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You Have The Right to Remain Silent



Have you ever started with a goal only to find 5 days later it is tough to stick to and you are the hamster back on the wheel and haven't made the change?

Here are three common "resolutions" that by day 7 are broken.

1. "I am going to exercise 30 minutes each day."
2. "I am going to write a daily blog."
3. "I am going to quit smoking."

How do you effect change and create a good habit? How do you toss out an old habit?

For most, the problem lies with time and attention. Too much time on other things and not enough attention on the things you need to focus on.

So for today I'd like empower you with the right to remain silent!!

My guess is for many of you, including me, taking ten minutes or even twenty minutes of silent reflection can be a bit uncomfortable and feels maybe a bit self-indulgent.

However you have the right to remain silent!

Silence can sometimes be uncomfortable because without distractions you feel what you are feeling and think what you are thinking and sometimes you don't want to.

So, now that the discomfort has set in, you know you are on the right track. How you move forward with discomfort is important. That's your gem. It's a lot easier to avoid feeling uncomfortable than it is to deal with it. For me, ten to twenty minutes per day is the key.

If you just make a promise to stick with ten minutes a day dedicated to silence, the ripple can make a major difference. That's a habit worth making!

Ten minutes a day, maybe even twenty dedicated to self care is a wonderful goal.

Just think how much better our day can be if we all took time each day to show appreciation for ourselves. Filling up 'us' allows us to enjoy others. It's a great first step to lasting change!

Silently,
Elizabeth Hamilton-Guarino
Founder/CEO/Life Coach

Auld Lang Syne



Out of the 525,600 minutes in a year, the first few are my absolute favorite. The ball in Times Square starts its descent on New Year's Eve and with ten seconds left, we all count down together.

10..
9..
8..
7..
6..
5..
4..
3..
2..
1..

“HAPPY NEW YEAR!”

Kisses, hugs and handshakes immediately follow and we're all filled with hope and good wishes for the year to come.

Now here's my favorite part: we all get on our cell phones and scramble to connect with loved ones scattered throughout this planet of ours. But the cell sites and satellites can't handle the massive influx of hundreds of millions or even billions of people singularly focused at simultaneously spreading joy. And then we're forced to redial a couple of times until we finally get through.

God, I love that. I really just love that.

Do you want to be the change you wish to see in the world? Bring this level of openness, hope and joy to the very next person you encounter. Whether it be face to face, on the phone, through a text message or even by carrier pigeon.

And please make no exception. It might not be easy, but everyone, as of this moment, gets a clean slate. Try it with the next person and the person after that and the person after that and... (repeat indefinitely).

Don't worry if your brother is always in a cranky mood, come to him as if it's New Year's Eve. Maybe he's reading this right now as well and he'll come to you in the same way. And if not, do it anyway. Love heals. It will heal you both.

This is the resolution of a Fruit Fly and we don't have time to wait until January 1st.

Live like a fruit fly.



Please Make a Legal U-Turn as Soon as Possible

Wouldn't it be nice if someone could invent a GPS system for life?

One that says "turn right at the next stop," "make a legal U-turn as soon as possible," and one that clearly states "you have arrived." Leaving life to chance is very much like a GPS system gone awry. I especially like the idea of the one that tells me when I've arrived, so I can stop wondering if I am where I really need to be.

I guess the GPS itself is only as good as the program. Maybe that's the point. I remember one trip to the Boston Aquarium some years ago. This was a few years before an onboard system was even available. I went online, plugged in my beginning point, put in the address for the Aquarium, and printed MapQuest directions, confident that I would end up where I needed to be, in just a little more than an hour. And, fully satisfied

with my efficiency, my son and I climbed into the car and embarked on our excursion.

However, something went wrong: I took the exit that should have taken me to the Aquarium, according to the directions. My son read it to me: "at the end of the exit, go straight." Uh oh. Problem. I could go left. I could go right. However, if I were to go straight, a very large, very OLD building stood straight ahead. Sadly, MapQuest, in all its glory, was wrong: I had a choice to make – and traffic to deal with. Trusting my instincts (not always the best move) I chose to turn right. We were within a mile of the Aquarium. And yet – it took us another hour and a half to find it!

We were agitated, and of course, disappointed, as it was a mid-day excursion, and the place closed at 5. Certainly, it made for an adventure, but a frustrating one. We didn't enjoy that hour and a half, desperately seeking our destination. We forgot to pay

attention to the sights along the way, and while we enjoyed our visit, once "we had arrived", it was not as pleasing as it would have been had all gone as planned.

How often do we get so focused on our goals that we miss what we've passed along the way? I do complain that there isn't a guidebook, but can't we find a happy medium? Choose route A for an efficient, no-nonsense trip to my destination, choose B to get there, but not on your preferred time schedule...

Bottom line – we need to relax. A GPS system for life would certainly get me where I am going, but it may take some of the fun out of the trip. Allow for those moments this year when the GPS system malfunctions and you have to trust your gut. Maybe you'll spend an extra hour getting where you need to go, but maybe you'll pass Fenway on the way, and actually NOTICE it!

Liz Foley, Editor-in-Chief

Come home to Maine.



Home is where the heart is, and it's time to make Maine your home. As you enter into Maine, a sign welcomes you, saying "Maine, the way life should be." And it's true. So few places offer the amenities that Maine does: beaches, mountains, lakes, pastures, quaint country villages, and cities brimming with opportunity are all within your reach.



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If 2012 Could Talk, What Would It Say?

Did you send or receive any of those annual family updates over the holidays? You know what I mean; the letters people send that highlight their accomplishments, announce how their families have grown (or, sadly, shrunk) and include a snapshot or two.

After reading a few of these letters, I began to wonder about the year ahead. If 2012 sent us a message, what would it say? It might go something like this ...

Dear Humankind,

Hey. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm 2012, and I just moved in. Since we'll be spending the next 365 days together, I thought I'd send you this note so you can learn more about me and my hopes, wishes and intentions.

My family, the Years, comes from a long line of accomplishments and challenges. And, just when we think we've seen it all, something always seems to sneak up from behind to surprise us.

Right before he left, my older brother, 2011, sat me down and told me all about the heartbreaks and joys you experienced during his tenure. From horrific natural disasters to amazing miracle cures, it sounds like you've had quite the ride.

Just the other day, my cousin, Decade, was reminiscing about the good old days. She told me how technology caught on like wildfire during her time, and proudly outlined how far you've come since that silly rumor circulated that suggested Y2K would mark the end of the world. I hear that old rumor is being recycled. Hmmm.

But what really captured my attention is a conversation that I had with my grandparents. They've been watching, and are astonished by how you're treating one another. Grandma Century told me she expected that bullying and harassing would have stopped by now. "It's such archaic, nasty behavior," she said. And Grandpa Era ... well, he nearly rolled over when he saw how cruel people can be online. He actually asked, "Whatever happened to looking someone in the eye and being thoughtful?" I don't know, Gramps.

Do you remember our dear friends Respect, Integrity and Kindness? They've been away, and called last week to let me know they're coming back. I'm so excited! They said they're tired of lying low, and asked me to let you know that this time they're here to stay. It seems like forever since we've seen them! They mentioned that they had to put their shades on because the future looks so bright. Oh ya, they're driving all the way here with Patience. I bet you haven't seen him on the road for a while!

Get this. The HR Department made a surprise announcement the other day that Professionalism is coming back to work! That's so awesome! There's talk that High Standards might also be returning, but no one's willing to confirm it.

On the home front, I've decided that 2012 is the year to evict Greed. He simply doesn't belong in our community anymore. To take his place I invited Gratitude to move in, right next door to Courtesy. They have both signed long-term leases.

Between you & me, my new little sister, 2013, is expected to arrive in about 52 weeks. The scary part is that my parents are relying on me to make sure I get our home in tip-top shape before she comes along. My mom and dad, Will and Grace, won't let up! Their exact words were, "2012, we expect you to create a civil world for your sister to live in."

Talk about a tall order!

The thing is, I don't want to let them down. The only way I can see to get this all done is with your help. Are you in? Good. Here's what I need you to do:

- Clean up your own back yard – Not to sound cliché or anything, but before you criticize the behavior of others, work on your own.
- Build a solid community – Become actively involved in your neighborhood and keep an eye out for one another.
- Respond to telephone calls & e-mails promptly – Show people that they matter by replying to their requests in a timely manner.
- Spend quality time with others – Slow down, listen and share.

- Show up on time – Do whatever you must to ensure that people never have to wait for you or your promises again. Ever.

- Make your life a gossip free, whine-free and bully-free zone – Those qualities don't look good on you.

- Treat yourself and others well – Show others how you'd like to be treated by treating them and yourself with respect and self-care.

- Be authentic – It's time to lose your veneer and show people who you really are, not who you think they want to see.

- Slow Down - Take more time to get where you're going on the road, in your life and with your decisions.

- Say please and thank you – Enough said.

- Honor the earth & keep her healthy – Do your part to keep our environment clean.

- Live your life like you mean it – As my family always says, "The Years go by quickly" (it's an inside joke). Before you know it, you'll be at the other end of this chapter of your life. Live it with passion.

We don't have much time together, so let's get at it. You do your part and I'll do mine. Feel free to stay in touch - I welcome your ideas, and look forward to receiving your annual newsletter at the end of my contract on December 31st! Until then, take care.

Best, 2012

So, there you have it. A letter from 2012. How cool is that? The next question is, what are you going to do with it?

Sue Jacques is The Civility CEO™, a corporate civility consultant and professional speaker who helps individuals & businesses gain confidence, earn respect and create courteous corporate cultures. Do you have a conundrum for The Civility CEO™? Please send it to advice@TheCivilityCEO.com. Your question could be featured in an upcoming column! www.TheCivilityCEO.com

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WHAT'S UP, 2012?

Amazing that here we are in the twelfth year of the new millennium (Anyone remember the Y2K fright?) This year has had a lot of hype, fear, hope, and excitement surrounding it. With the Mayan calendar ending, forecasts of profound endings and beginnings, I thought I would take a new direction in my column this month and talk about the future and work. In other words, 2012 and your career: what to expect, what you might focus on, and how to be the best professional you can possibly be.

What to expect this year

- **Radical, fast-paced change:** the very nature of work is changing. How people earn money and how they connect are all in transition. We have less personal contact, more touching through the cloud. More and more jobs will be involved with service - not hands-on service, but service from afar. What your job looks like today and what it will look like by Christmas will most likely be very different.
- **Polarization, unwillingness to yield:** In this election year, don't expect better behavior from our leaders. The desire to win will bring out uncompromising behavior. How this will filter down to your place of work might look like this - management might try to get what they can as quickly as they can. Leadership will also not make any dramatic changes, as they want to see which way the tide will go.
- **Slow, gradual building of confidence:** with each passing day that the world does not end in 2012, people will gain more confidence in the future. What you might focus on
- **Do what you do best:** Do it consistently, and with confidence! Shine at what you do best and make sure others know. While you do this, be an effective team player, so that your brilliance helps you and makes the team even better.
- **Opportunities to move:** If a new opportunity presents itself, don't be afraid to take a leap. This might be a great year to make that move. Of course, think it through carefully and



look before you leap. This year of dynamic change might just be your year to transform!

• **Look for new synergies, alliances:** You know that person who you wanted to have lunch with, but haven't asked yet? This is the year for new relationships, new mutually beneficial relationships. Explore, show interest in others, and try out new ways of being.

How to be the best professional you can be

- **Learn something new:** It might something that has nothing directly to do with work, but learning something new will enhance your thinking, agility, competence, and confidence. Personally, I want to learn how to play the steel drum - I have wanted to do this for years, and 2012 is the year!
- **Take on a challenge that is a bit scary:** Do something at work that stretches you, makes you think differently, and adds to your skill set. It might be a project that will enhance your organization and enrich you on many levels. Go for it - you can do it!
- **Mentor someone:** I have found that the best way for me to grow is by helping others. Mentor someone who has potential and could use your guidance. You will be helping them and yourself. I recently got a Facebook message from someone I hired in 1983 that is extremely successful now, and he wanted to reconnect and thank me. It made my day and reminded me of the many gifts I have to give as a professional.

2012 will change us all — if we stay in the flow, we will expand and grow. If we get stuck in the fear, our feet will be stuck in quicksand. Don't let the world move without you — you have a lot to give! May 2012 bring you gifts, abundance, and the joy of being the best professional you can be.



