

WOMEN INSPIRING WOMEN FOR GOOD!

COMPLIMENTARY

Women 2 Women

MICHIGAN

Blessings/Appreciations

**Have an
Attitude of
Gratitude**

**Hello People!
Your Priorities
Are Askew!**

THE GIFT
I NEVER
KNEW I
NEEDED



**Stacey
Rourke**



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Dear Friends,

It's that time of year when it is always good protocol to count our blessings and take time to appreciate all that we have in our lives. It is so easy to forget to be thankful for the sun shining on us, the flowers blooming and the lovely people we have in our lives when the days are long and the sky is blue. At Women2Women Michigan Magazine, we want to make sure we take the time to enjoy our blessings and appreciate all the wonderful things in our lives, and that includes all of you!

In this issue we introduce you to our cover feature, Stacey Rourke, the author of the "Gryphon Series" who is launching her Once Upon a Book Author Signing in Frankenmuth this August 12th and 13th which will highlight 70 authors in every genre imaginable!

There is something for everyone in this issue! We hope you enjoy all the wonderful articles within the pages and find inspiration for your own life. There are so many amazing women showing how to be a light in the world. Imagine what you could do by believing in yourself. At Women2Women Michigan Magazine, we are convinced there are no limits as long as you believe. We believe in you!

Cheers!

Debra & Susan

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Women2Women Michigan

Women Inspiring Women for Good!

Our Mission:

Women2Women Michigan was created to connect women with women for good to encourage, support, have fun, do business and provide links for women's resources.

DO YOU KNOW A MICHIGAN WOMAN WE SHOULD FEATURE?

Submit your stories online at w2wmichigan.com. Article guidelines are under the magazine tab.

WHY ADVERTISE WITH US?

Women make the majority of purchasing decisions. They buy goods and services for their homes, gardens, businesses, entertainment, health and nutrition, the list is endless. They want to be informed and connected in their communities. Event-driven marketing makes education fun and rewarding. You can reach these women in a heartwarming environment at Women2Women Michigan events and through our magazine.

READERSHIP & DISTRIBUTION

Women2Women Michigan magazine is distributed to subscribers via US mail. It is also available at every Women2Women Michigan event, chamber events, and women's organizations. It is delivered to over 400 locations with 25 outside vendor racks throughout the area including restaurants, hospitals, retail locations and medical offices in southeastern Michigan. Interested in hosting a distribution location? Call 810.694.2326 or email at info@w2wmichigan.com

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Meet Stacey Rourke, mother, wife, author, and publisher. She was born and raised in Michigan, and now lives in, what she describes as, the adorably quaint little town of Flushing. She is a woman who has forged a career out of pursuing her passion and encouraging others to do the same.

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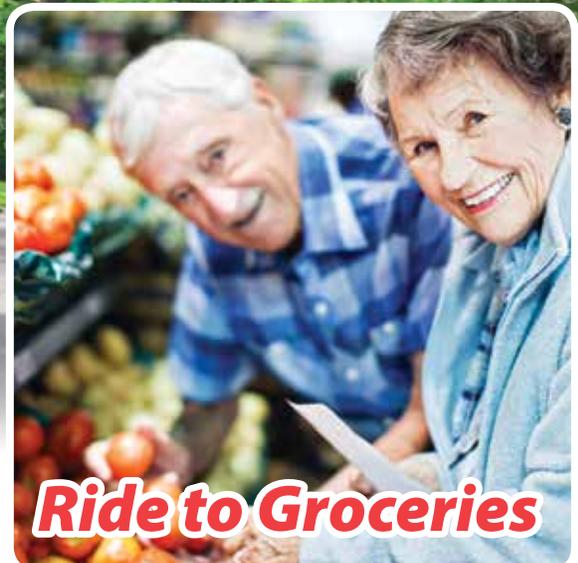
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Rides worth taking!

MTA has added two new specialty routes; Ride to Wellness and Ride to Groceries. The Ride to Wellness route provides residents and their families with accessible transportation to medical facilities outside the normal fixed route bus service. Ride to Groceries services Flint Eastside residents through a call-in service and a limited access bus route.



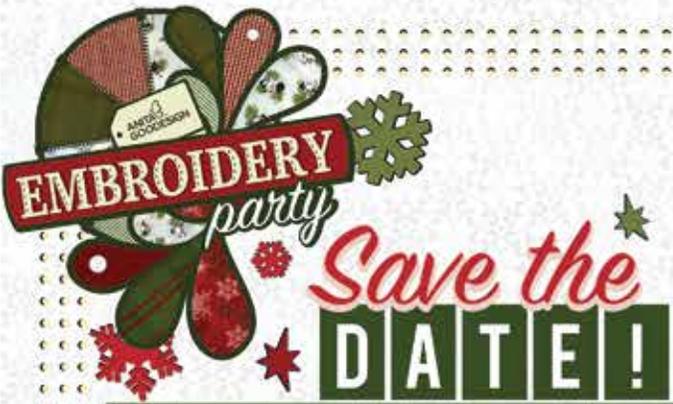
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Kaptured by Kassie and special thanks to Tenacity Brewing for the location shoot



The Birch Run Expo Center is pleased to present the Ballroom



the Ballroom is a beautiful 4,800 square foot room with a bar, dance floor, gorgeous chandeliers and a retractable video screen for presentations. The Ballroom was completed a few months ago and has already hosted a dozen wedding receptions, numerous business meetings/luncheons, a Charity Casino night for the Old Newsboys, several Christmas parties, the Great Lakes Bay Regional CVB Annual Meeting and the Genesee County GOP Lincoln Day Event.



- Groups of up to 300
- Receptions, private parties, galas, luncheons, etc.
- Business Meetings (Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner)
- Food & Beverage catering options are available

the LOFT is a huge 12,500 square foot area accommodating groups of up to 400 and more. The Loft features a lounge area with a private bar, television screens, couches and cocktail tables in a contemporary setting with ample space for mingling as well as a banquet area for a more intimate and private atmosphere.



- Groups of 400+
- Large receptions, wedding services, business to business meetings, private events, proms, election night campaign parties, galas, etc.
- Food & Beverage catering options are available

Calendar of Events

June

3

June 3

First Friday at Longway Planetarium
sloanlongway.org

17

June 17

Design, Style, and the American Dream
Car exhibit opens at Buick Gallery
sloanlongway.org

18

June 18

Get in the Game with Zach Gowen
Beecher-Vera B. Rison Library
12:30-2pm
(810) 230-9613
www.thegdl.org

Drummunity
Headquarters Library, 11am
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

Gemini Family Concert
Burton Memorial Library, 11:30am
Clio Area Library, 2:30pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

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June 21

Straight Ahead Concert
Headquarters Library, 6:30pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

23

June 23

Michigan Works! Free Career
Assistance
Grand Blanc-McFarlen Library, 2-4pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

Applewood's 100th Birthday Party:
5:00pm – 8:00pm
www.ruthmottfoundation.org/
applewood/

25

June 25

Sloan Museum Auto Fair
sloanlongway.org

Gemini Family Concert
Genesee Valley Center Library, 4pm
(810) 230-9613
www.thegdl.org

Sloan Auto Fair @ Applewood:
10:00am-6:00pm
www.ruthmottfoundation.org/
applewood/

26

June 26

Sloan Museum Auto Fair
sloanlongway.org

Sloan Auto Fair @ Applewood:
10:00am-6:00pm
www.ruthmottfoundation.org/
applewood/

July

1

July 1

First Friday at Longway Planetarium
sloanlongway.org

4

July 4

Independence Day

7

July 7

Magic Chef Nutrition Show
Swartz Creek-Perkins Library, 2pm
Headquarters Library, 5pm
(810) 230-9613
www.thegdl.org

11

July 11

Egg Rolls with Ming Louie
Linden Library, 3pm
Baker Park Library, 6pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

12

July 12

Bats in the Library
Fenton-Winegarten Library, 3:30pm
Montrose-Jennings Library, 6pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

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July 14

Author Event: Todd Biermann
Handing Out Life: The Simple Way to
Rewarding Relationships in All of Life
Grand Blanc-McFarlen Library, 6-8pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

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July 19

Documentary Showing –
Thank You for Playing
Grand Blanc-McFarlen Library,
6:30-8:30pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

Documentary Showing –
Thank You for Playing
Grand Blanc-McFarlen Library,
6:30-8:30pm
(810) 230-9613 • www.thegdl.org

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July 21

Kick-off Party at Applewood with the
Flint Cultural Center
5:00pm-8:00pm
www.ruthmottfoundation.org/applewood/

21-24

July 21-24

Four Days of Family Fun at Applewood:
10:00am-6:00pm
www.ruthmottfoundation.org/applewood/

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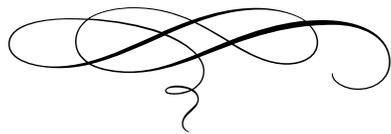
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Ignore The White Noise



If you would like to learn more about Stacey Rourke and her books: contact her at www.staceyrouke.com, Facebook at www.facebook.com/staceyroukeauthor, and Twitter and Instagram @rourkewrites.



