse the panic that pounds inside her. Offer help in researching jobs and gathering curriculum information. Reiterate that the choices are hers and that she has time. Something magical happens when we value our teen as an adult.

4. Be patient.

Our teens may not get the choice of college major right the first time, and switching the major or moving to a new school may stretch the education beyond four years. Try to maintain perspective. Many parents struggle to fund the college experience and a mid-stream redirection gives rise to additional financial burdens. Your student is capable of working and studying simultaneously, and the value of her education will blossom as she takes ownership. Push some of the costs her way. Flipping burgers and driving a clunker are great motivators for finishing school and landing that dream job. JL

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Puppy Love

Love at first sight. I saw it in his eyes—he didn't want me to go. I yearned to take him into my arms, speak sweetly in his ear, and tell him I loved him. But I knew we would be together again. When he looked at me with his dark eyes, I would give him a big, wet puppy kiss.



BY WENDY TARYN DELUCA

Wendy Taryn Deluca:

a U.S. Navy Veteran and Clinical Therapist, provides faith-based counseling. She studied at Liberty University and Australia's Hillsong International Leadership College. Wendy is writing a book to help women find joy and contentment in singleness. For more information visit wendydeluca.com.

I wake him from a deep sleep so we can cuddle.

God's love is also patient, even if I am disobedient. I can be selfish, goal oriented, and choose projects over people. At times I put other things before Him, such as postponing prayers to catch up on emails. Yet He still loves me.

Toby misses me when I am gone. Always a happy dog, he is excited to see me and does "The Toby Dance" to welcome me home. Likewise, God waits eagerly for me to spend time with Him. He wants me to share my heart.

Toby cheers me up when I am sad. God's word also lifts my spirits when I am down. A guard dog and man of the house, Toby's forceful barks ward off danger. God commands His angels to guard me in all my ways.

On a cold night, my dog is my snuggle-buddy. His tail wags as he showers my face with kisses until I giggle. Sometimes I tell him that his kiss-giving quota has been exceeded for the day. I feel warm and happy inside. The same sensation occurs when I am filled with the Holy Spirit.

From the moment I brought this little ball of fluff home, Toby has been the love of my life. As a single woman without children, my pet is my baby and best friend. He shows unconditional love that surpasses what any man has given. Except Jesus.

I love my dog like I never loved before. I am playful with him. We growl. I hug him until he squirms. I want to hold him tight and never let go. Sometimes I feel my heart will explode because I love him so much.

My dog isn't judgmental. He doesn't care if I gain weight, have messy hair, or wear mismatched pajamas. Toby thinks the world of me. He loves despite my imperfections. To him I have no flaws.

The way Toby loves reminds me of God's unconditional love. Nothing I do could make Him love me more or love me less.

My pet is patient. He allows me to do things he dislikes, such as bathe or brush him, with little fuss. Toby doesn't mind if



When I know I am loved unconditionally by God and my dog, I am confident and secure in this love. I don't need to seek others' approval. No matter what I do, whether I succeed or fail, I am loved. I can give this unconditional love to others, just as it has been given to me.

Regardless of struggles I may have, one thing will never be taken away—God's love. His love never fails. I also believe that God loves me enough that not only will I be in heaven, but my Toby could be also.

My God loves me. My dog loves me.

What more could I want? ~ DOG is GOD spelled backwards. **JL**

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BY RENAE TOLBERT

Should I Sell The House?

God said "For I know the plans for you..."

For the past 2 years, since my husband died, to sell or not to sell weighed heavy on my mind. Selling it would be one more loss, like losing Herb all over again. I hung on as if I'd never let go, no matter the cost. However, I also knew the monthly payment was more than I could continue forever and selling was inevitable, it was just a matter of when.

One day I listed items to sell. On the top line of a 5x7 tablet I wrote: "Sell the House." I thought, I didn't just write that, God did!

I knew I needed to sell, but I shrugged and proceeded to write:

Bike Rack • Generator • D5100 Nikon Camera
I gave "Sell the House" no more thought.

Several days later, my neighbor rang my doorbell, "Do you want to sell your house?"