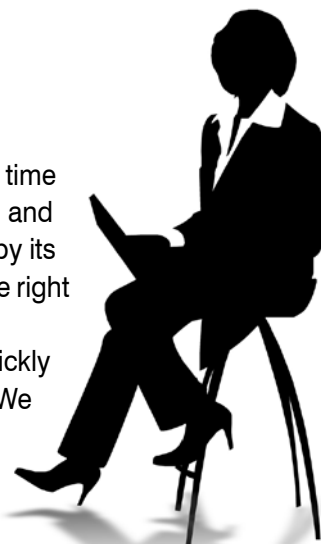
Dr. Diane Katz has worked with organizations and professionals for over 40 years. She holds a Masters Degree in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in Conflict Resolution from Union Institute. Her consulting company, The Working Circle, provides organizational development, human resources, teambuilding, training and coaching to organizations of all sizes. Her newest book, "Win at Work! The Everybody Wins Approach to Conflict Resolution" is now available. www.TheWorkingCircle.com

First Impressions:

Using Your One-Tenth of a Second Wisely

One-tenth of a second. That's the amount of time you get to make a first impression every time you meet someone. Yes, in less than one second that person has made a judgment about you, and that impression is very difficult to overcome once it's been made. Unfair? Don't judge a book by its cover? Of course you're a really great person with a lot to offer, but unless you're able to make the right first impression you may never get the chance to prove it.

A study by Princeton University psychologist Alex Todorov found that people respond so quickly and intuitively to a new face that our reasoning minds don't have time to influence the reaction. We decide whether a person is attractive and trustworthy within a tenth of a second. "We decide very quickly whether a person possesses many of the traits we feel are important, such as likeability and competence, even though we have not exchanged a single word with them. It appears that we are hard-wired to draw these inferences in a fast, unreflective way."¹



Think you'll just win people over once they get to know you better? That could be a challenge as well. "What we found was that, if given more time, people's fundamental judgment about faces did not change," Todorov said. "Observers simply became more confident in their judgments as the duration lengthened." The researchers did note that as time passes and you get to know people, your impression of them does become more well-rounded, but you'll have to spend enough time together for that relationship to evolve.

As a creative professional, whether you're currently working or seeking a new position, there are ten key places that first impressions are made. Take the time to review each of these areas to be sure you are making the type of first impression that you want people to remember. It can be difficult to assess yourself objectively in some of these areas, so consider asking a fair but honest friend or colleague for feedback. It's better to identify issues and correct them before something you really want, like that new dream job, is on the line.

1. Resume. For many hiring managers nothing puts a resume in the "no" pile more quickly than typos and sloppy grammar. Keep the information clear and concise, remembering that your resume is an informational document first and a creative assignment (a very distant) second. Proofread, proofread, proofread, and then have someone else proofread it for you once more.

2. Website. After receiving an interesting resume, hiring managers often visit your personal website. This is a chance to draw their interest and excite

them about your work. Present only your best work, in an interesting and easy-to-navigate way, and (again) proofread everything for spelling and grammar.

3. Social Media. In this interconnected world we all think we know someone, or know someone who knows them. Have that fair and honest friend look you up on all of the major social media sites and share the impression they get from your profile. Think sites like Facebook are private? If it's online, it can be found.

4. Dress. When people meet you in-person they are getting an impression and making a judgment on the whole package, including how you are dressed. Be current, appropriate for the situation, and properly prepped. Think your rumpled shirt doesn't matter if you're really talented? You may never get to show your talent because the person you just met thinks if your dress is sloppy; your work probably is too.

5. Grooming. Again, impressions are made on the whole package. A current and appropriate haircut, recent shower and some deodorant go a long way. Personal grooming tends to be one of those things people notice and remember when it's bad. Keep it clean and you'll be fine.

6. Personal Décor. Jewelry, tattoos and piercings are all beautiful ways to express our creativity. Just keep in mind the situation, purpose and person you are meeting. A more subtle choice or a little covering up may be appropriate for some settings. If you're not sure, ask an insider for advice.

7. Interview. How you come across in an interview makes a lasting impression that is difficult to overcome. If it doesn't go well, you rarely get a second chance. Be engaged, interesting and interested, and participate in the conversation. Hiring managers will usually forgive a little nervousness, but they generally believe that the interest level and personality you show in the interview is the same as what you'll show on the job.

8. Portfolio or Work Samples. This is your work, treat like you love it. The same work presented in a nice format with an attractive cover looks ten times better than the same work jammed in a grocery sack. If you act like your work is special, the person you're talking to is more likely to think so too.

9. Networking or Industry Events. This is the sort of place where you'll meet a lot of strangers who could someday become friends. Most people are nervous and uncomfortable in these situations, just be as open and friendly as you can. Be yourself, introduce yourself to groups, and gracefully wrap up the conversation at a convenient time so you can meet someone new. And keep coming back, eventually you'll become the "regular" that other new people are excited to meet.

10. Chance Meetings. It's a cliché, but you never know who you'll meet where or when. I have run into people in the grocery, park, pet store, concerts, parties, all sorts of unexpected venues. The fact that they are unusual can make impressions from those chance meetings even more memorable, so be sure they're good ones.

¹ First Impressions: Making Up Your Mind After a 100-Ms Exposure to a Face; Janine Willis and Alexander Todorov, Princeton University; <http://www.princeton.edu/main/news/archive/S15/62/69K40/index.xml?s...>



What's Going On in The Best Ever You Network?

Comments to Consider . . .

THIS MONTH'S QUESTION:

What is the difference between Motivation, Inspiration and Influencing?



Dr David Fraser

Another important piece that I only understood properly recently is that “inspiring” means literally “in spirit,” so someone who is inspiring is so because they are well-connected to their inner sense of purpose, or their soul, or their inner God, or source, if you like – whatever word you prefer. They just have a knowing. Also, they will only be connected in that way if they are acting from a state of unconditional love, because these are all different ways of saying the same thing (in my mind anyway).

Motivating someone is about helping them find the inner drive to act in some way, to find their own reasons for doing something.

Inspiring someone is about showing them an example of what's possible that causes them to step up in their own way.

Influencing someone is about changing someone's view of the world so that they act or live in a different way.

That's how I see it, anyway. Inspiring is the most powerful and long-lasting, I believe.



Heshie Segal

Motivation can be as simple as someone running to get out of the way of a burning bush. The fear of getting burned is enough to motivate them to move quickly. Wanting something badly enough is often a key to motivate an individual to “move.” It starts from within. Motivating someone else is giving them something to strive towards, something strong enough for the other person to internalize it and act.

Inspiration comes from a person's experiencing, feeling, seeing . . . something or someone that . . . depicts the possibilities of what could be. It starts by an outer force “showing” the way. To inspire someone may be as simple as showing that “it” can be done.

Influencing someone is powerful because it is about changing another person's mindset, attitude, way of being. It is important to positively influence and not manipulate.



Debbie Mancini-Wilson

To me, motivation is about lighting a fire in someone, and inspiring is more about delivering tools to help keep that fire stoked.

The new year is already well under way. Job deadlines – or job searching – has begun anew, and the stresses of bills, kids in school again, and the sometimes endless treadmill of daily life can make us forget those New Year's resolutions we made not so very long ago.

Physician and healer Amnon Goldstein, who has earned an international reputation for his practice of both Western and Eastern medicines, says it's time to slow down and re-evaluate.

"You've heard it said before and you know it in your heart, but it's the external pressures that leave us feeling stressed, depressed, disappointed and overwhelmed," says Goldstein. "Add to that the lingering economic troubles, families in flux, and all of us working harder just to maintain our standard of living and it's easy to forget the most person to take care of first is – you."

Those resolutions to exercise more, eat healthier foods, meditate or otherwise tend to spiritual needs, they should be priorities, Goldstein says. They will ensure you're stronger, happier, and better able to manage the external pressures, maybe even with a smile.

Quiet contemplation and a focus on spiritual growth – no matter one's religion or beliefs – will lead to a clearer vision of how to accomplish the goals set for this year, Goldstein advises.



Failed Resolutions

"Spirituality is no longer linked only to religion," says Goldstein, the author of the recently released book *Screwed: The Path of a Healer* (www.iuniverse.com), a title that reflects the twisting nature of his global journeys as a healer and his own experiences with depression, divorce and illness.

"More and more people understand that they must nurture both body and spirit, which is why they make the sorts of resolutions they do. No matter how difficult your life, it will become easier and more joyful if you keep to those goals."

Israeli-born Goldstein has practiced medicine around the world using conventional Western, traditional Eastern and less-familiar spiritual and mystical methods. In *Screwed*, he chronicles the path to wellness, understanding and enlightenment, a journey that takes the traveler to unexpected places.

Goldstein has known the horrors of war, witnessed the birth of new nations

and experienced the mysterious healing powers of unconventional medicine. As a physician he has explored unconventional approaches to age-old physical and mental health challenges, embracing an over-arching philosophy that a life well-lived is not one which follows a straight or uncomplicated path.

Goldstein advocates proper nutrition as the basis for good health (no overeating, no dairy, no sugar), and exercise and meditation as the foundation of healthy living.

"We can live healthier and more fulfilled lives by looking inward," Goldstein says. "Most of us will find that we have everything we need to celebrate the new year in one form or another – either a healthy family, a warm home or some aspect of our lives that brings meaning. Expectation of perfection at this time of the year is toxic to our minds and spirits. Every healing is self-healing, but we need to take the time in the midst of our busy lives to take care of ourselves."

Amnon Goldstein, M.D., is a physician with more than 40 years of experience in conventional Western medicine and holistic and Eastern medicine. He has specialized in trauma care, vascular surgery and hypnosis, and has done in-depth study into the evolution of HIV and cancer research and treatments. A resident of Florida, Dr. Goldstein retired from medicine but continues to travel the world, learning, teaching and sharing with others the healing powers within each person. He is the father of three grown children.



Are you listening? . . . Are you being heard?

Debbie Mancini-Wilson
Best-Selling Children's Book Author
Creativity Expert, Parent Coach

What if you could change the way you communicate with your kids? . . . Heck, what if you could simply communicate with them at all this year?!

I've got a New Year's Proposal for you . . . Instead of making resolutions which will probably be broken before February rolls around, how about we parents make a decision together? I propose that we make a decision to check in here with each other every now and then to learn and encourage great parenting skills for 2012.

Over the past several years, I've taught some pretty serious parents fun and easy steps which have improved communication skills between them and their kids. The really cool thing is that the tools we use are simple, and the exercises are woven into our typical, everyday moments, so there is no need to 'find the time' or 'spend a dime!'

I'm thinking that if you've read this far, I can count you in on the plan! And so, let us begin with step one.

This first step is so easy, it's hardly a step at all; however, it has proven to be most important to laying the foundation for successful parenting. Most of the parents I work with simply want to have a good relationship with their kids; they want to be able to talk, listen and be heard, but those three 'simple' things are not so attainable a lot of the time.

While there is nothing more gratifying than parenthood, the paradigm of a healthy connection can be blown out of proportion when the dynamics of the parent/child relationship get in the way. So many parents feel they must choose between being their child's friend or foe (aka parent). Parenting does come first; however, that does not mean we must be a foe. With that said, we should take a step back and examine the parent/child relationship just like any other relationship pairing, whether it is between friends, neighbors, or employee/employer; let's break this down to the lowest common denominator.

Most of us converse more easily with friends and neighbors because, for the most part, the makeup of those relationships is non-threatening and non-competing, unlike the dynamics of parent and child. This indicates that we just need to learn to be more casual about conversing with our kids instead

of always talking to or at them. Most of us simply want to talk, listen and be heard – or have a normal conversation – with our kids to learn what's really in their heads and hearts, or to offer advice to them, and so it truly comes down to one component: communication skills.

Just about everything we do as parents boils down to being able to open up and get our kids to open up and communicate. That seems simple enough . . . until you try to have 'a talk' with your kid, right? Did the same little vignette just play on your mind's theatre screen? I'm talking about the scene where your kid rolls her eyes, sucks her teeth, crosses her arms and heaves that <SIGH!> as you follow her out of the room trying to talk.

What do you do? Do you throw in the towel and forget about having that quality time with her or continue to chase after her talking until you are screaming? At that point, you know she has hit the 'mute' button, and you've become the lead actress in a silent movie of epic comic value to her.