Meet Stacey Rourke, mother, wife, author, and publisher. She was born and raised in Michigan, and now lives in, what she describes as, the adorably quaint little town of Flushing. She is a woman who has forged a career out of pursuing her passion and encouraging others to do the same.

“I never take myself too seriously. I love to laugh and have found life is a heck of a lot more fun if you can roll your eyes at yourself from time to time.”

“As an author, I make a career out of talking to the imaginary people that live in my head!! I love to write. It allows me to get my crazy out just enough that I can function as a normal member of society.

Seriously, I love it, plain and simple. What better reason is there to pursue *any* dream?”

Currently, Stacey has nine novels out, with a tenth in the vigorous editing process as we speak. She is also the founder and co-owner of Anchor Group Publishing, a medium-sized press in Flushing, with 40+ authors signed to the label and well over one hundred books in the catalog.

Her writing career began when her debut novel, *The Conduit*, became a semi-finalist in the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Contest. Riding that wave, she pushed on.

In 2012, Stacey won the RONE Award for Best Young Adult Fantasy for her follow-up book, *Embrace*, “Gryphon Series” book 2, and was voted the Young Adult and Teen Reader Author of the Year. “That was a great year. I spent the majority of it giddy.”

In 2013 *Turning Pages Magazine* awarded *Sacrifice*, “Gryphon Series” book 3, Best Teen Read of the Year as well as Best Young Adult Book of the Year. In 2015 *Crane*,

“Legends Saga” book 1, won the Readers Favorite silver medal in the fantasy category. “While I’ve ventured into other genres and have found success in them, I would say dark fantasy mixed with snarky humor is my wheelhouse and where I am most comfortable writing.”

Yet Stacey’s path was not entirely a bed of roses. After dealing with ‘more rejections than she could count’ and a ‘heartless con-artist’, she swore she would not let her dreams die. She did her research, relied on her business background and asked a few friends to join her on a new venture called ... Anchor Group Publishing. “How did Anchor Group become the success that it is? Because my friends trusted me; and I have spent every day since making sure I earn it.”

She still struggles to tune out the naysayers. “I doubt myself, second guess my abilities, and say stupid things in public I instantly wish I could take back.”

Yet Stacey is a fountain of inspiration. She knows there will *always* be those who claim we’re chasing a pipe-dream or we don’t have the talent, or offer a million other negative comments that make us doubt ourselves.

Still she encourages us to ignore the white noise of those trying to put us down. “Challenge yourself, grow in your talent and see where that epic ride takes you!” The turning point came for Stacey after she finished her Young Adult series and challenged herself to delve into other genres: the more dark and twisted fantasy in the “Legends Saga” and the light-hearted romantic comedy in *Adapted for Film*. That is when she stopped feeling like a ‘one-hit wonder’ and started reveling in the knowledge that she had acquired enough skill to rise to the tests and trials before her.

Her big goal right now is to host her first ever book event here in Michigan. “My passion for the written word has inspired me to orchestrate the **Once Upon a Book Author Signing** in Frankenmuth on August 12th and 13th of this year. This celebration of the magical adventures found at the turn of every page has seventy authors signed on, spanning every genre imaginable! There will be something for every book lover at this event! Tickets are on sale now, and can be purchased at www.onceuponabookauthorsigning.com.”

Everyone reading this article is invited to come out and join in the fun!



The Gift

I Never Knew I Needed

Ask Shuntai

Dear Shuntai,

I have a 17-year-old daughter and a 15-year-old son. My relationship with my children seems to be changing. My kids are distant. It seems like we are always arguing about something around the house. I am newly divorced and my work schedule is a little hectic. I would like to improve my communication with my kids. Can you help me?

Dear Hectic Mom,

As our children become teenagers it can be a struggle as they attempt to gain their independence. The distance may be the result of them being teenagers or them dealing with the break-up of your marriage. It is important that parent's set healthy boundaries for their teenagers and sometimes they may not like it. However, it is our duty as parents to have some control over our household. Here are some tips that will help you improve communication with your teenagers and help you deal with the conflict in your household:

Do establish an environment where your child feels comfortable talking and sharing with you. Do create boundaries. Children need to understand what behaviors or actions are unacceptable.

Do follow through on the consequences for unacceptable behavior. Be firm but fair. Do model good behavior. Parent's need to be aware of the type of conversations and pictures they are posting on social media. Don't get too emotional when reprimanding unacceptable behavior.

May you find peace and balance in your household

Love your life or live trying

Shuntai Beaugard

Clinical Therapist

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I have two daughter-in-laws and they are very different.

The first, Kristin, is very quiet around me. She's one of those women whose IQ is off the charts and whose understanding of the world is broad. She loves libraries and books; shopping and her mom; swapping kids clothes with other parents in the area and traveling. She is practical, beautiful, natural, sensible and amazing. My son adores her and her family is her pride. She is amazing.

In the early days, I think she thought I was eccentric.

The other daughter-in-law, Nicole, is a nutcase. But I say that in the nicest of ways. She can be loud, precocious, sensitive, and wild. She is sexy, inappropriate at times, and "larger than life." The love she has for her family is all encompassing and her husband, my son, relies on her for most everything. Her children cling to her for happiness and love. She, too, is amazing.

From the beginning, I think she thought I was too conservative.

It's so odd that these two women, married to my grown boys, can be so different and can see me so differently. And yet, as far apart as they are in every way – they appear to be perfect, not only for their husbands, but for me. Though one is a classic extrovert and scoffs at conservative dress and the other is always appropriate and genteel, I can't possible choose one over the other.

Life has brought me so many gifts. Children, grandchildren and parents. I expected all of these and worked hard to make sure they came my way. What I didn't expect was to love two young women, an American and Canadian, so deeply. They have enriched my life in ways they can never know and I love them because they are good and loving and the gift I never knew I needed.

And I am blessed.

Helen Hicks



◀ *Helen Hicks is an award-winning administrator and motivational speaker living in the Detroit area. You can reach her at helenk7306@hotmail.com.*

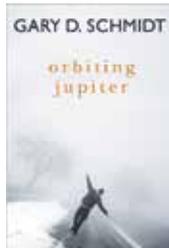
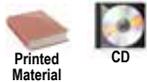


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Review written by Christine Heron, senior librarian at the Fenton-Winegarden Library.

Orbiting Jupiter

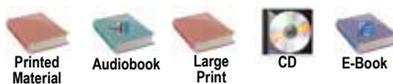
By Gary Schmidt



When a book transcends genre, it must be very special. In *Orbiting Jupiter*, Gary Schmidt tells the emotionally turbulent story of 13-year-old Joseph, a father who has recently left a juvenile detention center to live with a foster family in Maine. Young Joseph has never met his daughter, Jupiter, and will stop at nothing for an opportunity to meet her. Despite its junior fiction classification, this story appeals to a multi-age audience due to its gut-wrenching subject matter. Joseph's 12-year-old foster brother, Jack, narrates the story. As Joseph deals with stereotypes, Jack pushes back against the establishment, insisting that they focus on the good attributes of his friend. Through an interesting series of events the two boys learn what it means to be a family.

Our Souls at Night

By Kent Haruf



Our Souls at Night by Kent Haruf is a carefully written story about finding friendship in unexpected places. Set in Holt, Colorado the main characters, Addie and Louis, develop a friendship during the twilight years of their lives. Living in a small town, they've known each other for many years and decide to defy stereotype by spending their nights together. Though everyone thinks their lives should be about winding down, Haruf's storytelling depicts the joy of developing a relationship outside the boundaries of tradition as they share their hopes and dreams. This lovely little story is about experiencing new adventures and appreciating the small blessings life has to offer. It is a true treasure not to be missed.

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“I’m not trying to look like a girl in a magazine.”

This comment was meant to put me in my place, as if hearing it would suddenly cause me to realize how absurd and vain it was to exercise and eat healthy.

I laughed and told her to have a great day. I didn’t have to try to convince her of anything- she knows. We all know.

Pretending it is all a highly superficial and selfish waste of time- because she has better things to do and is not caught up in looking like a model- excuses her to sabotage herself. It welcomes a steady diet of migraines, indigestion and lack of energy that all taste like heaven as later she reaches for mockery antacids when the distasteful burps of regret start to rise.

Because, deep down, she knows. She knows that underneath all the sneering about bitches eating salad and memes about fat thighs isn’t a valiant effort to rage against societal expectations of women- It’s a heavy, pressing fear that even her best efforts won’t be good enough. That SHE’S not good enough.