My jaw dropped. The image of the 5x7 tablet flashed in my mind. "Sell the House." God, what are you up to? I replied with, "Maybe, why do you ask?" He explained that his landlord wanted to buy if I was willing to sell.

He gave her my phone number and she didn't waste time calling to make an offer. Cash – No Realtor Commission – No Inspection – AS. IS. She simply wanted to buy my house. Period. No fuss, no muss.

My heart screamed "NO!" My mind said, "An offer you can't refuse!" If I walked away from this, the opportunity would never pass my way again.

At first, I told her, "Yes." But, a few days later, my heart took over, and I spiraled into deep sadness. I told her I changed my mind. She said, "If you change your mind again, call me." I thought, If I could see where I'd be living, I could let go of what I was leaving.

The next day as I drove past the duplexes near my house I saw a FOR RENT sign on the corner. They don't have vacancies very often. I used to tell Herb if we sold our house, I wanted to move to one of those duplexes. That is when I knew God had His hand all over this!

I did the math and pushed my heart aside, I realized this was a once in a lifetime deal. If I took it off the table, it was gone forever. I knew if Herb could yell from heaven, I'd hear him coaching me as he would his basketball teams, "SELL! SELL! SELL!"

With a racing, breaking, heart, I called my buyer and told her I made my final decision to sell the house.

This was not an easy move by any means. There were buckets of tears as I packed. And more tears when moving day came. But I focused on God's provision for my future and leaned on his promises. He saw me through the difficult emotional part and blessed me with a perfect place to live. I miss my home every day, but I know God's ways are not my ways. But, HIS ways are so amazing!

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11. JL



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~Pamela DeOlivera

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Redding Home and Garden Show



Kool April Nites



69th Annual Redding Rodeo



Love Your Pet Expo & North State Super Adoption Event 2017

Redding, CA Impresses with Springtime Events and Recreation

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If the thought of spring revs your engine, get to Redding in time to see 2,000 classic cars roll through town as part of Kool April Nites' annual celebration of all things vintage.

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April 1st & April 2nd

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April 28th - 30th

Kool April Nites

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BY CHERYL
STASINOWSKY

Be There For Others

Twenty-four hours ago, I received a phone call from my adult son who lives in Pennsylvania. I was on my walk with my dogs. He was upset and crying as he told me that he had just watched their puppy of 4 months get hit by a speeding car. He saw his puppy on the other side of the street and the speeding car coming, and even though he was yelling and waving his arms, they didn't even slow down. The puppy decided to run back to my son just as the car was going by. He did everything he could to try to revive Mac, the puppy, even CPR, and he rushed him to the vet, but he was gone. I was crying as he was telling me. I told him I was so sorry and tried to console him as best as I could, but nothing was really going to help. He was hurting so deeply.

When we hung up, I was in shock, too. I looked at my dogs and connected how I would feel if something ever happened to them. You might be doing that right now as well. I went home and tried to stay busy, but I couldn't get the picture of little Mac and the accident out of my head. I was also concerned about what this trauma could do in my son and his fiancé's future.

I couldn't really focus on much, so I decided I would give myself space and time to just cry. I know the Lord and I am a praying woman, but I could not even begin to figure out how to pray, so I needed to cry it out. My son and his fiancé do not really know the Lord, so how they deal with this is much different from the way I do, but I needed to be praying for them. I was concerned about them. I couldn't take away the pain nor fix it. They had to walk this out together. Prayer was all I knew that I could do for them.

Over the years, I have learned that everyone goes through grief and trauma differently. There is no exact way to go through it. Some post pictures, or write. Some just need to talk about it. The worst thing we can do is try to stop their process. I purpose to be a good listener. This morning my son called and talked about it. I didn't have to ask; he just processed it with me. I know it is good for him to get the thoughts, pain, anger, regrets, and everything else out of his head. It is healing.

We all encounter grief, whether it is a pet, a loved one, friend, or someone...sudden, or not so sudden...it hurts, we want to avoid the pain or get away from it. Maybe we just go numb and can't think... you can't fix it for yourself or for others...you cry with them. You tell them you are sorry. You listen if they want to talk about it, as many times as they need to...You check in on them, encourage them, pray for them, but remember that you

can't take away their pain or process, but you can help them through it.