Neither of these scenarios is better than the other, and now you don't have to worry about choosing the lesser of two evils. Instead, get ready for a parental payback of your own epic proportion! The best way to handle this situation is to outsmart her . . . and you are about to taste the sweet nectar of successful parenting, bam!

First things first, we have to stop thinking of our 'talks' as talks; that is red flag number one that the teeth-sucking will begin. Then, we take a baby step that is so tiny it seems insignificant. As such, it is not recognized by the unsuspecting eye-roller.

This baby step has to be so casual that it in no way resembles 'a talk.' In an effort to make it as casual as possible, choose a topic that is a no-brainer, and ask your kid a question while you are doing something else. Notice, you are not approaching them and interrupting a video game or anything else that is important to them, you are merely chatting in a non-threatening way (as you would over a cup of tea with a friend). Now, you know your kid better than just about anyone, so you'll know what questions to ask, but here is an example of just how casual your questions can be, "So, what was your favorite holiday gift this year?"

Of course, you should be prepared for the dreaded one-word answer, but that is actually great because it gives you an opportunity to casually ask a follow up question. Again, the key is to keep it 'casual,' so casual that you might not lift your eyes from tossing the salad when you respond, "Cool. Why is that your fave?"

Bear with me here if you are thinking that this is so benign that it's hardly worth it. Hear me out: What you are doing is purposely NOT going too deep in order to build that conversational give and take. Every conversation does not have to (and really should not) be heavy; would you blame your kid for not ever wanting to take a moment and just shoot the breeze if every time he did that he got knocked over by wind gusts? Besides, have you ever listened to your kid's conversation with a friend? I'm talking about completely BORING subject matters, and these are the people he will open up to and talk about his deepest secrets, life dreams and problems, so what have we to learn from that?

Lighten up! At least while you are laying the foundation and building great communication skills. So, ask your questions, give nonchalant responses and be done with it . . . for now.

Do this periodically over the next few weeks and take note of what happens. How is your child reacting to your questions? Are their answers growing in length? Is their response more animated each time? Are they reciprocating with questions back to you? Chances are that you are answering 'yes' to at least one of my questions, and that is great, because you have just cracked open the door to broadening communication with your kid!

Now, before bursting through that door with a heavy 'talk' and having him run out the back door, take a while to sip tiny sips of that sweet nectar. There's no need to gulp yet, soon you'll be chugging; meanwhile, allow this baby step to get you to your goal successfully. Remember to practice a little patience. And hey, I KNOW you've got patience . . . um, you've got kids! :) I'll see you back here soon with the next step.

Self-Esteem and Self-Awareness

By Arba Baartz

We look into their eyes for the first time and we melt! Our hearts beat faster and we make silent promises to protect them forever, we are in love.

And we do love our children, no matter who we are and what we may have been through we want to do our best for them and even though our best may be questionable at times that is exactly what we do. The best with what we have, the best based on what we have learned and the best according to the degree with which we are able to love ourselves.

My experience of mothering eight very different children over twenty-three years has shown me that the most important action I have taken in regards to my children's self-esteem has been to broaden my perspective on life and clean up some less than loving ideas I held about myself.

It may be time to stop wondering why we behave and think the way we do and begin accepting ourselves and implementing small changes until our self-view is one we would wish our children to hold of themselves. It is too much to expect our babies to grow up feeling great about themselves if we are closet self-loathers.

Our children learn through imitating behavior, subtle nuance and speech. We teach through energy, tone and action. Children are highly intuitive; they easily interpret the energy that we have been delivering for years and getting away with in a world where social pretence is seemingly acceptable.

Children interpret our true value system and repeat it. We may be saying 'love yourself' with our words but demonstrate through our actions and energy that we don't love ourselves, and it is the latter that makes the biggest impression on the child. The words and energy together create a mixed message at the least.

It is quite a journey working out who we are and what makes us happy, but it can be done with a little diligence and intention.

People with self-awareness and high self-esteem have an optimistic outlook. They are naturally calm and confident. They attract positive experiences; have higher emotional intelligence and broader social skills.

- High Self-Esteem means your emotional fuel tank is full and you will experience positive energy and enthusiasm for life.
- Low Self-Esteem means you don't feel good about yourself. Your emotional fuel tank is low or on empty, you have less enthusiasm for life and a negative point of view.

A child develops self-esteem within her environment. The home is the primary source of development and school is the second most powerful environment for shaping a child.

Supporting an internal environment of healthy self-esteem in children allows children to grow into responsible and conscious adults.

**'High self-esteem isn't a luxury.
It's a necessity for anyone who
has important goals to achieve.'**

– Jack Canfield

Four Magic Words That Can Change Your Child's Life

By Felicity Baker

Having a high self-esteem, great self-belief and self-worth are important pieces to the puzzle when it comes to living a joyful and fulfilling life. As children, we are still developing these empowering qualities. It can be difficult for children at times, and the seeds of doubt can grow. Thankfully we parents have a great way to help our kids remember how special they are and what a contribution they are. In fact they are here for a reason (as we all are). Their existence proves it.

A little while back I heard about a man who had a difficult childhood. In a way it was unusual. This boy was born into a hard-working family; however he didn't quite fit in. Not because he wasn't hard working, rather because he was super-intelligent.

You see, there had been no one "like him" in their family before. He wanted to be doing things that stretched his mind and intelligence while his family wanted him to be doing more manual things. His family gave him up for adoption.

As you can imagine, this had a rather significant effect on his self-esteem. He believed there was something completely wrong with him. After all, why hadn't he been born like the rest of his family? As a result, his behavior deteriorated.

One day a volunteer was talking with this teenage boy. She could see that he was struggling, and she spoke four words to him that would see him ultimately live to his full potential. Things changed for this boy that day and now he is living a successful and happy life.

Yes, these four words are that powerful.

She looked at him and said, "I believe in you."

He was taken aback a bit at first. He felt as though no one had believed in him ever before. He certainly didn't believe in himself. He looked back and said, "do you really mean that?" To which the volunteer replied "yes I do." She meant every word, and he knew she did, too.

Things, of course, don't have to get to this extreme with our own kids. But when we start saying these four powerful words to them, the magic they can produce is quite incredible. Every night when you say good night, be sure to look them in the eye and say: "I believe in you." It doesn't matter what else is happening, all our children need to know is that there is at least one person that believes in them no matter what.

Imagine how you would feel if someone said that to you every night.

Having a great self-worth and self-esteem isn't done overnight. Just like creating a beautiful garden, it takes work, love and care. Helping our children believe in themselves takes work, love and care. But the benefits far surpass any effort on our part. Plus, these four little words, when truly meant, aren't really work at all.

Start using these words today, and know you are helping to set your kids for an exciting and bright future.

A Message to Parents from a Teen's Grave

Oftentimes, out of personal tragedy comes a benefit to others. In the case of Jamey Rodemeyer, the investigation into his suicide on September 18, 2011, presents a powerful message to parents, guardians and caretakers of children and teenagers.

After 14 year-old Jamey took his life at home following years of bullying, the police took custody of his cell phone and computer. They discovered that Jamey had an account on Tumblr.com, Formspring and other social networking web sites. His parents weren't aware of these accounts and accepted Jamey's word that everything was fine at his new school. But it wasn't.

The police discovered mean-spirited and cruel postings to Jamey during the months before he started ninth grade. Jamey had suffered years of bullying through middle school. His parents thought starting high school would be different. Jamey told them that things were better but kept the truth to himself. Some of the comments included: "JAMIE IS STUPID, GAY, FAT AND UGLY. HE MUST DIE!" an anonymous commenter said on Formspring. "I wouldn't care if you died. No one would. So just do it :) It would make everyone WAY more happier!" said another.

Parents, make sure you keep the conversation going with your kids. In order to properly monitor your son or daughter's online life, you need to understand the technology and keep up with new web sites. Once you build trust with your teenager, sharing their passwords with you will be expected and come easily.

These messages to Jamey were undoubtedly a shock to his parents. But they are a message to all those responsible for our youth to know their friends including their online acquaintances. It could save a life. Our hearts go out to Jamey's family and friends. His bullies also need understanding as they may have been bullying victims as well and have to live with Jamey's passing for the rest of their lives. They won't be prosecuted as insufficient evidence exists to file formal charges. Their consequence for participating in this loss is essentially a life sentence.

Tom Jacobs, Author of Teen Cyberbullying Investigated (2010) and What Are My Rights? (3rd ed., 2011). Askthejudge.info

HOW TO GET YOUR TEENS TO TALK TO YOU

Ah yes those dreaded teenage years. Daughters who shut down, sons who grunt. That's just normal isn't it, something we as parents have to put up with. They will grow out of it.

And yet their teenage years are when we really want them to be talking to us. It is a confusing time for them and there seems to be a constant barrage of confusing messages and temptations in front of them. If your teenagers aren't talking to you then how on earth are you supposed to know if they are coping? Do you know if they are even happy?

Ideally we don't want to wait until they are teenagers to start communicating. Many parents get frustrated when their younger children don't stop talking or asking 501 questions every day. But if we encourage our children to communicate with us from an early age, they will continue to do so as they get older. If they are chastised for being chatter-boxes when they are younger, chances are they aren't going to speak to you when they are older. What is important to them is relative to their age. If they learn when they are younger you weren't interested in what was important to them then, why would you be interested when they are teenagers?

All of my kids love a good chat and when they were younger would often want to tell me things all at the same time! I'm sure I got more than a little confused. My youngest son, who is now 11, has this uncanny habit of wanting to tell me things when we are running late. When this happens, I stop and say something like "I'm really interested in hearing all about this. But we are running late, so how about we get ready and you can tell me all about it in the car? I will be able to listen to you better anyway." He is more than happy with that response. We get into the car and then he tells me all about whatever is important for him to tell me. I want him to communicate with me and I certainly don't want him to stop when he is a teenager!

But what happens when it's a bit late for all that and you already have teenagers? Is it all too late?

I'm happy to say no, it's not too late. It is never, ever too late. It will more than likely take a bit of effort and consistency on your part. If you have a teenage son that has been grunting for the last couple of years, it may take a little more than over night for that to

stop. But if you make that your intention and do what it takes, you will find your teenagers communicating with you again.

The first thing you need to do is set some ground rules. Explain to your kids that the silent treatment or grunting is not acceptable. And there will be consequences if they continue to do so. (Which you must follow through on.) This is the most important thing and if you aren't prepared to go through with this, I suggest you stop reading now, because you are truly wasting your time. If you say to your kids that they won't get dessert if they grunt at you, and then you end up giving it to them because you don't want them to be upset with you, your teens won't take you seriously and they won't start talking to you either.

They will put up some resistance at first which you may find tough. But it is important you follow through. Be sure you don't go too extreme with the consequences either. Grounding them for the next month is a little excessive. Always, always, always ensure the consequence is in direct proportion to the behavior.

The next step is for you to start talking to them. Tell them about your day or pass on a joke. Tell them about challenges you have faced during the day. Don't burden them with adult issues but if you have been having trouble with a co-worker, for example, let them know. Even ask if they have any ideas on how to deal with it. Now you may choose not to take their advice, but they will feel valued that you are even interested in their opinion.

It is important to remember if you want your teens to talk to you about the big stuff, then you must talk to them about the small stuff first.

Finally, why not spend some time with your teen doing something they enjoy – even if you can't stand it. You can ask questions about the activity. If they really love it, you will find they are willing to tell you all about it. Tell them how good they are at it, how impressed you are with them. When you affirm your kids they are more likely to talk to you.

It may seem all a little pointless at first, but like everything it will gain momentum and before you know it, your teen will be coming to you to start a conversation instead of the other way round.



Felicity Baker is an author, speaker and mindset expert who specializes in empowering children and the child within us all. Having lived with clinical anxiety for over 30 years (it nearly destroyed her life), she understands the importance of self-esteem not only in our childhood years but also beyond. Raising her own children practically on her own for over 11 years, she has found proven tools that work. Today she helps parents empower their own kids with rocketing self-esteem and to create their own phenomenal families.

Should You Pick Up the Check?

Are you Princess Kate, Britney or Angelina?

Women under 30 earn more than men, according to new data crunched by Reach Advisors. With this newfound financial freedom comes an age-old dilemma. Who picks up the check?