You see, she knows no one looks like the girl in the magazine, not even the girl herself. She knows it is not the horror of achieving perfection that is holding her back. What is so absolutely terrifying is that in her pursuit to be simply average, she can fail.

She knows all about that fear and the false bravado she could wear to hide it. She also knows she doesn’t have to believe those paralyzing lies anymore. She knows she is stronger than those fears, so she grins and pulls on her sports bra and laces her shoes anyway. She acknowledges that cheeseburgers and cocktails are amazing, but that they will just have to wait until she says it’s time, because potato chips don’t get to dictate her life anymore.

I know, because she is me.



◀ *Tamra Klaty is a health and fitness coach and certified instructor for CIZE Live classes. You can learn more about what she does at her website www.designed-health.com*

Games For Your Brain



There are so many game apps to download these days and with the ease at which you can become obsessed with the next hot game, why not take the time to train your brain instead?

Games can be a great way to eat up wait time in offices for appointments but did you ever think it could be a great way to increase your brain activity in a positive way?

Educational games stimulate brain activity and improve memory. Move over Farmville, it’s time to facilitate the power of the mind!



Elevate App

35+ training activities for the skills you need the most. We already feel our brain swelling with new intelligence from playing this app!

Lumosity

Designed by neuroscientists, this app creates a personalized training program to help you improve your weak point, whether that’s memory, attention, or multitasking. Get your sweatbands on!



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Goodnight, Smartphone

Powering Down Before Bed For a Good Night's Rest

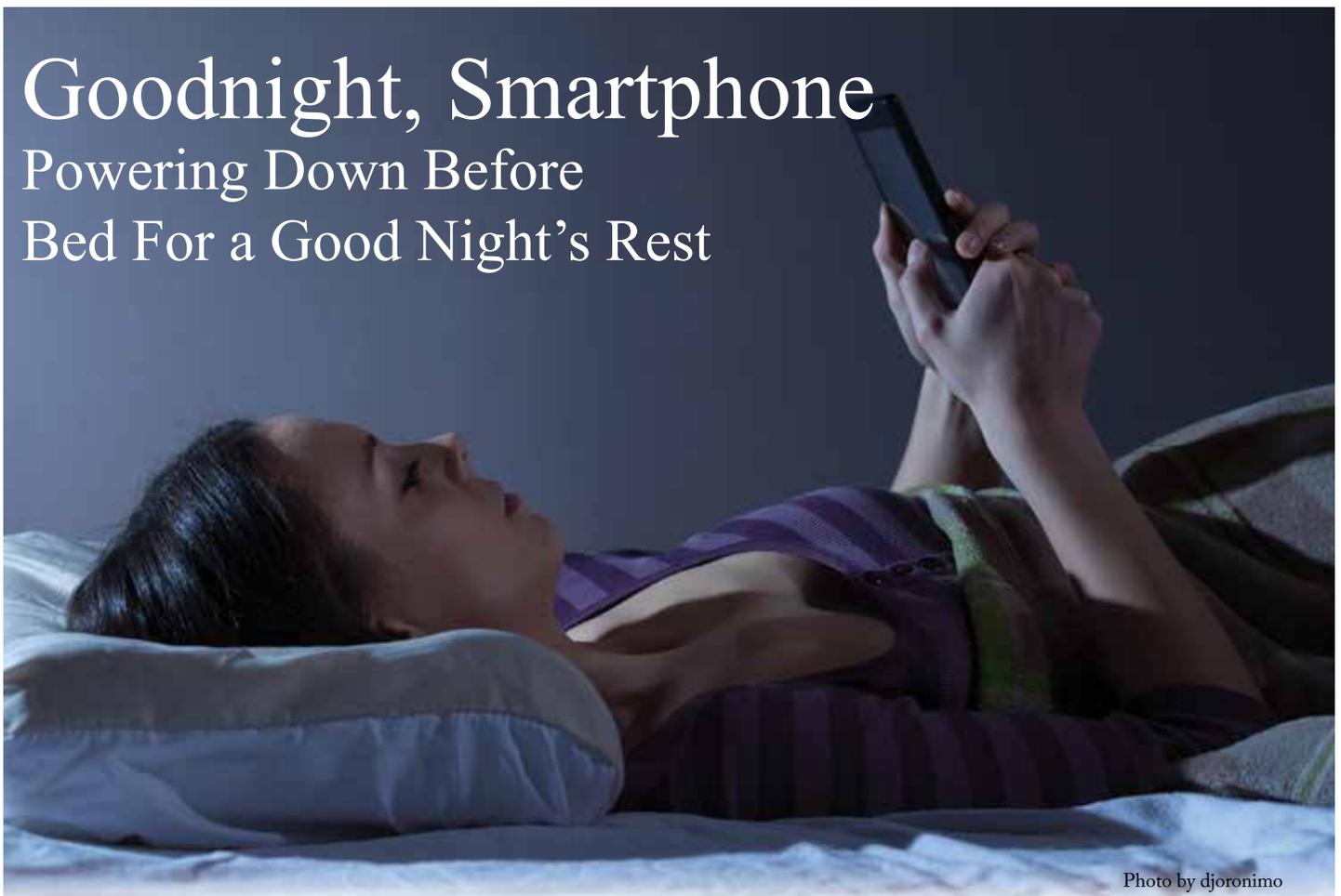


Photo by djoronimo

Checking email or flipping through channels instead of sleeping? Playing video games or browsing social media in bed? If you want to catch some quality ZZZs, you should put down that smartphone.

The National Sleep Foundation reports nearly 90 percent of adults sleep with at least one electronic device in their bedroom. However, staring at a screen after 9 p.m. can zap your body of energy, turning you into a zombie the next day. To get a good night's rest, consider shutting off all electronics before climbing into bed.

How Electronics Affect Your Sleep

Your body functions on a 24-hour internal clock. This clock is influenced by your physical environment and daily schedule. Using electronic devices around bedtime can throw off your body clock and negatively affect your quality of sleep.

Light and darkness affect your body clock. Staring at the blue glow of electronic devices – computers, tablets, televisions, gaming systems and/or smartphones – before bedtime can trick your body into thinking it's still daytime. The artificial light sends messages to the brain to wake up and activates the body. This, in turn, can reset your body clock, delaying your normal sleep cycle.

Studies show that staring at bright screens within four hours of bedtime reduces melatonin, a hormone that makes you naturally tired when it's time to sleep. This can cause difficulty when trying to fall asleep, poor quality of sleep or sleep disorders, such as insomnia.

In the long run, problems sleeping at night can impact

you during the day. Lack of proper sleep can lead to impaired focus at work, trouble remembering, fatigue, stress and even weight gain.

Get Off the Grid

It is important to get 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night. To get a better night's sleep, experts recommend:

- Spending at least 30 minutes technology-free before you climb into bed.
- Reading a book or magazine in bed instead of using an electronic device.
- Making the bedroom a technology-free zone (i.e., no smartphones, tablets, laptops, TV, etc.).
- Using your bed for sleep only – this habit will create a connection in your mind between your bed and sleep.
- Putting caps over electrical outlets in the bedroom to discourage plugging in electronics to recharge.

If your smartphone is your alarm clock, set your phone to sleep mode (do not disturb function) so all calls and texts will be silenced unless it's an emergency. Be sure to put your phone face down on the nightstand so incoming messages don't wake you up.

Power down tonight and don't let your technology keep you from a good night's rest.

Find more resources to help you get a better night's rest from Guard Your Health, a health education campaign by the Army Source: National Guard, at guardyourhealth.com.

Story courtesy of Family Features

Discovering *Life* After the Fall

I remember growing up on this nursery riddle which has related to my life many times and I'm sure that this riddle relates to your life and will encourage you to pick yourself up after a great fall.

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall and had a great fall, all the king's horses, all the king's men couldn't put Humpty Dumpty back together again."

What happens when you fall? When you discover there is no king's horses and king's men in your life to put you back together again after the fall of broken relationships, unfinished dreams and financial difficulties that come at unexpected times and disrupt your life. Do you remain broken or do you try to put yourself together again. Like "Humpty Dumpty" most of us have had to experience this riddle in our life and later learn how to get up and put the pieces of our life back together again. Later on after the riddle, I discovered additional lyrics referencing Humpty Dumpty saying, "even though the horses and men couldn't do it, I

know that I can do it. I can pick the pieces up, I can put them all together, I can pull myself up and feel proud, I can do better, be stronger, smarter, try harder and feel happy". Now just like Humpty Dumpty if you have falling you can get up and be inspired to put your life back together again with joy, peace, love and hope. How do I know? Because I was Humpty Dumpty's Sister, I had a great fall and after battling with issues of rejection, shame and traveling down unexpected journeys of living a life of a public success and a private failure behind closed doors, I decided to unmask my pain and let go of my fears, failures and flaws that was holding me back from becoming the woman that God himself had created me to be. My faith was ignited and after this great fall, I decided that faith would become more than a topic, it would become a lifestyle. Examine yourself and don't be afraid to pick yourself up because you too, like Humpty Dumpty & I, can discover there's Life After The Fall.