When we encounter a situation such as above, we need to try to forgive ourselves and everyone involved as quickly as possible, otherwise, in the future we will hold it against ourselves. If we do not forgive ourselves, we will have regret, guilt, and be angry with ourselves until we do. Maybe you are remembering something from your past, forgive and forgive everyone involved...may we all become better at being there for others in their pain and process... JL



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John S. Feinberg, Ph.D. (University of Chicago) chairs the Department of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Dr. Feinberg is one of today's leading Biblical scholars and Christian philosophical thinkers. He is the author of *Ethics for A Brave New World*; *Can You Believe It's True: Christian Apologetics in a Modern and Post-modern Era*; *No One Like Him (the Doctrine of God)*; *The Many Faces of Evil (The problem of Evil)*; and *When There Are No Easy Answers*.



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Speakers on Biblical and Scientific Creation:



Dr. Randy Guliuzza, M.D. (University of Minnesota) is National Representative, Institute for Creation Research. Dr. Guliuzza is a Medical Doctor, Engineer, former Air Force flight surgeon, Chief of Aerospace Medicine and author of *Made in His Image*. He also holds an M.A. in Public Health from Harvard University. Dr. Guliuzza is considered by many to be THE Leading authority on evidences for creation.



Dr. Henry Morris, III, D.Min., Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Creation Research. The eldest son of ICR's founder, Dr. Morris is the driving force behind ICR's expanding creationist ministry. He is a popular conference speaker and author of articles and books, including *The Big Three: Major Events that Changed History Forever*; *Exploring the Evidence for Creation*; *5 Reasons to Believe in Recent Creation*; *The Book of Beginnings*; *Your Origins Matter* and *Unlocking and Mysteries of Genesis*.



Dr. Larry Vardiman, Ph.D. (Colorado State University) recently retired Senior Research Scientist at the Institute for Creation Research and Manager of the RATE Project (Radio Isotopes and the Age of the Earth) that provides strong evidence for a young earth. Dr. Vardiman is also a specialist in Atmospheric Science and Climate Change (Global Warming). He is currently part-time Professor of Science at Shasta Bible College & Graduate School.

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Perfect Imperfect

It oppresses me when I hear that ill-fated question, "What will they think of me?"

BY DIXIE LEE GREEN

For it is not so much what WE think of ourselves that determines the way we carry our emotions, but it is what we believe OTHERS think of us.

If I just lose ten pounds my significant other would find me more attractive, or if I joined that club my friends would think I was trendy, or if I furthered my education my friends would respect me more.

But on a more sorrowful level this same question often leads one down a destructive path, a path that inevitably ends with guilt and shame.

The world is but a shadow of condescending messages which stream through our phones, televisions, and computers, informing our fragile thoughts that we are not good enough that somehow we need to be more than we are. We need to be wiser, prettier, thinner, bolder, and then perhaps, more accepted? Why does society hinge on causing others to feel inferior?

For me, a defining moment came when I was a student in high school. I was studying fields in health care and for a semester my class worked in a

For me, a defining moment came when I was a student in high school. I was studying fields in health care and for a semester my class worked in a nursing home.

nursing home. On one particular day my teacher was demonstrating how to make a hospital bed. I struggled to comprehend what she was saying. Tears had run freely down my face. Green/Perfect

"It's not rocket science," she had belted. "What's the matter with you? You can't be that stupid!" she had ferociously continued. In that fraction of time she

had defined my identity. I was stupid, worthless, and a waste of her time. I believed myself to be those qualities. I strived for acceptance through destructive behaviors, focused on outcomes of what others wanted me to be.

My heart sympathizes with the overweight adolescent who slides into anorexia, or the depressed mother, who reaches for pills to manage her day, or the father who bears a sense of inadequacy and kills himself.

We hunger to 'fit in,' so we conform to what the world shouts at us. We live by messages of condemnation commanding us to be something we are not. Can acceptance even be found in this world? For it takes more courage to be true to ourselves than it does to try and be something we are not.

For years I wrestled with coping mechanisms searching for acceptance but I have realized through God's word and true friends that I am the "perfect imperfect," I was planned to be.