Fortunately, thanks to the hard work of the women who have come before us, women are free, free, free to get an education and pretty much any job we desire, so, these days, many of us can afford to pick up our own check anytime we wish to.

But should we? Or should a woman politely excuse herself to the powder room just before the check arrives, to allow him to make the choice? Should she discuss it with him beforehand? Should she take charge and just snatch the bill before he does, so he won't think she's only after him for his money?

As if procreating the species and having a monthly period wasn't hard enough, now we have to figure out an entirely new mating dance! Who picks up the check?!!

If you were time-transported back a century, the waiter would hand the bill directly to him, and the girl would just "Be a lady and let him pay." Those old mores are more than a little responsible for keeping women barefoot, pregnant and without a vote, for nearly a century and a half after America was founded.

But old mores die hard. The current version of "Be a lady and let him pay" is based upon the assumption that letting him pay the bill makes him feel more manly and is simply more romantic. Plus, it's a gauge of just how into you he really is. But is this true?

I looked at three very high profile women, and a few throughout history, and what I discovered was that the real question isn't who picks up the check. The real question is: What kind of relationship are you interested in? Picking up the check (or not) sends a subtle relationship signal to your date early on about the kind of relationship that you are interested in. Not who wears the pants, but, rather, who pays the bills. And rest assured, there is a good man available for many different types of payment scenarios.

So, would you rather be Princess Kate, Britney Spears or Angelina Jolie?

Girls Who Pick Up

Do you own your own castle? Are you so wealthy that the only guy who can pick up your check is Prince Harry?

Let's face it. Britney Spears could have dated a prince or perhaps even an Internet billionaire, if she wanted to play the damsel in the relationship.

However, she picked a dancer to be the father of her two children – someone she would have to support. In 2009, she began dating her agent – another man she supports.

Now, Britney divorced her first (and second) husbands, but picking up doesn't necessarily doom the relationship. Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip have been married for centuries (okay, since 1947). Prince Philip renounced his own bloodlines, assumed the title of his maternal grandparents and then moved into Windsor Castle. Who knows what goes on behind the castle walls, but the adoring public wants to see and touch their Queen, and you will never see the Prince Consort upstaging her.

If you have more money than the Queen of England (like J.K. Rowling does), or have a dream job that you want to place as a priority in the relationship, and/or are looking for someone to play a supportive role to you, then, by all means, reach for the check (with all of the femininity that you desire to summon) on ALL of your first dates. Be aware, however, that if you do reach for that check on the first date, and he lets you pay it, he's also sending a tacit signal to you – that he's fine letting you support him!

The challenge of being a woman who rules the roost in a relationship is finding a great guy and not just a gigolo who is fawning all over you because he likes your lifestyle! This is certainly possible. Cindy Lou Hensley, daughter of a wealthy Phoenix, Arizona beer distributor, seems quite pleased with her choice for a husband, Senator John McCain. Let's hope Jennifer Aniston's new romance turns out so well.

Girls Who Are Provided For

American girls are doing pretty well in finding their Prince Charming. Grace Kelly, the former Queen of Monaco and Princess Caroline's mother, was an American actress when Prince Rainier came calling. Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, was originally just a California girl. But the most famous commoner to marry a royal today is Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, who is the wife of Prince William, Duke of Cambridge.

Today's damsel in distress is not kept behind closed doors in the castle. Princess Kate went from Waiter Katie party girl to royal philanthropist and People headlines overnight. Queen Noor is now one of the most important voices for peace in the world, and, even more importantly, a symbol for women's equality in the Middle East.

Smart, motivated women can carve a niche for themselves, even if their husbands are the rich, famous ones – provided he respects, loves and believes in her and lives in a land where women are valued. Princess Kate and Queen Noor's lives are certainly very different from that of Dr. Zenat Karzai, the First Lady of Afghanistan, who is rarely seen in public or heard from. Dr. Karzai may be living the life of her dreams behind closed doors, but she is certainly not setting an example of empowerment for the women in her country.

Girls Who Want an Equal Partnership (and Pick Up the Check Sometimes)

They won't even admit when the first date actually occurred, and if it occurred on the set of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, then the catering crew picked up the tab... What we do know about the Jolie-Pitt family is that both Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt each command beaucoup bucks for their films and are rich enough on their own to buy homes, planes and nannies for the kids.

Do they support and applaud one another's dreams? It is widely reported (and documented) that when Jolie is working, Brad entertains the kids and vice versa.

So, is it possible that Angelina picked up the tab on the first date, or on some of their well-publicized date nights away from the kids? Who knows? However, it is evident that Angelina has established a very equal partnership with her very hot baby daddy, Brad Pitt.

Are you a Queen, a Damsel or a Democrat?

Now... Some psychiatrists insist that women should be wary of men who don't reach for the check. Pop authors will say that if the dude doesn't reach for the bill, he's just not that into you. However, the truth is that romance is a dance and there are dances today where men take the lead and others where partners kick up their heels pretty much on their own, but in close proximity to one another. Picking a great dance partner is far more important than insisting on the minuet or some other time-worn tradition, while trance music is pulsing in the background.

Having said that, there are a few date specific tips that you might consider.

1. If he asked you out, he's probably planning on buying. And that may be a big piece of his special way of wooing you. So don't blow a special night by snatching the bill. In that case, you're just being rude.
2. If he says, "Let's go Dutch," and it's your first date, he's just not that into you or he's a cheapskate. A guy who wants to win you over would figure out a better way to romance you than that – even if you're much richer than he is.

Bottom Line: So, to pay or not to pay is an important choice! But, the most important decision you'll ever make isn't who pays, but is this guy a really great person, who will delight you, empower you, respect you and love you. With lovers and husband candidates: It pays to pick a good one, regardless of who buys lunch.

Natalie Pace is the author of "You Vs. Wall Street" and "Put Your Money Where Your Heart Is," and the founder and CEO of the Women's Investment Network, LLC. She is a blogger on HuffingtonPost.com and a repeat guest on national television and radio shows such as Good Morning America, Fox News, CNBC, ABC-TV, Forbes.com, NPR and more. As a philanthropist, she has helped to raise more than two million for Los Angeles public schools and financial literacy. Follow her on Facebook.com/NWPace. For more information, please visit NataliePace.com.



Meet Shea Vaughn

How did you get to be where you are today?

No one gets to where they are without the help of others. I have worked hard — regularly getting up at 4:00AM and putting in long hours. But I have really been blessed with great family and friends, and have been surrounded with mutually supportive relationships. It also helps to have an unwavering desire and passion to succeed but still be able to laugh at yourself.

Have you ever been fired?

That is one painful experience I am fortunate to have avoided.

What are your real passions?

My family, friends and the SheaNetics 5 Living Principles...

If you won the lotto what would you do?

I would first set up a nonprofit foundation to support worthy causes. Then I would like to travel and positively touch as many hearts along my journey as possible.

What do you hope to accomplish in the future?

I am planning to implement a SheaNetics instructor certification program, so instructors will be able to teach SheaNetics in fitness clubs and private studios. My continuing mission is to provide additional inspiration,

education and products that help people on their pathway to personal wellness.

What do you like to do in your personal life?

Spend time with family and friends; continue to create new and fresh choreography for SheaNetics; read and play a little golf and tennis.

Please give us one or two shameless plugs.

SheaNetics is your pathway to well-being. There are no secrets here...SheaNetics gives you the inspirational tools to power up your life and ignite your potential; to look and feel your best on the inside and out...The answers to living the life you deserve are in my new book, Shea Vaughn's BREAKTHROUGH — The 5 Living Principles to Reduce Stress, Feel Great and Find Total Well-Being.

"BREAKTHROUGH invites you to find the clarity, balance and fulfillment that await you...to live the life you want without fear and regret.

Please give us one plug for someone else or your favorite cause or charity.

I know a young man by the name of Danny Ferrone who has Cystic Fibrosis and only 50% lung capacity. Yet he is a marathoner and boxer and founded the Fight Forever Foundation (www.fightforever.org) to fund a cure for this terminal disease. He is a real hero.

What do you do to help stay your best ever?

I follow my heart's dream and the SheaNetics 5 Living Principles of Well-Being. Pursuing my passion brings meaning and purpose to my life; and the Principles help me make good choices. They infuse my mind, body and heart with wellness.

How do you help other people be their best?

This is my life's calling everyday; as a fitness expert and wellness coach. The goal of SheaNetics is for everyone to breakthrough — to take charge of your life; as you are the CEO of your mind, body and heart.

What is your favorite book to recommend to someone else to read?

East of Eden, by John Steinbeck ...it really opened my eyes to how the mental challenge that isn't visible may be more profoundly debilitating than a physical one that is visible.

Tell us a secret ;)

I am not much of a jewelry person, even though I have family in the business. So remarkably, my girls were already grown, done with college and out of the house before I had my ears pierced for the first time.

Shea Vaughn is an author, fitness expert, wellness coach, motivational speaker and a recognized spokeswoman for creating well-being at any age. Ms. Vaughn is also the founder and CEO of SheaNetics®, a revolutionary East-meets-West lifestyle wellness and exercise practice that delivers a powerful mind-body experience and ignites your potential to look and feel your best on the inside and out. Shea has appeared on The Ellen DeGeneres Show, is a regularly featured health and fitness expert on Chicago's Windy City LIVE and The Best Ever You Network and is a frequent wellness commentator for other TV, radio, and print media and corporate events. Her SheaNetics DVD/CD Mind-Body Collection offers dynamic one-of-a-kind full body workouts and along with her new book, Shea Vaughn's Breakthrough — The 5 Living Principles to Defeat Stress, Look Great and Find Total Well-Being, invite you to live the life you deserve!

What is your background in fitness and wellness?

I am a fitness expert, professional trainer and wellness coach with a lifetime of mind-body experience and a passion for health and well-being. My career focus includes inspirational speaking and media appearances, in addition to my commitment to a great group of students and clients. These students include professional athletes and prominent executives. My goal is to help them build strength and flexibility; prevent injuries; “stay in the game”; and live more fulfilling lives. I am also the CEO and founder of SheaNetics®, a revolutionary lifestyle wellness and exercise practice that helps you power-up mind-body breakthroughs, create well-being and live the life you want.

My career in health and wellness began as a dancer and teacher, and later broadened to include fitness instructor and trainer. My diverse resume of program and specialist certifications includes: Yoga, Pilates, GYROKINESIS®, Bosu®, Zumba®, Bodypump™, Spinning®, AFFA Group, PTA Global and AEA Aquatic Exercise instruction; and these certifications are further augmented by NASM Board Certification as a CES (Corrective Exercise Specialist) and PES (Performance Enhancement Specialist); in addition to an Associate Degree in Applied Science.

What is SheaNetics®?

SheaNetics® is a revolutionary lifestyle wellness and exercise practice that blends Eastern and Western values and movements giving you a powerful mind-body experience. There are no secrets here...SheaNetics gives you the inspirational tools to power up your life and ignite your potential to look and feel your best on the inside and out...The heart of SheaNetics is The 5 Living Principles of Well-Being – Commitment, Perseverance, Self-Control, Integrity and Love; uniting the mind and body as one and inspiring the answers you seek – to live the life you deserve. SheaNetics takes mind-body transformation one step further with a fresh self-styled approach to exercise that combines yoga, pilates, tai chi, martial arts, ballet and lots more, along with the performance-enhancing benefits of Tri-Core Power Training – to develop your “killer” core. SheaNetics is “Your Pathway to Well-Being.”

What was the inspiration for creating SheaNetics®?

The origin of SheaNetics was very organic, with both its physical and mental components developing simultaneously. SheaNetics was inspired by the enthusiasm of my students coupled with my own life experiences; and today presents itself as an eastern-influenced western-lifestyle wellness and exercise practice. My journey began one day while teaching class, when I started to add certain poses and

movements to the routine from other exercise forms. These just seemed to naturally present themselves and improve the overall flow and diversity of my usual choreography. The feedback from my students was instant and positive. I realized I had tapped into something really exciting, and continued on that path. The 5 Living Principles of Well-Being, the driving force behind SheaNetics’ transformational power, are the result of my personal life lessons, decades of training in many disciplines. They



are influenced by eastern philosophy, and gained through my experience studying martial arts. It was through this influence in my own life that I found myself regularly talking to my class about being committed, having perseverance, finding balance and extending this thinking to all you do in the rest of your life. This creates the breakthroughs that open the door to lasting life-healthy changes. I found an easy synergy of motion and thought between these physical and mental elements. I knew it was important to share how together, they provide the practical tools to bring wellness into all you do; and help you create your personal state of well-being.