Hello, I'm Tarnesa Martin, your Faith Strategist and I have been inspired to write articles that empower women to go forward in their life and share stories of success, survival, resilience and redemption. Each article is designed to ignite a lifestyle of faith that conquers and confronts the disease of stagnation. Faith is Not A Topic, It's a Lifestyle.....



◀ *Min. Tarnesa Martin, Writer, Motivational Speaker & Life on Purpose Coach is the founder of Women of Radical Praise & Life On Purpose – "Finding Yourself" Life coaching, Self- Development & Empowerment services, which focus on connecting, supporting and strengthening women through life challenges that impact them personally, professionally, physically and spiritually.*

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ANISHA NAGPAL



Finding *Beauty* in Unexpected Places

I am sitting in the surgical waiting room at Mott Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor. My teenage son, Jordan, is having a procedure – one he's had many times before.

I never get used to this waiting place. Like the parents around me, I worry about worst case scenarios and mull over the what-ifs. The prayer, "Dear God, please let him be okay," plays in a continuous loop in my heart.

Although there are about two dozen parents in this space, it's quieter than church on Sunday morning. We are all in the same boat, but we don't

interact or meet one to herself. Startled, parents look up from their distractions to see where the noise is coming from. When they do, they see it – her beautiful, gap-toothed smile. She looks as if she's in a most delightful place. People smile back.

And then something miraculous happens, and the mood of the space lightens. As Megan continues to squawk, screech and smile, the group adjusts so that hers is not the only noise in the room. They talk to one another in louder voices. They rustle around in their seats and shuffle through their purses.

Someone laughs, and the tension loosens. Someone else sneezes, and when Megan echoes "Achoo!" we giggle along with her. Without saying a word, she has brought joy and light into a dark and difficult space. Although she is dependent on others for virtually every need, she has given us a gift.

No doubt, Megan is extended mostly pity by strangers, but there is so much going on behind that smile, so many mysteries we can never understand. What, I wonder, does she know about the world that she will never be able to tell us?

My prayer's continuous loop widens to include Megan and her family, and I feel only love and empathy for them. As I pray for their strength, my mind wanders to Frederick Buechner's words, "Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid."

I pray that for them. I pray that for all of us.

"We're ready for you, Megan," a nurse calls out, as she helps to steer her into the surgical unit. "You're like royalty around here, aren't you?"

Yes, I think to myself. *Yes she is.*

another's eyes. We don't ask questions, and we try hard not to eavesdrop on each other's whispered conversations. We give each other the privacy needed to worry, think and pray. On edge, we listen for our names to be called. We know the drill.

As we wait, we stare into space or search for distraction. Some pretend to read outdated magazines. Most thumb through their phones and meaningless feeds.

And then Megan enters the room.

I know her name because she is a regular here and the nurses use it affectionately. She must be a teenager, although it's difficult to determine her exact age because of her physical challenges. She wears pink sweatpants and is able to fold her legs into her wheelchair like a very small child. Clearly, she is limber, although she cannot walk and probably never has.

Megan's head rolls about, her eyes darting to and fro. Intermittently, she shrieks a loud, bird-like sound, drawing attention

"There's beauty everywhere. There are amazing things happening everywhere, you just have to be able to open your eyes and witness it. Some days, that's harder than others."

~Sarah McLachlan



◀ Eileen Button is the author of *The Waiting Place: Learning to Appreciate Life's Little Delays*. She can be reached at buttonhouse@juno.com.

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Creating Balance: *Pot Pie or Deadline*



Photo by tiero

As my deadline looms I feel so torn. I promised my family for oh-so-long that I would make my family-famous chicken pot pie. But, but, my column is due. Back and forth, I anguish over what to do.

Actually the list of distractions seems endless: birthday celebrations, Easter gatherings, work demands, family needs, party plans for upcoming retirements and graduations. Life keeps getting in the way of writing this article.

Creating this column challenges and inspires me. I love writing it, but as time grew short, my anxiety grew and choices became more difficult.

Sadly, these choices included spending time with my grandbabies, taking nature walks and having heart-to-heart talks with my children. Ugh!! How did these precious moments become interruptions?

And how ironic I'm writing about "Creating Balance"!!

What I'm learning is that:

Balance doesn't mean life runs smoothly all the time. Creating balance is about standing as comfortably as possible in the ups and downs of life. It's about moving in sync to the rhythm of your heart and the rhythms of life.

"I always try to balance the light with the heavy - a few tears of human spirit in with the sequins and the fringes." Bette Midler

At times its best if we stand back, sit still and hold on. Other times we need to step forward, take action and let go. Taking turns is balance; I don't always have to be in charge.

"Doubt can motivate you, so don't be afraid of it. Confidence and doubt are at two ends of the scale, and you need both. They balance each other out." Barbra Streisand

Life is a roller coaster full of difficult decisions. It doesn't come at us balanced

and somehow we make a mess of it. No, part of our journey is to learn to ride this roller coaster the best we can - to enjoy the ride itself, especially the highs, and to responsibly and respectfully deal with the lows.

"Feeling compassion for ourselves in no way releases us from responsibility for our actions. Rather, it releases us from the self-hatred that prevents us from responding to our life with clarity and balance." Tara Brach

Balance is more about ease; a steadiness in handling the rough and calm waters. It's about choosing your best self through it all.

I am part of a blended family with 5 children, lots of siblings, in-laws, and 4 grand kids with more on the way. Life is complicated - especially at the Holidays. And I have promised to do my best to be "No drama Mama."

My partner and I strive to hold the equilibrium - be a center for the family to count on, fall into during tough times and be used as a springboard when it is time to fly.

"Letting go helps us to live in a more peaceful state of mind and helps restore our balance. It allows others to be responsible for themselves and for us to take our hands off situations that do not belong to us. This frees us from unnecessary stress." Melody Beattie

Yet here I was - potpie or deadline, potpie or deadline?? I had to laugh at the irony of my dilemma and decided to keep my promise and happily make the potpie.

Even though I stayed up late and am up early to write, the paradox provided great fodder for my article! And I need to make certain I don't stress out my Editor again.

"Women need real moments of solitude and self-reflection to balance out how much of ourselves we give away."
~Barbara de Angelis

► *Elaine Stenger, PhD., is the Author of "Dancing in the Rain" and Co-Founder of Cairn Venture Group which produces Leadership Retreats for Women. "Connecting women to help change our world."*
Visit: www.elainestenger.com or contact Elaine at estenger2@gmail.com





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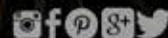


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Hello People! Your Priorities Are Askew!



I went to a workshop, in the late eighties, where the facilitator instructed us to draw three circles, all overlapping at one point. Then we had to label them: personal life, professional life and financial security. The intersection was “success”. Another one had us draw one circle, divided into eight pieces and labeled, personal, professional, financial, physical, mental, recreational, familial and social. If you could insert the same number of items, in each piece of the pie, you were leading a balance life. WHAT?? I don’t have the same number of items

in each category and you’re missing something here! There was instruction about time management, office protocol, sales methods, negotiation and role playing up the ying yang. They suggested ways to invest, all of the money we were going to make, in order to make more. They demonstrated proper terminology, spread sheets, follow-up and objection handling techniques. They encouraged us to dress well and stay thin in order to appear moneyed. I was a successful, fit, very well educated sales woman with a marital relationship that was falling apart and a spiritual life that was non-existent.

I was hollow and shallow. The only things that kept me grounded were my children and friends

Class after class preached the same thing: Outer appearance was everything without any mention of what was going on inside.

Hello people! Your priorities are askew!

Ah ha!!! Finally, a light went off. That’s what was lacking. The fact that educating your soul as well as your mind, that taking care of your partner and family, as well as yourself, is paramount to being a well rounded individual. That making money is important...but not just for the sake of being wealthy. Communication, at home, with those that truly matter, is far more valuable than perfecting a new cold calling technique. Yep, it’s true; the “Queen of Negotiation” lost her king because she didn’t spend enough time and energy on him or herself.

I reflected on my career, realizing that all of the business preparation, the classes, and the workshops had only focused on how the world affected me not on how I affected the world. The common thread was how to manipulate for gain, to make certain that I always won, instead of focusing on building strong relationships at home; I was cultivating a “Farm” of contacts that would someday make me money. I was searching outside of myself for answers when all of them were hiding inside. I learned, by turn of fate, that the best thing I could do for my career was to get involved in my community!

I was existing way out of balance, ungrateful for what I had and spiritually vacant! All of those lectures lacked substance. If only there had been a fourth circle, a ninth piece of pie, tagged “spiritual”. There should have been lessons on nurturing, self care and fulfillment...a section on how to live a balanced life that included gratitude...one without greed, competition and judgment. If only...