We are each an important piece of God's glorious painting, accepted and loved just the way we are. JL



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STRESS RELIEF

In my twenty years as a private practice psychologist, I incorporated what I referred to as "stress management 101" into my work with every person I treated. Addressing both immediate and longer-term stressors and offering ideas for managing them was an invaluable tool for me as clinician. People seeking counseling and therapy often feel that life, or certain aspects of it, has become derailed and beyond their control. Having a person leave my office, even at the first appointment, with something for their coping tool box was often priceless in restoring a better sense of control going forward.



BY MARISA TOMASIC

Marisa Tomasic: is a counseling psychologist and writer and lives in Pittsburgh, PA. I love simple, joyful pleasures and being a mom to two young adult children.

One thing I discovered when approaching stress management was the importance of not framing it as "one more thing to do." Neither did I want to convey the message that the person needed to "balance" his or her life in order to feel peace, a challenge way too daunting when already overwhelmed. It's refreshing to realize that strategies for handling ordinary life stressors can be quite uncomplicated, not even remotely requiring a balancing act. In my quest for simple, non-clinical stress-busting strategies, I had an eye toward effortless ideas for taming the stress beast that are also backed up by science and that are easily accessible for everyday living.

We commonly hear about the benefits of meditation and prayer, deep breathing, and muscle relaxation in stress reduction. Sipping chamomile tea, listening to classical music, and spending time in a garden are other common and frequently suggested ideas for decompressing. Some lesser known but

fascinating ways to ease tension that I added to my compilation include watching fish swim, doodling, eating dark chocolate, chewing gum or crunchy foods, and smelling eucalyptus, lavender, jasmine, or coffee. Each of these simple acts has the capacity to produce peaceful feelings while creating enjoyment.

Perhaps the most humbling of these simple, unpretentious, discovered tools for managing our stressors is the simple act of smiling. The mere act of smiling, even when we don't feel like it, releases feel-good brain chemicals associated with relaxation. Take a second and try it now. It doesn't have to be a huge teeth-bearing grin, but you do need to feel your cheeks rounding out. As an anxious bride, I remember smiling at my awaiting congregation as I started the walk down the aisle and feeling a much-welcomed wave of calm. Stress is the response when our coping abilities take a direct hit from life's challenges. Knowing that we can manage and thrive in spite of it is priceless. **JL**

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CONQUERING THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS

You have an illness, you let your boss know, and he fires you. What's the likelihood of that happening? Practically nil, unless it severely prevents you from doing your job. Why is there a need to ask such an unlikely question? Because there is an illness, that if your boss finds out about it, may result

BY ERIC LEVY

in you losing your job. There are many first-hand accounts of people who have experienced such a situation. Not only is this illness often an unjustifiable cause for dismissal, it's a taboo subject. Not just to your boss, but your coworkers too. That condition is mental illness. One in four adults—approximately 61.5 million Americans—experiences mental illness in a given year.

Why it is that mental illness is such a stigma? Simple: people are terrified of it happening to them. We are our minds. To lose your mind is to lose yourself, the most crucial part of being human.

That's why those with this disorder hide it with the impenetrable masks they've taken so long to create. Those who come out of the closet, as Sifu Casey Blood writes in his book *Science, Sense and Soul*, are "so tired from faking it." Then there are many who have selected to stay in the closet, writes Helen Schucman, PhD, in her book, *A Course in Miracles*, because our "greatest fear is being discovered."

Gary Zukav, author of *The Heart of the Soul: Emotional Awareness*, writes: "You make a good impression at first and assume people won't like you once they get to know you better, so you push people away,

anticipating inevitable rejection...Intimacy paralyzes you because it reveals the truth of who you are."

The issue of whether to disclose or not is an issue that plagues many people with mental illness. Authors Patrick Corrigan, PsyD, professor of psychology, Illinois Institute of Technology, and Robert Lundin, Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, University of Chicago, in their book, *Don't Call me Nuts: The Stigma of Mental Illness*, write: "Most people are coping with some kind of personal trial or tribulation, even if it is not mental illness. They may be fascinated by your ability to cope and respect you for it. You may be pleasantly surprised to find out that others have similar problems. Frequently, people discover that when they admit to their psychiatric problems, others respond 'me too.' Given that more than twenty percent of the population are struggling with some

kind of mental illness at any one time...it is likely that you will have 'me too' experiences when you tell your story."