Who is SheaNetics® for and why should I want to get off the couch?

Most people know that a healthy lifestyle is good for them but not everyone puts that knowledge to action. SheaNetics® is for the person who really wants to make a life change, but just isn't sure how to get started, much less how to sustain the effort. SheaNetics® gives you the mental and physical power tools to make your desire into a lasting reality.

What does SheaNetics® do – how does it work?

SheaNetics® helps you to reshape and enhance the overall quality of your life. It gives you the mental strength and physical ability to make on-going life-healthy changes. The Principles are always with you. They inspire your workouts, as you build strength, flexibility and Tri-Core Power, and are an inspirational guide to making positive and beneficial choices in everything you do.

How is SheaNetics® different?

SheaNetics® is first and foremost an East-meets-West inspired wellness lifestyle practice. It is a first-of-its-kind combination of both physical and philosophical concepts that are life transforming. SheaNetics is an energizing blend of many great and effective physical formats. These formats include the special performance-enhancing qualities of Tri-Core Power Training, joined with the

heart of SheaNetics – The 5 Living Principles of Well-Being: Commitment, Perseverance, Self-Control, Integrity and Love. These work together to unite the mind and body toward a common goal of living life on your terms, and living it well.

Can you share with us what SheaNetics® has done for some of your students?

My students continue to share with me that SheaNetics® has evoked in each of them more thought and action about healthy living than anything they have ever tried before. They share with me how it has made real changes in their lives – mentally and physically. Most importantly, their actions are no longer reactive. They have the tools to help them think through their actions. Now they find themselves focused, “in the moment” and better able to take positive control of their lives; to decide what they want to accomplish and how to do it.

How often do you need to do the workouts?

Three times a week for 50 minutes each time; or if time does not allow, you can break your workouts down to 20 minute segments, 4 times a week.

How is eastern philosophy part of SheaNetics® and why are The 5 Living Principles of Well-Being so important?

We say SheaNetics® is “meditation in motion and thought” and this body-mind connection is very much a part of Eastern philosophy. My development of SheaNetics® also gives a respectful nod to the gifted Bruce Lee, who, early in his career, combined the different fighting styles and philosophies he had studied into a way of life he named “Jeet Kune Do.”

In a broader sense, Eastern thinking also generally embraces tenets or principles as a personal guide to living a good, healthy and rewarding life. SheaNetics® embraces this same philosophy using our 5 Living Principles of Well-Being as a practical approach, encouraging you to naturally make healthier choices and meaningful connections with others throughout your day. While many of us seek the health and balance that comes through creating harmony within our mind, body and heart; finding well-being can seem as challenging as climbing Mt. Everest. Really, it's more like Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz, who clicked her heels and realized the answers she had been searching for



were there all along – just as SheaNetics® is there for you. Your body and mind are meant to move and to connect with others. SheaNetics® with its 5 Living Principles of Well-Being are the catalyst for making those connections and more.

What does the SheaNetics® phrase Embrace It • Own It • Live It® mean to you and your students?

We feel like SheaNetics® is a best friend. Your journey to well-being begins as you “Embrace It.” Be open, wrap your arms around it with the same spirit of commitment you would give to anything you value and hold dear. “Own It” by accepting responsibility to do what is good for you, and having the perseverance and integrity to do it right. “Live It.” Set a good example and reveal the quality person you are by bringing SheaNetics in as your guide to everyday life. It has made great changes in my life – and I promise it can in yours.

What are your future plans for SheaNetics®?

I want to continue to share quality information, newsletters, healthy tips and products focused on wellness. My exercise DVDs and CDs have been well received and we'll continue to produce great new workouts and inspiring music. Reviews of my new book “Breakthrough” have been very good, and I am involved in a national promotion of it that is ongoing. SheaNetics® has added jewelry to the product line, and we are also developing an exciting and innovative exercise machine we hope to introduce later this year; in addition to plans for a SheaNetics® clothing line. So we're staying pretty busy.

How can I get started?

Well, we all need the right tools for the job. Visiting the website (www.sheanetics.com) and purchasing the SheaNetics® DVD/CD collection is a great way to begin. Do the workouts 2-3 times a week and add the same amount of cardio to make up the core of your workout program. Stay connected with SheaNetics® by signing up for the monthly newsletter and let the Five Living Principles of Well-Being be your guide to everyday living.

The magazine written by YOU!

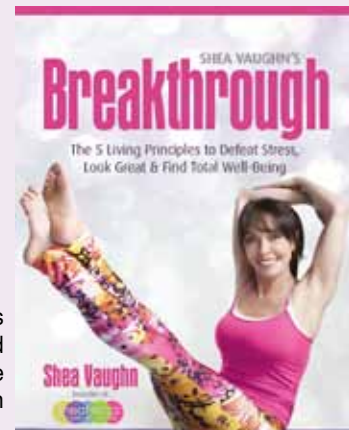
Q&A:

Shea Vaughn's BREAKTHROUGH – The 5 Living Principles to Defeat Stress, Look Great and Find Total Well-Being

Tell us about your new book

“Shea Vaughn's BREAKTHROUGH”...

“Breakthrough” inspires a lifestyle of wellness that is sustainable. It invites you to find the clarity, balance, and fulfillment that await you...to live without fear and regret the life you deserve. “A new beginning is just a breakthrough away.”



Why did you write this book? How do you think the book will benefit women who read it?

“Breakthrough” is really the story of SheaNetics® which was inspired by real life personal and student experiences. Watching my students embrace The 5 Living Principles and transform their lives to a healthier and sustainable lifestyle was my gift. Each time they walked out of class they were less stressed, they felt great and looked great; and they continued to make better choices and set better examples all through their lives for themselves and others. Touching hearts and making a difference encouraged me to want to share my Breakthrough's with a larger audience.

I hope this book will awaken your heart. My wish is to encourage you to look inside yourself and admit the things you need to do, and to help guide and inspire the positive breakthroughs in physical health and emotional peace of mind you are looking for. “Breakthrough” gives you the tools to Embrace It, Own It & Live It!

What is a Breakthrough?

Have you ever had a moment or a time in your life when you just “GET IT”? You saw something before a certain way, or did not give any meaning to it, and all of a sudden it takes on a different importance. Your perspective has changed, opening a new doorway to understanding. It is like flipping a switch, and a Breakthrough can happen any day, month or year – the bulb goes on and with it comes enlightenment.

Does “Breakthrough” speak to a certain audience?

The book has a practical appeal for many, but is most relevant to women 45 up. They have experienced enough of life to appreciate the benefits that come from a breakthrough, but still have challenges and questions, looking for answers and guidance. Women in this life phase seem to have unresolved issues of all types (mental, physical and emotional) which left unaddressed, have festered until life's mid-point, when they usually begin to boil over. “Breakthrough” will help you recognize your issues and show you how to take action. Most times, it is easier to keep our heads down and keep doing what we always do until we have no choice but to look up; and there it is, smack – whack, right in our face. This leaves us with no options but to address what we tried to avoid. Breakthroughs confirm whether you are on the right or the wrong track. They are a proactive and positive way to take more control of your life; to confront your challenges, desires and dreams; and to finally reach out for the truth, help or fulfillment that you have been longing to find.

What does your life look like living breakthroughs?

My life has been blessed and rich with love and acceptance from both family and friends. But it has not been by accident. I believe we determine our own destiny and along my journey, my own personal breakthroughs came from my efforts to live the Principles. They have been key to maintaining a lifestyle of wellness and improvement, and continuing the valued relationships I have with family, friends and others.

How is the “Breakthrough” different from other books?

“Breakthrough” is a straight forward method for living a better life. You get tangible advice, along with the practical tools and techniques to find the answers to your personal questions. It gives you the inspiration you need to discover and experience your own breakthroughs, and creates a lifestyle of wellness and the state of well-being that comes with it. The process of self-discovery and finding fulfillment is very personal and the road traveled is different for each of us. In this book, I also share my journey which I feel demonstrates the value of SheaNetics and the lessons learned along the way, and the positive prospect that what works for one person may work for anyone who will Embrace It, Own It & Live It...!



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"I cannot place a value on my sessions with Sara. I learned so much and feel as though I have new found clarity when it comes to food and well-being."

- B.G., Falmouth, ME

. . . from the way you think to the way you digest your food. So a one-size-fits all approach to getting healthy probably won't fit you very well. My programs consist of a balance of education, modeling, guidance, and emotional support. Breaking bad eating habits is one of the most challenging things that one can face. Together, we will replace bad habits with good ones. You will develop habits that uplift your spirit and bring you happiness through fitness, good health, and mental clarity.



Sara Sullivan, BA, CN, HHP, CH
Nutrition Counselor
Holistic Health Practitioner

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I design specialized nutritional food plans that enable you to lose unwanted pounds, facilitate proper digestion, and improve your overall health. My unique approach will help you transform both mind and body. www.nourishyourbodytoday.com

For delicious recipes and nutrition tips, please visit me at www.saradishes.blogspot.com

5 SUPERFOODS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

“Superfoods” can support weight loss.

Superfoods are nutrient dense foods that are proven to have specific health values. They have been known to improve the appearance of the skin and hair, reduce stress and prevent disease as well as support weight loss. Foods in this group are generally low in calories, fat and sugar. Including these foods often in your diet can boost your metabolism, increase your energy level and help your drop that extra body fat. The following are my top five superfoods due to their proven effectiveness with weight loss.

Avocado

It is true that this delicious fruit is full of fat, but that's what makes it a top weight loss food. The heart-healthy monounsaturated fat it contains increases satiety and also helps reduce both bad cholesterol and overall cholesterol levels. Avocados are rich in carotinoids, vitamin E, potassium and fiber, which ultimately help digestion. In addition, one avocado provides 13.5 g of fiber. Fiber can help you control your weight by filling you up faster and reducing overeating. It also improves your digestive health, keeping your intestines strong and your colon clean. Try adding avocados to your salad, or use as a replacement to butter, cream cheese or mayonnaise. If you do not regularly eat avocados, or are unsure of how to tell if they are ripe, try Wholly Guacamole's 100-calorie fresh guacamole packs (available for \$3 at grocery stores).

Broccoli

Broccoli is a VIP on almost all superfood lists. This dark green vegetable is packed with essentials like vitamins A, C and K as well as folate, which helps boost metabolism and reduce stress. It contains antioxidants and anti-cancer properties and is also a high-fiber food. Remember high fiber foods make your tummy feel full and your bowel movements easier. Broccoli is very filling, which is an added bonus for people who need to lose weight. It is low-carbohydrate and low-calorie; one cup of chopped broccoli holds only about 30 calories. Having broccoli as a vegetarian entrée, side dish or including them in your salad are all great ways to cut calories and prevent overeating.

Lentils

Lentils are a bona fide belly flattener. They are low in fat, calories and sodium. In addition, eating them helps prevent insulin spikes that cause your body to create excess fat, especially in the abdominal area. Lentils are high in protein, which is essential for building lean muscle, and they also supply adequate energy and strength to carry out your daily activity and workouts. Lentils are packed with fiber, which is necessary for keeping your appetite under control by making you feel full longer. One more perk- a one pound bag will set you back a whopping \$1.29 and a 1 cup serving weighs in at 230 calories, almost 18 grams of protein, 15+ grams of fiber, and 37% percent of your daily value of iron. Amazing!

Kale

Long sidelined as a lowly garnish, this green belongs center stage on your plate. This dark green vegetable has more fiber than other greens and can contribute to managing and losing weight, as well as preventing cancer, fortifying bones, increasing energy and fighting infections. Kale also contains sulforaphane, a powerful nutrient that helps the liver detoxify carcinogens and other toxins. This is important since the liver is our main fat burning organ. Kale also has the highest antioxidant rating of any vegetable and is incredibly low in calories. One raw chopped cup contains 34 calories as well as a hearty helping of iron and calcium. Try it tossed with olive oil, a few dried cranberries and some pine nuts.