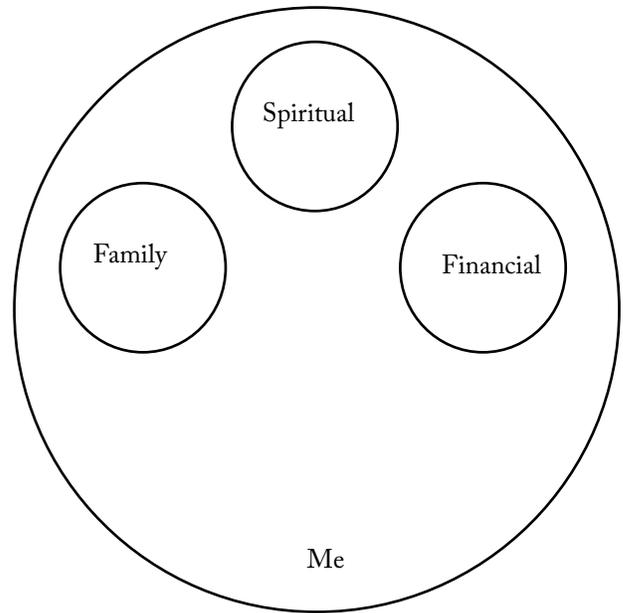
The lessons we learn the most from are the ones that cause the most pain. So, I’ve learned, the hard way, what is most important. It has become apparent, that in order to be truly satisfied professionally one must be content personally and satiated spiritually.

As busy as we all are, all of the time. Here is a method of juggling that I hope will help you maintain a sense of equilibrium within your daily disarray. Maybe some of them will work without experiencing the pain.

1. Relationships, at home, take top priority. No ifs, ands or buts.
2. Spend quiet time, alone, to replenish the “giving bank”.
3. Be thankful, for the many blessings you have, in order to have more.
4. Learn new things. Try new things. Try weird food.
5. Pray, do Yoga, go to church and/or meditate to keep grounded and humble.
6. Laugh as often as possible.
7. Take care of your body by eating well, drinking water and exercising regularly.
8. Spend time with your friends.
9. Breathe and love deeply.
10. Enjoy your work, be the best you can be...or move on.
11. Learn from your pain. Help others who may experience the same.
12. Read. Read aloud to your children and/or grandchildren.
13. Relax...preferably with a glass of wine and/or a hot bath.
14. Volunteer for a cause you believe in.
15. Play outside.

My revamped idea of the circle exercise is: Draw three small circles inside of a big circle. The small circles are Family, Spiritual and Financial, the big one “Me”. Then fill them with the things you do to keep them healthy, remember that in order to populate the other circles, you have to fill the “Me” circle first. Feel free to add circles that matter to you (i.e. Church, Parents, Grandchildren, Travel, etc) If some of the circles are overpopulated, move stuff around; the numbers do not have to be exact. Use this as a tool, a map, in order to measure where your energy is being spent. If you are happy with that energy assessment, great! If not, make some changes. Do the things that make you and those closest to you happy.

ENERGY ASSESSMENT MAP



Here’s the thing. It doesn’t matter how you earn a living... it doesn’t matter how you look, what you wear or how much you weigh, you are perfect...it doesn’t matter if your house is spotless and it really doesn’t matter if you go to church. What will make the biggest difference in living a well balanced life is to make certain that you spend your time and energy on the people and things that you value the most, that you are grateful for everything and everyone, that you make certain that you’re strong enough inside to deal with the outside, that you feed your soul with nature, that you love and pray, that you take time to know who you are and what you believe.

This is the way you can give to and nurture without losing yourself. This is how you can perform at your highest capability.

Inner peace is your balancing pole on this tight rope called life...it is your circus...enjoy it.

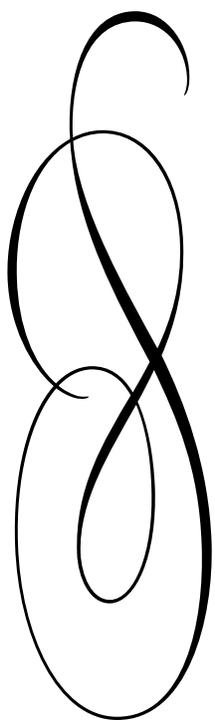
► *Deborah St.Hilaire is a holistic woman's life coach, specializing transition and divorce. She is also certified in Nutritional Consulting, Design Psychology and is a Master Reiki Teacher. She is the Founder of The Divalution and author of "Divalution, the evolution and revolution of the diva". She can be reached for speaking engagements, coaching and Reiki Treatments at 419.366.8091.*



Have an Attitude of Gratitude



Photo by high_resolution



Can you remember the last time you said “thank you” before you stepped out of bed? Each day is a gift and you should begin it with a smile. Let your morning set the tone for your day and make a positive affirmation that success and favor will chase you down. Today is the perfect opportunity to complete what you did not finish yesterday. You only have today, therefore, make it a day you will never forget.

Can you imagine if everyone started being grateful for what they had instead of being discouraged by what they didn't have? Being grateful is a Choice. Life is not always fair, however, the way we react during the storm, will shape and mold us to form our true character. It's very easy to be joyful when everything is going our way but when were faced with adversity do we remain strong and resilient?

It has been estimated, we have anywhere from 25,000 to 50,000 thoughts a day and 80% of them are negative. If your mind is predominantly negative, image how much negative energy you are omitting. In order to change the channel to “positive” and have a grateful attitude, here are some helpful motivational quotes I have created to keep you centered, balanced and focused.

1. Be Bold and Design a life you desire
2. There is always a reason to smile
3. When you eliminate the flaws, there is beauty in everything
4. Take pride in your successes and see yourself as a Winner!
5. If you want to Be Great you must believe you Are Great.
6. Have no regrets. Ignite your passion and Light your fire
7. Keep your eyes forward. It's no longer serves you to look in the rear view mirror
8. Life is a series of magical miracles
9. There are opportunities ready to be discovered behind every failure
10. Supersize your dreams. Let your passion fuel your inspiration.
11. When you feel like giving up stay focused on why you started
12. You don't fail unless you quit
13. Be Confident and quite the voice of doubt
14. Release Stress and Fear to focus on what makes you feel good
15. To be an effective rainmaker, you must follow the clouds

It has been estimated, we have anywhere from 25,000 to 50,000 thoughts a day and 80% of them are negative.

Keeping an attitude of gratitude is a practice we should exercise on a daily basis. Having the right perspective about our blessings will enrich our lives, foster our growth and allow us to be more mindful. It is amazing when you exhibit an act of kindness it shifts your emotions, creates a feeling of gratitude and ultimately makes your heart shine!

Are you ready to change the way you think? You make thousands of choices each day, make the right choice by being grateful today!

”Gratitude is the Open Door to Abundance” ~ Cheri Schultz

► Cheri Schultz is a 1:1 Life Coach and the author of *Inspirational Quotes For Challenging Times*. She lives in Michigan with her husband. She dedicates herself to eating healthy, yoga, meditation and helping others develop a positive spirit by staying optimistic. You can reach her at cherschultz@gmail.com or visit her Web site at <http://www.cherischultz.com>



Aging with Vitality, Grace and Confidence



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

It's one of the great ironies of life: Your reward for surviving the tumultuous teen years, establishing a career and nurturing a family culminates in dry skin, a thickening waist and too many moments peppered with "Now, where did I leave those car keys?" You know ... that time of your life that seemed so far away when viewed from a distance.

As the calendar pages keep turning, you may find yourself greeting this new phase of life with mixed feelings: a sense of accomplishment, sure, but perhaps also apprehension for the unknown and even surprise from unanticipated changes.

"With age comes wisdom and experience, but it can also include new and unexpected signs of growing older that can impact your body and life," said Barbara Hannah Grufferman, positive aging expert and author of the best-selling book "The Best of Everything After 50."

Fortunately, in many regards, age is but a state of mind. With these practical tips, you can glide into the future with vitality, grace and confidence.

Stay true to your style

There is no written rule that once you achieve a certain age, your hair must be cropped close, your wardrobe frozen in time or your favorite vibrant lipstick shade cast aside. True, with age you may make a few modifications, such as a new hairstyle that accommodates thinner strands or one that shows off your gorgeous grays. But your personal style is an important aspect of your identity, and simply tweaking or slightly evolving your look lets you remain true to your familiar self as you enter this new phase of life.

Resist the urge to rest

Filling your time with low-demand pursuits is a perfectly natural response to the liberation of an empty nest or the newfound freedom of retirement. You've earned a break, for sure. However, be wary of letting your brain languish to extremes. Find ways to stimulate your mind to help keep you sharp and ward off those "senior moments."