Workingwelltogether.com outlines the three levels of disclosure: low, medium, and high. Low disclosure is providing facts to people, not too personal, and easy to share. The medium level provides biographical facts, opinions, and is sometimes risky to share. High level of disclosure is very personal, risky to share, used only if you trust the other person, and if the other person is willing to listen.

The Working Well Together staff outlines the benefits of disclosure:

- Not having to worry about hiding experiences with mental illness and being more open

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about day-to-day affairs

- Finding others who express approval, including those with similar experiences
- Finding someone who can provide assistance in the future
- Promoting a sense of personal power and acting as living testimony against stigma and discrimination

How to Handle Stigma

If you're one of the millions who suffer with mental illness, you're

bound to have people comment negatively about your condition. It's best not to react defensively. Such a response empowers the other person's words. It presumes you are threatened by what they said, which suggests there is some truth in it. And the more defensive you get, the more confident the other person becomes. What they say, what they do, and the opinions they have is simply ignorance regarding mental illness. Remain strong. Whether afflicted or not, we can all work towards fighting the stigma of mental illness. JL

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BY JENNIFER CHASE

Jennifer Chase: is Founder of Frugi Home Organizer, LLC., Author of "Simple Start-Up: How to start a Home-Based Business. Simply." Mother of five boys, married to Captain Dan Chase and lives in beautiful Colorado. You can contact Jennifer directly: Info@Frugi-HomeOrganizer.com and Follow on Twitter @FrugiLife.

Disorganization is about so much more than just the lost keys. Being disorganized can lead to great loss. Loss of our peace, joy, fun, our precious time, our work, creativity and our smiles. Even loss of our youth because in disorganization we spend our time wasting what is truly important.

As the Mom of five children, a pilot's wife, and business owner, I get it! In my personal experience, I have lost so much being disorganized! I have lost time with my husband and children. I have lost and wasted money. I have lost friendships & relationships that were important to me. I have lost positions and promotions that counted. I have lost a home atmosphere that was wonderful to live in and come

home to. I have lost so much time trying to find those stinkin' keys! My solution. I took responsibility for my home and my work. I got organized.

From the garage to the basement. From the office to the home. Every closet, every nook. Every drawer, every spot. I cleaned it out, got organized and staged my life for success. Not over-scheduled, not over-spending, not over-worked, not over-exhausted. I got Over-Organized.

Organization has changed my life as a parent, wife, business owner. Being organized has allowed me to find all that was being wasted and all that was important to me. I got organized in my scheduling, my finances, my "stuff", my home needs, my work needs, my spiritual life, my entire life.

My secret. I only surround myself with the people and the things I love and I need. When all your people and things are in order, you and your family will have time for all that is important to you and you will find the time to enjoy the youth of your children. Go find your keys, make a designated place for them when you walk through the door, place the keys there every day, and then go play! JL



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Kindness

BY CINDY EVANS

Today you can do acts of kindness and offer some encouragement. You can bless strangers and friends and be surprised at how much it meant.

So many things you can do to give joy and love away, so many ways to be a blessing as you go about your day.

You can bake a chocolate cake and put gas in someone's tank. You can send someone a card and think of someone to thank.

You can bring flowers to a friend and pat a co-worker on the back. You can listen to the lonely and bring a hungry soul a snack.

Stop by to see someone who's sick. Let someone have your parking place.

Notice somebody's new haircut and put a smile on their face. Fold the laundry with a smile. Do the dishes in the sink. Pay a sister's bill for her and give the paper boy a drink.

All these ways to show some grace if only now we'll start... how much better the world will be as we give generously from our heart!

Never let loyalty and kindness leave you! Tie them around your neck as a reminder. Proverbs 3:3 (NLT)

CINDY EVANS: is a published poet living in the greater Atlanta area. When she is not writing, she does temp work for various companies including Christian ministries. She also enjoys spending time with her husband, church activities, traveling and chick flick movies.

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