Grapefruit

Ever heard of the grapefruit diet? Turns out there may be some good research to back up grapefruit's reputation as a fat fighter. In a 2004 study at the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, California, researchers investigated the effect of grapefruit on weight loss and found that eating half a grapefruit before a meal can actually help people drop weight. Grapefruit actually lowers the insulin levels in the body. This slightly decreased insulin level prevents the body from storing as much sugar as fat. Lower insulin levels help curb appetite, whereas high insulin levels are what turn the brain on to bringing food into the stomach. As an added benefit, grapefruit contains cancer-fighting compounds like Lycopene which fight free radicals. Grapefruit is high in fiber and low in calories making it a perfect addition to any meal. Try adding half a grapefruit with your breakfast and the other half with your lunch.

*Please remember that no single food can make you magically healthy. In order for superfoods to be effective and support weight loss, they need to be consumed on a daily basis, alongside exercise and a healthy self-image!

Recipes by Sara Sullivan

Superfood Recipes

Grapefruit and Arugula salad

Serves 4

1 pink grapefruit
1 large bunch arugula (about 5 cups)
1/4 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped dressing:
2 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tsp. honey
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt and cracked pepper to taste

Peel the grapefruit and cut each section between the membranes. Clean and dry the arugula and place in a large salad bowl. Mix together the salad dressing ingredients, and toss with the arugula (you may not need all the dressing, just enough to coat). Top with grapefruit and walnuts.

Simple Sautéed Kale

Serves 4

1 1/2 lbs. kale, stems removed and coarsely chopped
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1/2 cup vegetable stock
Salt and Pepper
Balsamic vinegar (optional)

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook until soft, about 3 minutes. (Don't burn!) Add the stock and kale and toss to combine. Turn the heat to high and cover and cook for 5 minutes. Remove cover and continue to cook until all the liquid has evaporated. Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with a dash of balsamic if desired.



Sara Sullivan, BA, NC, HHP, CH is a Certified Nutritional Counselor and Holistic Health Practitioner. She has a private practice at Sanctuary Holistic Health & Yoga Center in Yarmouth, ME.

Sara uses an individual approach to achieving optimal wellness for each and every client. "We are all unique" — no two people have the same metabolism, biochemical make-up, health concerns, behavioral issues or nutritional needs.

For the past five years Sara has also been a featured chef at the Stonewall Kitchen cooking classes in Portland, ME and continues to teach Pilates classes three days a week at Sanctuary Holistic Health & Yoga Center. She lives in Yarmouth, ME with her husband and two children.

Easy Lentil Soup Serves 4

1 onion, chopped
1/4 olive oil
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 stalks celery, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. dried basil
1 (14.5 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
2 cups dry green lentils
8 cups vegetable broth
1 cup spinach, rinsed and thinly sliced
Salt and pepper to taste

In a large soup pot, heat the oil over medium heat. Add onions, carrots and celery; cook until onion is tender, about 8-10 minutes. Stir in the garlic, oregano and basil; cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the lentils, add water and tomatoes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for at least 1 hour. When ready to serve, add the spinach and cook gently until it wilts, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Healthy Appetizers!

By Sara Sullivan



White Bean Dip Makes about 2 cups

1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 sprig fresh rosemary
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
2 cups cooked white beans or 1 15-ounce can, rinsed and drained
3/4 cup toasted, sliced almonds, divided
Sea salt
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup hot water (you may not need it all)
Grated zest of 1 lemon

In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, warm the olive oil, rosemary and garlic. When it just barely begins to sizzle, remove from heat and let sit for 10 minutes. Pour the oil through a strainer and discard the garlic and rosemary. In a food processor, combine the beans, 1/2 cup of the toasted almonds, a pinch of salt, the lemon juice, and 1/4 cup of the rosemary olive oil. Pulse a couple of times to bring the ingredients together. Add the water slowly until you reach your desired consistency. Taste and add more lemon juice if needed. Scoop the spread into a small bowl and sprinkle with the lemon zest, remaining almonds and remaining rosemary olive oil. Serve with crackers or vegetables. *adapted from Super Natural Every Day

Crab, Apple and Mango Salad Makes 8-12 servings

1/3 extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 tbsp. finely chopped green onion
1 clove garlic, minced
1/8 tsp. cumin
1/4 tsp. Dijon mustard
8 ounces fresh crabmeat
1/2 cup diced mango
1/2 cup diced Granny Smith apple
2 tbsp. chopped cilantro
Serve with dried apple rings or tortilla chips

Whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, green onion, garlic, cumin, and mustard in a small bowl until blended. Gently remove any excess liquid from the crabmeat. Place crabmeat in a bowl with the mango and apple. Add the dressing and toss gently to mix. Arrange on a platter and serve right away.

What if you could make one change to your current diet
and experience increased energy and motivation?
What if you could easily and successfully
reduce your unhealthy habits and lose weight?
You can.

I have seen countless clients experience incredible results, simply by replacing their usual breakfast or lunch with a green smoothie. If you can replace just one meal a day with a cleansing, nutrient packed meal, you too will be surprised how much of a difference it can make! Ideally your meals would be packed with nutrition, easily digested and filling enough to sustain you until your next meal, however, around the Holidays you may find yourself skipping meals or loading up on processed, nutrient deficient treats & snacks.

How does it work?

Green smoothies provide carbohydrates, otherwise known as energy, but they're also loaded with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, phytochemicals and chlorophyll. And of course, they are an excellent source of fiber which will keep you full for hours. Green smoothies are also very cleansing to the liver which is your major fat burning organ! Blending the vegetables ruptures the cell walls of the greens and releases the nutrients encased in the plant cells. You'll be able to absorb more nutrients from the vegetables, plus, you'll be able to consume more greens than you usually do! All of this in a quick to make, easy to drink, and portable meal that will give you all the energy you need for your day.

Sara's Favorite Smoothie

4 cups spinach or kale or a mix of both
1 large cucumber, peeled if not organic
2 bananas, peeled
1 apple, cored
Juice of 1/2 lemon

Enough water to blend, I usually add about 1 cup.
4 ice cubes

Blend until mixed smooth. Makes 2 big yummy drinks. Breakfast for two!

Elizabeth's Favorite Green Smoothie

In a small bullet personal blender mix
A handful of fresh spinach
1 bartlett pear, cut up, no peel
1/2 of a cucumber, no peel
Handful of ice
1/4 cup of water

Make Your Own Green Smoothie

The best green smoothie recipe is the one you make yourself!

1 bunch green leafy vegetable of choice (50% of total)
Fruit of choice (50% of total)
1 Banana or 1 avocado to emulsify (make creamy)
ginger, lemon, parsley to taste

Put all ingredients in your blender. Add clean water to cover all ingredients. Blend.

Remember, even if the rest of your diet remains the same, you might be lucky enough to experience a boost in immune system function, weight loss, increased energy, and many more benefits. Many people find that over time, the more green smoothies they drink, the more they crave greens and healthier foods throughout the day. Your body likes being treated this well and will be asking for more! You may start with breakfast, but don't be surprised if the rest of your diet starts evolving as well.

10 Tips to Improve Your Body's Composition and Health in 2012

Your body's composition and health are worsening if you have been sedentary for a long period of time. Take steps to eat better, burn fat, lose weight and improve your health. This will give you the best chance to live a healthy, quality life. You deserve it.

If you are overweight or have too much body fat (a skinny person can have too much body fat), your body is not as healthy as it could be. Start making changes today! Here are 10 tips you can take TODAY to start improving your health and body:

1. Identify your fitness goals and determine why your fat loss and weight loss efforts have failed or succeeded in the past. You also have to get your motivation right for your exercise program to work for you. This step takes you being "very honest" with yourself! Sometimes it is a painful process.
2. It is crucial that you improve your body's composition (less body fat % vs. more lean mass %) Where are you fat? Excess abdominal fat has been shown to be a precursor to diseases such as cancer.
3. You need to know your body's measurements (chest, arms, neck, hips, waist, etc.). Consistently strength training your total body will help you burn fat and shrink your body.
4. What's your health history? You might need a doctor's clearance before you can begin an exercise program.
5. What are your eating habits? Part of your fitness assessment will look at what you are eating, how you are eating and changes that you need to make.
6. What is your basal metabolic rate? Don't know? This rate helps you set the daily calories you will need to reach your fat loss goal
7. Have you had low back pain for some time? If so, you probably have postural problems that need to be corrected. Schedule an appointment with your trainer.
8. Had any muscle spasms or "knotted muscles" lately? Then, you need to improve your flexibility. A fitness assessment will tell you where your muscles are tight, lengthened or weak.
9. When's the last time you checked your resting pulse rate? Your resting pulse rate will tell you how hard your heart is working in a resting state. For instance, my resting pulse rate was 58 beats per minute the last time I checked it. That's pretty low. When I was at peak condition as a college athlete, my resting pulse rate was 54-56 beats per minute.
10. You might have to start out slowly getting in shape. Try walking 30 minutes a day for a week. You will need to progress to regular strength and cardio training to transform your body to lean and toned.

You have to start taking steps to improve your health and body. Do it today!

By Mark Dilworth, BA, PES – Your Fitness University



Did Your Body Fat Decrease in 2011?

Did you have less body fat in December than you did in January? The secret to successful body transformation is to have less body fat and more muscle mass.

Don't let the publicity of quick weight loss programs deceive you. **FAT LOSS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WEIGHT LOSS.** Yo-yo weight loss and regain damages your metabolism and health. If you are a serial yo-yo dieter, your health is even more at risk. Quick weight loss methods don't work long-term and they are not worth damaging the only body you have. Your self esteem also takes a hit with every weight loss/weight regain failure.

Build more muscle mass. You don't have to get bulky to be a muscular woman. It's a fact that muscular women burn more fat and stay leaner throughout life if they maintain exercise and nutrition.

This time of year, you need to review your year of fat loss and weight loss. How did you do? Do you have less body fat and weigh less? Or, did you gain weight and did your body fat increase? Are you eating healthier than you did last year? Is your health better (schedule that physical exam!)? Did you have a good meal plan to follow? Answer these questions honestly.

If you have not made progress with your fat loss and weight loss, you need to determine the reasons why.

Your clothes should be fitting more loosely, your body should be more toned, you should be able to do some type of interval cardio instead of just slow-paced cardio, you should be able to get through a 30-minute circuit weight training workout, etc.

Keep body fat off by building and maintaining your muscles. Your muscles will shrink if you don't continue to do strength training – muscle does not ever change into fat. And, the body fat will come back with a vengeance! Fat cells will shrink but they will fill up again when you are inactive over a long period of time.

If you are not exercising, you could be hit with a double dose of bad news. First, you will probably gain weight – meaning fat). And – your metabolism will slow down because you are also losing muscle mass. Muscle mass speeds up your metabolism because it is metabolically active tissue (fat is not) and your body has to work harder to maintain it.

In your early thirties, you can begin to lose as much as one-half pound of muscle each year. Inactivity will make this problem even worse.

Don't let this happen to you! Starting today, stay consistent with your strength training workouts. Bodyweight cardio also works well as a combination strength/cardio workout.

Measure your body fat percentage once a week to check on your progress.

"Exercise is not my life.....exercise makes my life better!"

www.besteveryou.com

If you're like me, you've stuffed your face since Thanksgiving! Ok, I didn't really do that bad, but I sure as heck ate like a PIG the last few days! Besides my 'Restaurant Tour' on my recent trip to the Big Apple, my food choices had not been that bad – it was my PORTIONS that were out of control.

I found myself rubbing my belly like it was my new pet Pot Bellied Pig. My once flat tummy (and when I mean once, I mean just 7 days ago), turned into a Buddha belly quick. It's not like I gained 10lbs of stored fat over the week, but I was constantly carrying around a full stomach and packed bowels. I know, it's a gross topic, but someone's gotta talk about it.

Seriously, you can't expect to eat these huge portions and not feel huge yourself. Where do you think that copious amount of food goes? Yes, it goes right to your gut – literally. It spends roughly 30 minutes to 2 hours in your actual stomach, but that's not what makes us feel fat. Look at where the stomach is. When is the last time you grabbed just below your boob and thought, "boy I feel full!"? No, we grab our low stomach, where all our intestines are (which are probably already full from our last huge meal. And we unbutton our pants to make more room for the intestines to do their job. Isn't that an attractive thought!?