Make your physical wellness a priority

For decades, you've heard admonishments about taking proper care of your body: eating right, exercising regularly, avoiding smoking and excess drinking, and getting plenty of rest. If you ignored that advice, remember this: It's never too late to introduce

healthier habits. Taking care of your body will help ensure you have the physical stamina to continue enjoying your favorite activities, and will give you the best shot at keeping your health condition optimal.

Not only does keeping in shape provide overall health benefits, targeted exercises can help with other concerns, as well. For example, after 4-6 weeks of working out your pelvic floor muscles regularly, you may start to notice an improvement in your sensitive bladder.

Embrace confidence boosters

Change is at the very heart of midlife, and most of us can come to acknowledge, even appreciate, how life has a way of evolving. But changes can sometimes cause confidence to lag, especially when it's your body that's changing.

"The loss of a job, upheavals in a long-term relationship, financial hardships and empty nests are just a few of the big challenges we frequently confront – not to mention the new health issues that we might face," Grufferman said.

One common confidence breaker: a sensitive bladder. A recent survey by Always Discreet found that women with sensitive bladders feel less confident than those who don't experience leaks, in certain situations like traveling long distances or being in an unknown or unfamiliar area.¹

However, you don't have to let your sensitive bladder stand in the way of living your life. In fact, the same survey showed that most women with sensitive bladders (72 percent) who use bladder protection, such as Always Discreet liners, pads and underwear, say they feel more confident because of these products. The full line of bladder leak protection products provides women incredible comfort, protection, discretion and odor control so you can get back to enjoying life, no matter your age.

To learn more about managing a sensitive bladder, including advice for how to talk with your doctor, visit AlwaysDiscreet.com.

¹The Always Discreet U.S. Survey was conducted using the IPSOS Panel that surveyed a total of 400 American women (aged 35 to 65 years old). Of the 400 women, 200 have experienced urine loss/bladder weakness in the past three months and 200 had not experienced urine loss/bladder weakness. Significance testing between the two groups was done at a 90 percent confidence level. The survey was implemented between September 15, 2015 and September 25, 2015. In the study were 65 women with sensitive bladders who use products specifically designed for bladder leaks.

Story courtesy of Family Features

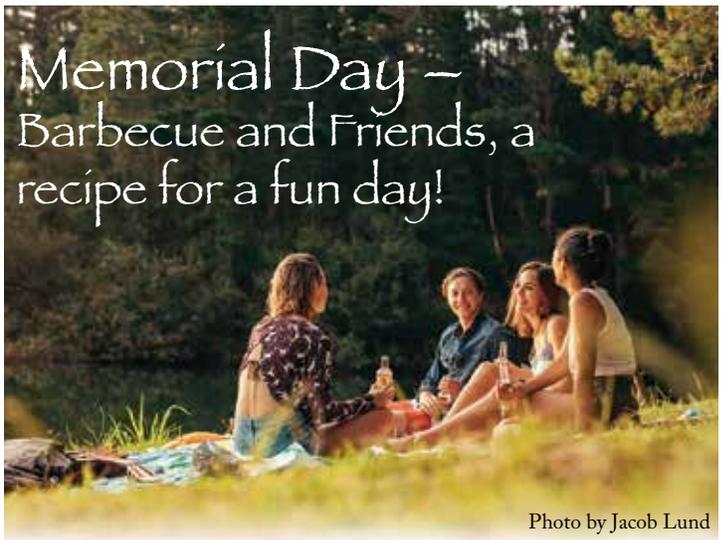


Photo by Jacob Lund

Memorial Day – Barbecue and Friends, a recipe for a fun day!

It's time to get outside and enjoy the weather. What better time than to call some family and friends and invite them over for a barbecue.

Here are a few things to remember:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Are you looking for ideas for recipes for your barbecue?

Pinterest.com is a great source. Go to the site and search *barbecue*. You'll find hundreds of great recipes, tips and ideas for your next get together. The only problem will be narrowing down what you'd like to do with all of the great ideas you'll find. Another great website is www.allrecipes.com.

Just because you are hosting the barbecue doesn't mean that you have to provide everything. Let's break things down and have people sign up to bring things. Many years ago, I also kept a list of items that I was in charge of so that you don't forget something in the fridge and find it when everyone has left. Has that ever happened to you?

Here is a list to help you get started:

- √ Salad
- √ Munchies – chips, dip
- √ Fruit and or Veggie Tray
- √ Cheesy Potatoes
- √ Main dish – hamburgers or hot dogs and buns
- √ Condiments
- √ Paper Products – plates, utensils, napkins, cups
- √ Games/Prizes
- √ Drinks for adults and kids
- √ Ice
- √ Crockpot dishes

Hope you enjoy your Memorial Day barbecue and that you have so much help from family and friends that you all have a chance to relax and enjoy each other's company and hopefully the weather will cooperate!



◀ *Betty Huotari is a professional organizer who services all of Southeastern Michigan. She can be reached at 810-348-1772 or betty@logicalplacement.com. Betty publishes a monthly newsletter. For more information please visit her website www.LogicalPlacement.com.*

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Peas of Mind



Photo by Tim UR

Seasonal eaters rejoice! After a winter of root vegetables, the fresh tastes of the season are upon us! One of my favorites is peas. As a kid, I thought they only came out of a can. I was amazed to find out how much better I liked the taste, texture and color of fresh peas.

In the garden, peas can be planted as soon as you can get your shovel into the ground. If you cannot decide between whole pod or shell peas, be sure to plant both types. They will like it much better in a garden bed that is well drained. You will want to get your trellising up before your peas emerge because it is a pain to put it in after. The root system of the pea plant is delicate and will respond better if you use mulch to keep down the weeds.

Peas, like most legumes, work with good bacteria in the soil to collect nitrogen from the air and store it at their roots. That

makes them fit for a rotational or succession planting plan, so they can be grown in places where you plan to or have had plants that require lots of nitrogen, like cucumbers or tomatoes. A midsummer planting will be ready just as the weather begins to turn chilly. So if you didn't get them in early, there is still hope.

Not only are peas healthy for your soil, but they are also really good for you. Peas are considered a heart healthy vegetable and are high in antioxidants and fiber. If you are growing peas in your garden, don't plan on using them in a recipe right away. You will most likely eat your first harvest right off the vine before they make it into the kitchen. But never fear, peas love to be picked and the more you take the more they will make. Use them raw in salads or as an easy addition to a stir-fry. Here is a light early summer recipe for you to try.

Pea, Feta and Mint Salad

- ½ lb fresh peas (snow, snap or shelled)
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 oz feta cheese

Dressing

- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- sea salt and pepper to taste
- 1 oz pistachio, shelled, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup mint leaves
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar

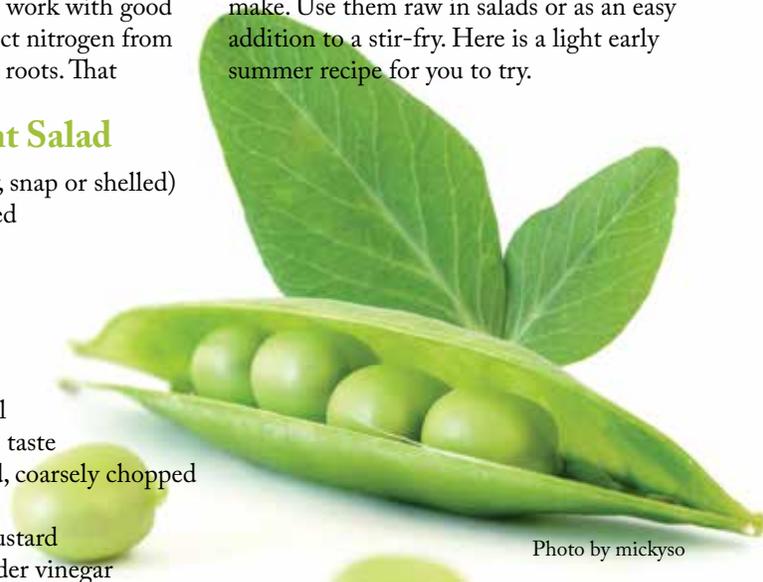


Photo by mickyso

In a medium sauce pan boil salted water; blanch the peas (boil for 2 min). Immediately plunge them into ice cold water. Drain, set aside.

In a small saucepan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium heat. Add the onion, and cook until soft, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, whisk together the mustard, 2 tablespoons olive oil, vinegar and honey, and season with salt and black pepper, to taste.

In a large salad bowl, mix the peas, onions, pistachios, and pour over the dressing. Add the mint and gently toss to coat with dressing. Top the salad with the feta cheese just before serving.

*Did you know
the oldest known
vegetable is a pea.*



▶ *Erin Caudell owns and operates The Local Grocer inside the Flint Farmers Market where she sells all natural produce grown at her farm in Beecher, MI. Learn more about the farm and the store at www.TheLocalGrocer.com.*



Right-On Spinach Roll Ups

In need of a great finger food to take to a friend's get-together? Look no more! Whip up a batch of our Right-On Spinach Roll Ups and watch as they get devoured by everyone.



Photo by thesimpleskillet.com

Ingredients

- 1¼ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 7 green onions, chopped
- ½ cup crumbled cooked bacon or MorningStar Farms Veggie Bacon Strips (whole package - cooked)
- Salt and Pepper to taste
- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 6 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sour cream, cream cheese, onions, tomatoes, bacon and salt and pepper to taste. Stir in spinach until well blended. Spread over tortillas; roll up tightly jelly-roll style. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 5 hours.
2. With a serrated knife, cut into 1/2-in. slices. Refrigerate leftovers. Yield: 12-14 servings.

Lady Lemonade

Now is the time to kick your feet up and enjoy your view! Invite some friends over and give them a treat with some Lady Lemonade! Good times, sun and laughter with a cool drink in hand. What could be better?



Ingredients:

- Lemonade, either purchased or made up in advance
- Fresh raspberries for garnish
- Frozen raspberries
- Sparkling wine such as Rosé or a sparkling juice for a non-alcoholic version

Directions:

In a pitcher, pour ¾ full of lemonade. Add some sparkling wine in, leaving room in your pitcher. Drop in some frozen raspberries. Add a few fresh raspberries to each glass after pouring. Enjoy!



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and Come In For Your New Sunglasses!

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A Hero In Disguise

When Stefan Reisch was asked to model for the American Stroke Association's Stroke Hero campaign, his first thought was that they were asking the wrong guy. "I'm not a hero," he said. "But luckily I know some people who are."

5 THINGS EVERY STROKE HERO SHOULD KNOW

Someone in the U.S. has a stroke every 40 seconds, but stroke is largely preventable and treatable. You don't need superpowers to be a Stroke Hero, you just need to know the risk factors and warning signs.

EVEN SUPERHEROES ARE IN DANGER.

Stroke risk increases with age, but young adults, children, and even babies in the womb can suffer strokes. If one of your parents had an ischemic stroke before 65, you are at 3x the risk of suffering one yourself.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE IS STROKE'S PUBLIC ENEMY #1.

Three out of four people who suffer first strokes have high blood pressure. 140/90 is too high. Lowering your systolic number by 10 or your diastolic number by 5 can cut your risk of stroke death in half.

ANYONE CAN HAVE A STROKE, BUT SOME ARE AT INCREASED RISK.

Blacks have nearly twice the risk for a first-ever stroke as whites.

STROKE IS LARGELY TREATABLE.

Clot-busting drugs and medical devices have made stroke largely treatable, but every second counts. The faster you are treated, the more likely you are to recover without permanent disability.

FRIENDS USUALLY SAVE FRIENDS FROM STROKE.

Learn to recognize the warning signs of stroke - F.A.S.T. - Face Drooping, Arm Weakness, Speech Difficulty, Time to call 911.



Become a Stroke Hero at StrokeAssociation.org/StrokeHero
 Featured: Stefan F. Reisch, Stroke Survivor



American Stroke Association

Together to End Stroke™

Medtronic

The Accident

The 911 call came in as a single-vehicle traffic accident; a suspected drunk driver. The EMT approached the driver and asked if he had been drinking or doing drugs. Then he asked him to smile. Stefan clearly remembers what the EMT said to him next. "I think you're having a stroke, buddy, we're going to get you some help."

Help for a Severe Stroke

First responders took Stefan directly to a comprehensive stroke center where he was quickly evaluated and diagnosed with a massive clot in a large artery in his brain, affecting his entire left side.

Staff administered a clot-busting drug and determined it wasn't going to be enough. Fortunately, Stefan was in the right place at the right time. He was a candidate for a procedure where a specialist threads a catheter from groin to brain and removes the clot with a stent retriever.

Awake the entire time, Stefan clearly remembers what the medical team said – and how they said it – after they pulled out the offending clot. "We've got movement!"

A Hero in Disguise

Stefan isn't a traditional "hero" but that's the point of the American Stroke Association's campaign: You don't need superpowers to be a Stroke Hero, you just need to know the signs of stroke and what to do. After all, stroke is largely treatable.

"People can learn from my stroke story that someone having a massive stroke doesn't have to die or be paralyzed. There are advances in technology that can save someone's life, like mine," he said.

Unless they read the fine print, people will assume Stefan is just a model who had the right look for the gig. Like a real superhero, only an observant few will know there is more than meets the eye for the man with super speed.



Photo courtesy of
The Minervini Group

BUILDING 50

Spires rise eerily out of a deep, dense wood. As the car creeps closer and closer to the institution and its outbuildings, a strange sense of dread, of foreboding and sadness seem to crawl stealthily over everyone. The former Traverse City State Hospital, an asylum for a variety of mental illnesses, may no longer serve its original purpose, but the shadow of its past lingers still.

Building 50 and Grand Traverse Commons, located in Traverse City, is now a lively shop and restaurant filled destination, farmer's markets, bakeries, wine bars and art deck the halls that used to house nurses and patients, drug store rooms and treatment facilities. Its walls are whitewashed and bright, the hallways airy and cheerful. Speciality soap shops and Michigan made delicacies rub shoulders with hip coffee shops and a store that sells couture for dogs.

As lovely as the renovation of the building is, one is somehow reminded constantly of the past. It is more than just the age of the bricks surrounding you, it is also in a feeling that sticks close from the moment you enter. It is not unlike the impression one gets when walking through Antwerp, the stately canal houses standing proudly, with a more modern dwelling tucked between every so often. It is the collision of the past and the present, because those modern houses only exist because of the tragedy of bombs falling in WWII. This same sadness and history is alive and well in Building 50.

Many of the outbuildings have not yet been renovated and painted over yet. They stand, crumbling and seemingly forgotten on the property, haunted by the memories of the souls who called the asylum home. The eerie caged-in front porches echo with long gone and forgotten rocking chairs and the sighs of those who had been left there, many forgotten themselves.

Although I write of a feeling of despair, Grand Traverse Commons always seems to pull me back again. I think because it *is* such a beautiful old edifice, and that it *has* undergone such change— is inspiring. A new beginning for a battered and depressing place. A new start for the future, that invites us to lay the despair of the past to rest, and begin again.

► Alexandria Nolan is a misplaced Michigander currently living in the wilds of the Houston urban jungle with her husband and two spoiled pets. She is a published novelist and contributor to various online and print publications, including a lifestyle blog, *Greetings from Nolandia*. When not writing, she can be found reading or traveling, or reading about traveling.



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Building A Future With Family

MICHIGAN FENCE COMPANY, INC. - Debby Harris

You may have heard of Michigan Fence Company, but what many people do not know is that this company is owned and run by a woman. Thirteen years ago, Debby Harris and her sister asked their dad and uncle if they could buy the family business from them. They took over the business with the help of their husbands and when Debby's sister moved away to Colorado, she kept the family business going strong.

Growing up, Debby Harris was always involved in the fence business. Her dad and uncle started the company in 1964 and it required a lot of hard work and family participation. The fence business is a year-round, all weather commitment. After high school, she had designs to go in another direction with her career so she went into the banking industry.

In 1997, her dad asked if she could come help out with the accounting at Michigan Fence. She agreed with a conditional "just for 3 months" vow. She never left. She found that there was great satisfaction in

helping people pick out great products.

Michigan Fence Company still maintains to be a family oriented business. Debby Harris works with nearly her entire family. She accomplishes great service and delivers reliable Michigan and USA made products with the help of her husband Brian, her daughter Danielle, her nephew and several cousins. This business is truly rooted with a deep foundation in love and support.

They care about the products they supply and strive to carry products that are of the highest quality. Debby helps her customers get exactly what they want by educating them on her products and finding the perfect fit. Her goal is that the products she sells "last until her client moves and needs a new fence."

Although she is often met with surprise when people find out she is the owner, everyone is quickly put at ease by her knowledge of her product and her non-threatening approach with her customers. She wants what is best for her clients and



always takes the time to really listen to them. It is often that a client might think they know what they want but, after sitting with Debby, they find they will get what they truly need. She loves

the positive feedback she receives from her clients and the knowledge that she has given them a great product that will last them for years to come. This concept of making the customer feel confident and happy over their choices with their purchase was ingrained in Debby through the founders of the company, her mom, dad, uncle and aunt.

When Debby isn't in the office, she is off taking care of her horses, golfing and holding "golf cart parties" with her friends and family. Since the business never stops, it is crucial to put fun in where you can and Debby finds ways to do it.

As she continues to work towards keeping her business excelling, she is also striving to connect with more businesses in the area. Networking is a great way to see how businesses can help each other reach their goals and collaborate on community projects. Helping each other is such an important element in business. Debby thoroughly appreciates all that her husband does to help keep the business up

and running smoothly. She says he works just as hard, if not harder. They are a very supportive team. Debby holds everyone that works for Michigan Fence in high regard to why they remain a successful business. She believes everyone plays a key role for the company and that "no one person or job is more important than any other." Team effort is clearly what defines this company as a combined step ahead in the right direction.