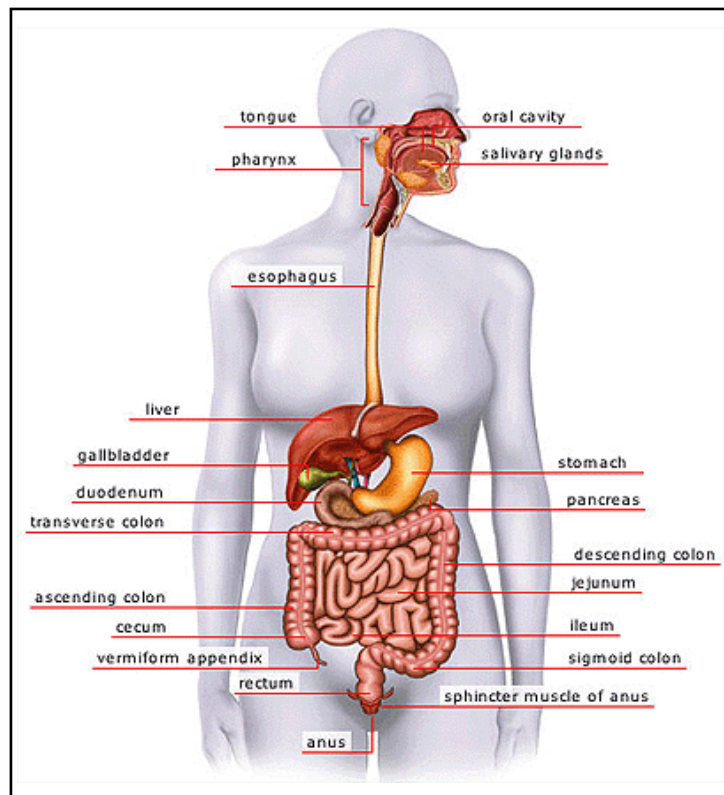
So the million dollar question, "How can I feel thinner in just 3 days"? Easy! It takes up to 80 hours to rid yourself of the last huge meal you ate – that's just a little over three days until you are truly through with that meal. This would also explain why I woke up feeling thinner today. Today is the three days after I ate my last big meal.

The key to feeling thin in just three days, then, is to immediately begin eating smaller portions so that you literally have less food in your gut. The first few meals may be the most difficult to adjust to, as your body has become used to the larger portions. Although your stomach is the size of your fist, it can be stretched out when you eat larger portions. However, it's not the size of your stomach that really is at issue, it's the type of meals you eat.

Each meal sets you up for the next. In other words, if you just ate a large unhealthy meal, your body will get your digestive system prepared for another large unhealthy meal. Once you stop that particular eating pattern, your body will begin to expect (and be content with) smaller, healthier portions.

However, if you are a yo-yo dieter who eats small meals one minute and huge meals the next, expect your body to be just as confused as your scale. You will likely find small portions unsatisfying unless you maintain consistent eating patterns. As soon as you begin to maintain smaller portions, you will begin to feel thinner in just 3 days!

PFIT TIP: Today I am addressing portion control – but what about all those extra calories you ate over the Holiday season? Don't forget to start burning some calories so you can burn off the stored fat from excess calories. Your new eating habits coupled with a consistent exercise program can get you faster (and much happier) results.



Feel Thin in Just Three Days!

By Bonnie Pfiester

The Art of Learning

I would love to start this article with one of the most inspiring and self motivating quote that I have ever seen. And I am proud that, it's of my GURU's, my personal guide's quote. My sincere salutation to him.

“Do not think out of the box, instead remove the box itself”

– Dr. Deepak Chopra

Yes, the title suits to the topic we discuss in this article. Learning is more of an artistic process than a systematic process. I believe that all systems are systems because they have certain rules associated with them, which always brings in limitations. And we are dealing with a subject infinite by nature: knowledge. And I don't think we should have a restriction based approach with which to deal with it. Most importantly, we human beings have infinite potential. It's just that we are not aware of it at the present moment. That's it! Through this article, I am trying to bring in some points that we can ponder on to understand and utilize our true nature for acquiring the most precious stuff, “Knowledge,” which gives shape to our world.

“A disciple acquires 1/4th of knowledge from his GURU (teacher), 1/4th by himself, 1/4th from his fellow mates and the last quarter from life experiences”

Awesome quote! It is so true! A teacher gives the knowledge which he has acquired through the whole process of learning to his disciples. His GURU also would have gone through all these phases of learning when he gave it to his disciples. In fact the disciples are getting a much more refined/specialized version of the subject.

“Cling to the one who clings to nothing”

Here I would like to add a word which I believe holds true for the so-called modern world GURUs. Most of our sources of information (from which we denote by the term, 'GURU' – it can be a teacher, book, internet or any other source of information) need not have gone thru the whole process of acquisition as described above. So we should be extremely careful when we select our GURU for any subject. Knowledge forms our views, our world itself. Do not take things for granted. You can agree with me or disagree with me. I do stand at my point as I believe in that.

“Great people were great thinkers”

Now what about the next quarter? Yes, it's more of a mental process though it involves practicing the learnt too. Which our ancient sages called by the name 'manana' – a process of churning the learned with his own intellect and extract the cream (essence) out from it.

Here, one point to be noted is that it does not say 'follow what your GURU taught, as it is.' Do an internal brain storming of what you have learned and how well you could map it in to a practical scenario, and come up with your own findings. Then, analyze the findings and decide on what to take in and what to omit. Form a conclusion from it, and make it a part of your knowledge. Here is the freedom of a disciple. He is free to take his own version of it. This approach creates only GURUs, not followers. That's the beauty of this approach. Imagine a world, where, for each subject, there is only one GURU and no room for free thinking for the disciples. The world would have been different.

“Together we are stronger”

Now let's see where the third quarter of knowledge comes from. It presumes that the first two has already happened. Knowledge comes from discussion with like-minded people. It's more like a group discussion or brainstorming

sessions. When many like-minded people sit together to discuss a subject, we get very different views of it. This helps us not to be biased. Openness, ego-less approach is necessary for it to be beneficial for us. Such discussions are very much used in our day to day life. When we talk to someone, we are in fact learning something. But it is all depending on how you approach. Here after the discussion, we have to go back to step 2. We have to go through the internal brainstorming session on the conclusion of the external brainstorming session. One more level of refinement occurs, and we get purer form of knowledge. Our knowledge-base is expanding . . . so is our world.

“Great leaders were great observers”

Here comes the last (but not the least) quarter of knowledge. It is from observing the situations when we practice it. Its experience that brings the practical aspects of the knowledge you acquired so far. It's a never ending process. You keep improving/refining it as and when you explore more and more in the subject. Practice . . . Observe . . . Refine . . . It's a cyclic, continuous process. We should have eyes to see, ears to hear and senses to sense, to extract the essence from situations (NOWs). It's a process of identifying possibilities, converting them into opportunities for improvement.

“The lotus rises with the level of water, and man as high as his will”

There is always a room for improvement. It's our attitude that really matters. An open, observing mind will always gain. Knowledge we gain is important to us as it forms our world. I am repeating this statement again and again, just to show of the importance of knowledge. We have infinite potential sleeping in us. We just need to be aware of this fact.

Elizabeth's Picks

BLUE RIBBON AWARD WINNERS



From live TV to live events, Michelle Phillips has inspired and entertained millions. By combining her knowledge as a Life Coach with her years of working as a celebrity makeup artist, Michelle has created formulas for authentic beauty and success. From appearance, attitude, personal goals, performance and relationships, Michelle provides a “blueprint” that empowers people and positively impacts them far beyond simple makeovers.

Michelle knows firsthand what it takes to succeed against the odds. Although she is from the Phillips family of music and TV, her entry into the entertainment industry was a humble one. She dreamed of working as a celebrity makeup artist at a time when it wasn't a viable career choice. Through hard work and determination she eventually went on to work with major networks and stars of film, TV, and music such as: NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, Katie Couric, Deborah Norville, Colbie Caillat, Jeff Foxworthy, Doris Roberts, and more.

Along the way Michelle was asked to move in front of the camera as the beauty and style correspondent on Tampa Bay's 10, eventually being cast as the host of the station's morning talk show, Studio 10. Since then she has made appearances on: The Daily Buzz, Gal Time, Head Drama, BetterTV, SheKnowsTV, HSN, TLC, HGTV, and shows across the country.

While working behind the scenes, and eventually in front of the camera, Michelle made some very important discoveries, the biggest being the connection between inner strength and outer beauty. Making this connection led her to create a process to help others achieve and live their true beauty. Michelle can now show you the right foundation for your skin tone and provide the right foundation for your personal success, providing a strategy for 'beautiful' living inside and out.

The process Michelle created provides a strategy for living a 'beautiful' life by covering areas such as: enhancing self-image, overcoming obstacles, health and fitness, style and beauty, goal setting and empowerment, life balance and more. While women across the world spend millions every month searching for tips and inspiration to make their lives better, Michelle provides help that will take them beyond what they've been told is the meaning of success.

She has made it her mission to help others live their beauty by sharing her message in her speaking programs, TV appearances, weekly radio show on Hay House Radio, and in her best-selling beauty and self-esteem book, "The Beauty Blueprint- 8 Steps to Building the Life and Look of Your Dreams" (Hay House, 2011).



BouncIng Back Bolder:

How Resilience Adds to Happiness

Confession: I don't really like lemonade all that much. And, I also think that lemons have their place in this world without being sweetened and liquefied: to balance the strong flavor of swordfish, add tang to a glass of water, keep apples from turning brown.

This much, though, I know is true: if life hands you lemons, and you choose to make lemonade, you have the supply the sugar yourself.

A good friend once asked if I though life was "easy or hard." Hmmm. I had no answer to that, nor do I now. But I do think it's not our place to judge life. It's our job to deal with it. And, if we open our eyes, to learn from it and take pride in our own ability to bounce back, bolder for the experience.

If you have never had a challenge in your life, you can stop reading right now. But, I suspect, you have dealt with at least one lemon – and, more likely, several big ones and a hundreds of small ones.

So – what defines us? Is it what "happens" to us, or the way we ultimately choose to react to it?

Specifics? Sure, I'll share. Here are some of my lemons, so far:

- I gained 50 pounds in college by eating in response to self-consciousness and stress.
- My first husband deserted me and my two young children and wasn't found until 12 years later. Alcoholic. No child support.

- I wanted to be a Broadway star and only got as far as Off-Broadway.
- I got fired from my radio job seven years ago and was rejected from full-time employment countless times after that.
- My son Ben developed schizophrenia, and that changed our family forever.

Tough life? I don't know. It's just...well, my life. I could describe it another way, to make it sound almost like a charmed life. Here is the resilience view:

- I lost 50 pounds after graduating from college and became a Weight Watchers leader after that, which helped me support my children.
- I was motivated by my need to support my family alone to find related "show biz" work in broadcasting, and eventually worked as a full-time radio personality for 15 years. I also taught drama in a private school, which helped me discover my own skills as

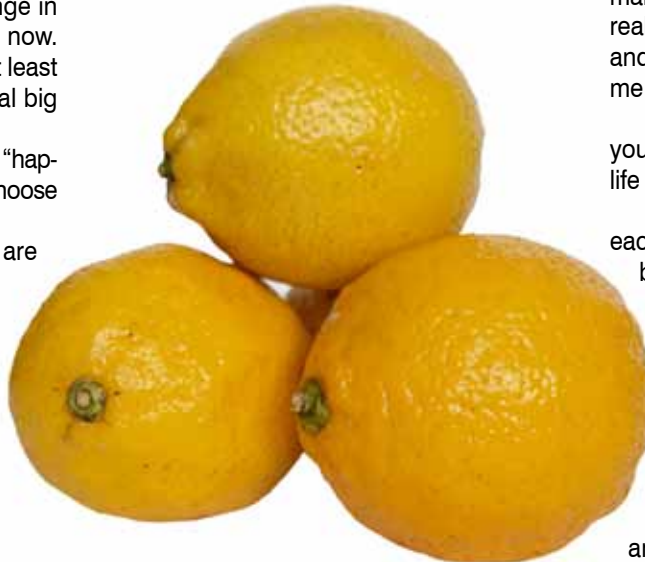
a writer (of the annual play) and gave my kids a terrific early education.

- I dated for sixteen years, off and on, after my ex-husband's disappearance – and learned from every "frog." I am now happily remarried to my best friend. I get it now.
- After leaving radio, I branched out into full-time voice-over work and now am in control of my own schedule, clients, and income. I talk for a living.
- I learned about my son's illness and am able to be part of his stabilization and recovery process. My memoir about our experience (Ben Behind His Voices) was published a few months ago, and is helping others, I think (feedback says yes). I also am paid to speak to groups about this subject, and about motivation and humor.

Sure, I would have loved to have gotten marriage right the first time. And, yes, I'd give anything for my son to be well. But those things are not in my control – not my past decisions, nor my son's chemical make-up. I can only do my best with these realities, and look forward with resilience and the lessons learned which empower me to move ahead with more clarity.

How have your "lemons" shaped you? How have you charmed your own life with their lessons?

I read somewhere that if we could each put our troubles in a basket, we'd be lucky to pull our own out again. No matter how many times I may have wished to trade problems with someone, I'd never be able to comprehend the whole package of their lives. I'll take my troubles back, please. At least I know the recipe of what to do with them. Happy New Year to you, full of resilience, gratitude and constructive thoughts.



Randye Kaye is the author of "Ben Behind His Voices: One Family's Journey from the Chaos of Schizophrenia to Hope" (Summer, 2011 from Rowman & Littlefield) a memoir of her experience with the onset of schizophrenia in one of her children, and the years from that chaos to recovery.



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GO NUTS

I'm a little nuts when it comes to eating the right kind of nuts. All too often my clients will write down in their Visibly Fit™ nutritional journal that they ate nuts during the day. I soon find out that their idea of healthy nuts consisted of macadamia nuts (which aren't bad, just higher in calories and fat) or worse, honey-roasted almonds, peanuts or pecans. Nuts can be very beneficial in your daily diet if you eat the right ones and if they are raw. When they are coated in honey, sugar, and salt then they become less healthy. For instance, honey-roasted almonds have 100 additional calories per ounce than without. Most raw nuts range from 150-210 calories per ounce. Studies show that people who are frequent tree nut eaters usually weigh less than people who aren't, in spite of the high calories of nuts.

Here's a nutritional breakdown of some of the most popular nuts available. I hope when you choose to go nutty, then you'll go nuts with the right one!

1. ALMONDS: My all-time favorite nut! I eat 12-15 of them daily, usually as part of my mid-day snack. Just one small ounce of these nuts offer 12 percent of your daily allowance of protein, 35 percent of your vitamin E allowance, the same amount of calcium that's in 1/4 cup of milk, and they are loaded with minerals and healthy fiber. To top it off, almonds offer a "filling" mechanism in them to keep you feeling full and satisfied and they are considered less fatty (although it's monounsaturated fat – ie. good fat and has no cholesterol) of all the nuts! I always keep some in the car as a grab and go snack when I'm on the road.

2. PEANUTS: Probably one of the most popular nuts as they are used often in cooking and they seem to be the nut of choice when watching many sports. Guess it's a bit of a sport nut! Yes, pun intended! The peanut is also a nut that many people are allergic to, so much so, that schools have a "peanut-free" table in the cafeteria for the kids to sit that have this allergy. This nut is technically a legume . . . a little trivia for you! Even though this nut is a great energy source, has an excellent source of resveratrol (antioxidant that's great for fighting cancer and heart disease), vitamin E, B-complex groups of vitamins and many minerals, it's susceptible to mold due to the way it grows. This is toxic to the body and roasting the nuts only reduces the toxins, but doesn't eliminate.

3. CASHEWS: Like other nuts, cashews are a great source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Cashews are said to offer the best source (of all the nuts) of minerals such as Selenium, Copper, and Zinc. These particular minerals are all co-factors for vital enzymes for the body. Native to South America, cashews are actually seeds that are found growing on the end of a cashew apple. They are high in monounsaturated fats, but no higher than almonds. In fact, cashews may be a tad less. BUT . . . they don't fill you up the way almonds do. Yes, I'm promoting my favorite nut. I'm allowed – it's my article!

4. MACADAMIA: Last time I had a Macadamia nut I was in Kauai. This nut is notorious in Hawaii and they grow 90 percent of the world's macadamia nuts there. It's no wonder that it's the token gift item to give once

one returns from the island. They are one of the highest in calories and fat. Very tasty and even sweet. Again, like the other nuts, the macadamia is high in fiber (offering about 10 percent of your daily allowance), minerals, phytonutrients and protein. But, nut popper beware . . . these bad boys have 962 calories in just one cup.

5. PECANS: My best memory of pecans were tucked inside my Aunt Thelma's award-winning (at least in our family) pecan pie! Haven't had it in years, but when I think pecans . . . I think pie! The consumption of pecans on their own and without the sugar, is ideal. This nut is known for its antioxidant properties. They contain over 19 vitamins and minerals and are a good source of fiber. It's been recorded that pecans play a vital role in protecting the nervous system. Keep in mind, though, that an ounce of pecans is close to 200 calories.

6. BRAZIL: Part of a staple diet to the Amazonians, this nut is another one that is high in fat. Yes, still good fats! Brazil nuts are known as the highest natural source of the trace mineral, selenium. Selenium is important as it stimulates the production of antibodies, helps with enzyme function, and works with antioxidants to protect the body from free radicals. **Important: You only need a small amount as you don't want to be subject to selenium toxicity.**

7. WALNUTS: The nut that looks like a brain, in my opinion, is actually good for it too! Walnuts offer the highest level of ALA omega 3 fatty acids. These fatty acids are highly concentrated in the brain and are important for brain memory and performance. Your body can not produce these essential fatty acids on its own and they are necessary for human health. Fat and calorie content are similar to the pecan and peanut. Not as lean as the almond, but not as fatty as the macadamia. Walnuts are great on salads and I use them often on my oatmeal in the morning.

Instead of just adding nuts to your diet, consider replacing certain foods that are high in saturated fats with nuts. They will offer great health benefits and keep you feeling full longer. So, go nuts!

WENDIE PETT is a nationally renowned fitness expert and coach, mother, speaker, author and creator of the Visibly Fit™ exercise program. Wendie's Visibly Fit™ instructional DVDs teach wellness maximization through the balance of mind, body, and spirit while using one's body as a gym (and saving hundreds in membership fees). To learn more, visit www.wendiepett.com and www.wakeupwithwendiepett.com.

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God's Timing is Perfect



Many years ago, we had a clock on our kitchen wall that read "God's Timing is Perfect." It's my belief that God is never late or early, but always right on time. If I really believe this, then why do I sometimes get anxious, impatient and complain that things are not going fast enough or that my prayers are not being answered? It's because I am human and I forget that it's about progress, not perfection. When I become aware that I'm feeling impatient and thinking things are not going fast enough, I can choose to change my thinking and remind myself that "God's Timing is Perfect."

There is always going to be something in our lives that we are waiting for. It may be a new job, a new relationship, the courage to get a divorce, improved health, increased finances, to be married, and the list goes on and on. What are you waiting for in your life?

It's really important to look at how we wait. Do we wait with peace, ease and grace, trusting that what we desire will show up for our highest good at the perfect time and place? As I was cleaning out a box of papers in my office, I came across something that spoke to my heart. It read "By waiting and being calm, I shall be saved. In quiet and trust, lies my strength." In quiet and trust means my mind is quiet and I am not obsessing about the future and what I want to happen in my life. I am content in the present moment and trusting God's divine plan for my life.

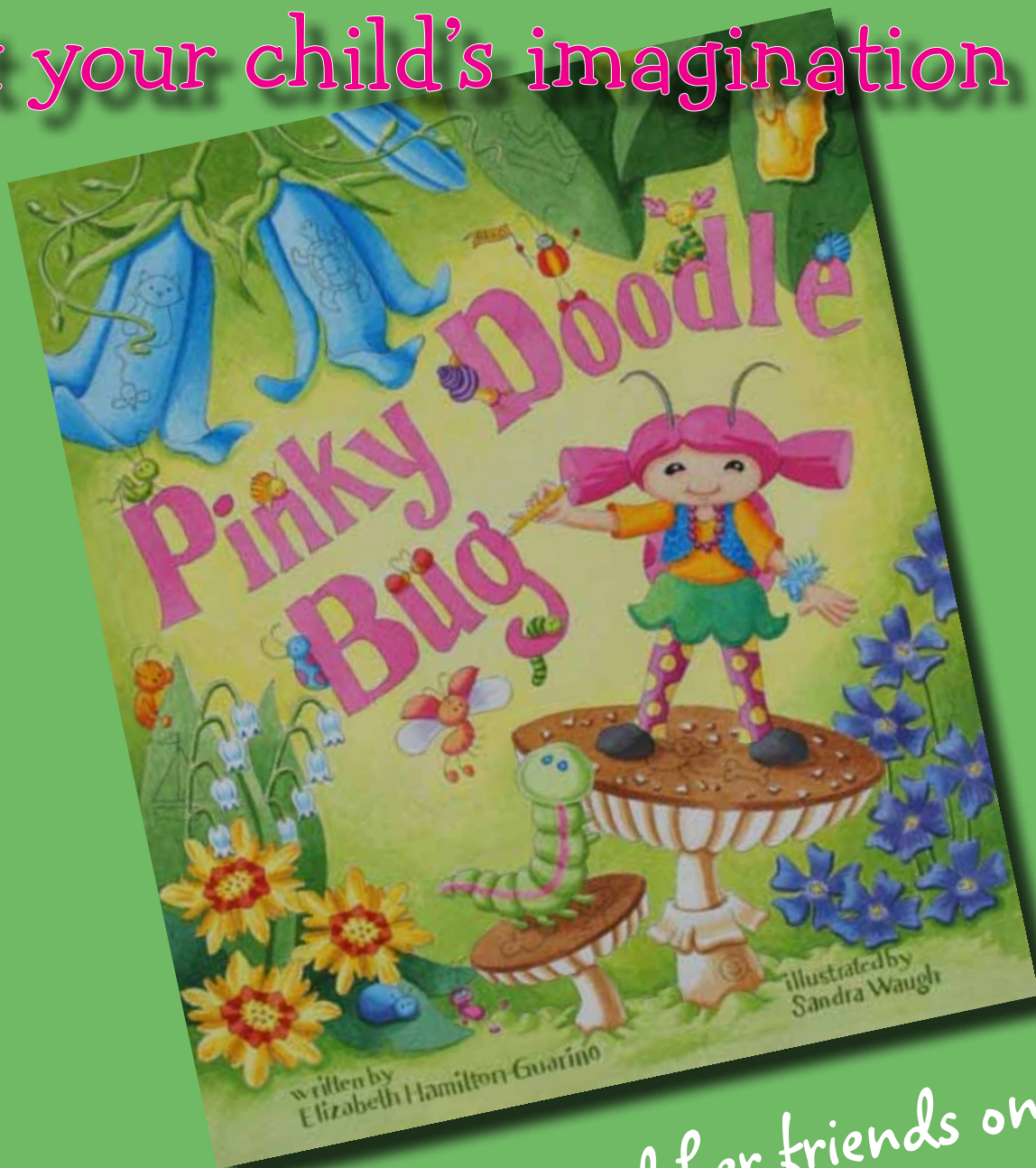
Learning to wait on God is essential to our well-being and spiritual growth. One of the keys is to be grateful and to focus on what we do have, rather than what's missing. What I have learned to do over the years is to express gratitude for what I do have and to give thanks in advance for the good I desire and all that God has planned for me. I open my heart to receive. For example, I give thanks for my coaching clients and give thanks in advance for the new clients that are coming. I give thanks for my beautiful, peaceful home and give thanks in advance for my new house on the water.

During a very low point in my life while I was writing "Simply a Woman of Faith," God spoke to me. At that time, I often cried myself to sleep and wanted to give up on writing. I was sure I was wasting my time and no one would read the book. One day I went to work and opened a magazine and the words on the page jumped out at me. "God has a plan that will make all of your dreams come true." In the four years since my book was published, so many miracles have happened. I can now look back and clearly see the divine timing in it all. Doors have opened and opportunities have presented themselves that I never would have imagined.

God has a plan for your life. His Timing is Perfect. Are you willing to wait and trust in divine timing? It's your choice to wait in peace, ease and grace and to be grateful for what you do have.

Pat Hastings, MS is the Author of the award winning book, *Simply a Woman of Faith*, International Inspirational Speaker, Certified Spiritual Coach, Therapist, and Radio Talk Show Host. Website: www.simplyawomanoffaith.com

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