You can find out more information about Michigan Fence Company, Inc. at www.MichiganFence.com or call 810.235.4581

*Do you know a female business owner that is making it happen? Submit your recommendations to info@w2wmichigan.com today! Please put "She Means Business" in the subject title.



Susan Lamphier is an Editor for Women2Women Michigan Magazine



Victoria Fencing



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Electronic Anti-Tether



Photo by Syda Productions

The modern female resents the old notion that a wife is to be submissive to her husband, or that she should “obey” his wishes. It’s had quite an impact on the traditional wedding vows the brides and grooms exchange on that ever-so-sacred day, when the two are joined as one. I think most vows have come down to “I promise not to kill you in your sleep.”

Yes, obedience and submissiveness are things of the past. The modern female is independent, reliant on no one. Master of her own destiny.

And then came Fitbit.

Honestly, if ever a race of people have been so completely controlled, I’m not sure when and where they existed. And it’s not just Fitbit. I submit (pun intended) for your consideration:

Farmville, which requires the servant to administer electronic watering, feeding, and yes, even breeding every hour. Otherwise, crops will die, bovine will escape, and your ovaries will shut down.

Facebook, the one-stop replacement for socializing, news, restaurant critiques, gossip, and attacks on your character should you vote different than any one of your three-thousand friends. If you try to ignore Facebook, a little red number pops up in the corner of your phone icon. The number embedded within will grow, taunting, daring you to ignore it longer. No, the servant must not resist. The servant will obey.

Smart phones, which, apparently, take precedence over any live conversation, TV show, driving, or sexual encounter. The cell phone not only begs your attention, it demands it. To make your life even less

convenient, the cell phone has several sub-headings of aggravation:

Text messages. You know, those little devils that must be responded to immediately? And texting, since it is not actually live, eliminates the inconvenience of limiting conversations to our waking hours. No, your phone can ring or vibrate at any hour, waking you and your spouse to the urgent matter at hand.

Weather alerts. Because you must know that it’s going to snow before morning. No longer do you have to wait until you wake before finding out that school is canceled.

The actual phone. Yes, some people still use this feature. But, unlike the old-timey days when you were allowed, even expected, to ignore a phone call if you were in a meeting, talking to a living human, or taking my &%\$! order at the drive-thru window, you now must answer the phone regardless of the circumstances.

Oh, and let’s not forget Fitbit. The electronic anti-tether. Tired at the end of the day? Tough cookies. You’ve got six-thousand more steps to complete. Hop to it! In fact, you must not only meet the prerequisite 10,000 steps every day, you must never take another step without your tracking device, which comes with a variety of attractive handcuffs.

I must say, it’s a good thing a woman is no longer expected to be obedient to her husband. How would she possibly have the time? What with all those other objects to which she must vow her loyalty.

Time to stop reading. You’ve got some walking to do.

Since 2010, Fitbit has sold almost 17 million devices worldwide, and has over 9 million active users. The company is amongst the leading companies in the wearable market.

According to <http://www.statista.com/topics/2595/fitbit/>

► *Ron Estrada resides with his wife, Kelly, two children, two cats, and a terrier-mix in Oxford. When not pursuing the spiritual gift of napping, he’s at work on his latest novel or some freelance project (he accepts cash, check, PayPal, or smoked pork shoulder). You can email him at rmestrada@ameritech.net or visit his website at ronestrada.com.*



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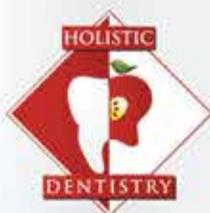


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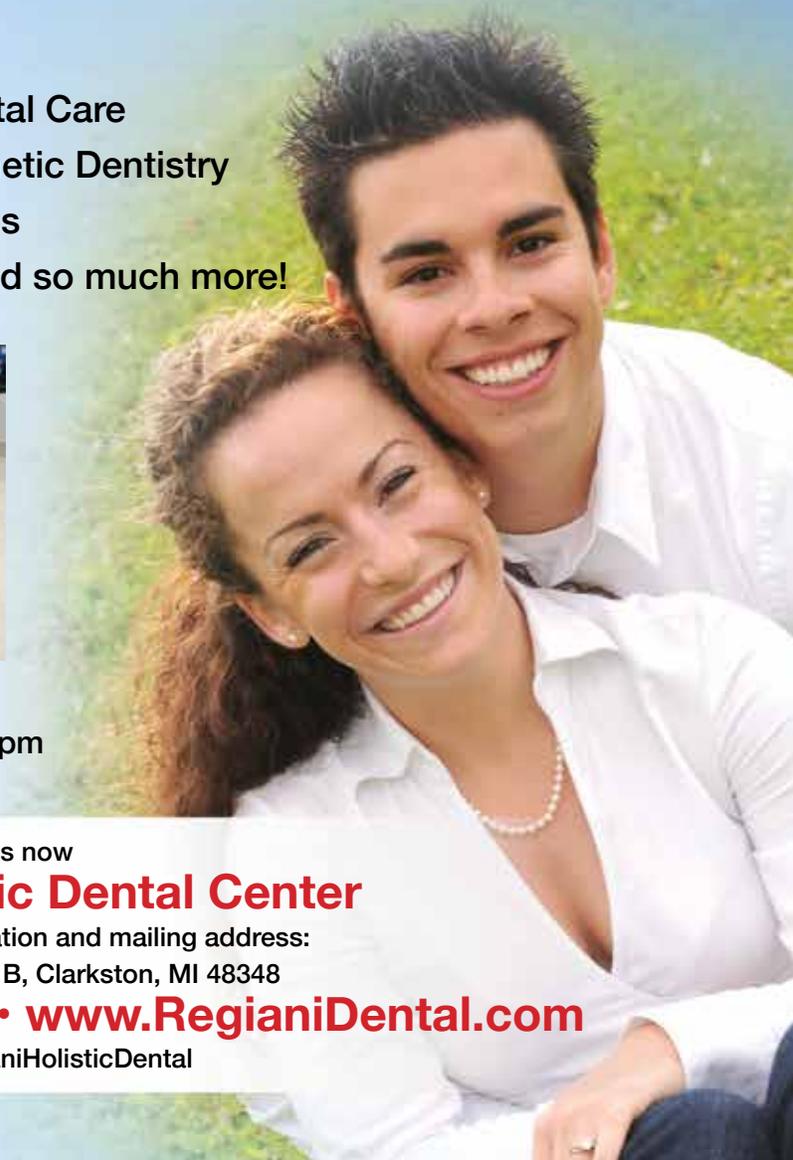
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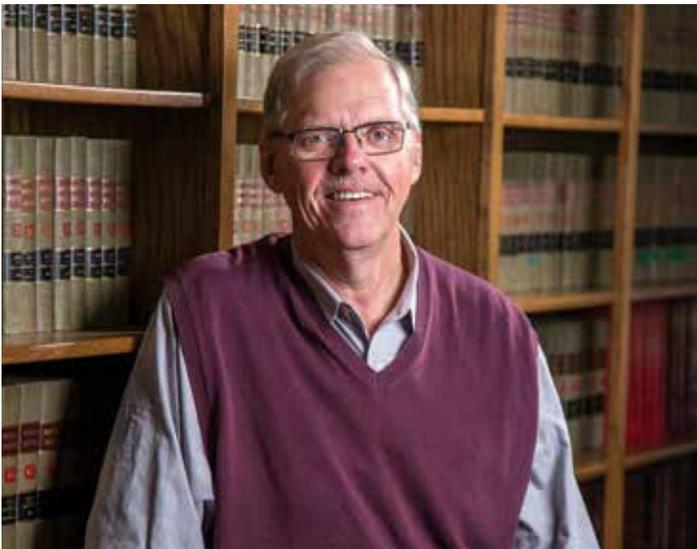


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Common Myths about Home Care



Al Jones, MBA, CSA, CDP, Owner Comfort Keepers

1 They don't care about their patients.

Reality: Nurses, therapists and aides base their treatment on individual needs. A professional will establish a rapport, make them feel at ease, understand their hesitations and make the experience as comfortable as possible.

2 They steal from the elderly and/or abuse them.

Reality: The data says that those kinds of crimes are committed by unskilled, independent caregivers who are not hired through a reputable agency. Ask about criminal background checks, and if they are licensed and bonded. Ask how the agency trains the home care workers and if the workers are regularly supervised to evaluate the quality of care.

3 I have no say about who comes to my home.

Reality: Reputable agencies will match interests and personalities that connect with your loved one and will change aide if its not the right fit.

4 The quality of care at home is inferior compared to that of a facility.

Reality: Reputable agencies extensively train their staff before they ever enter a person's home. To be certain that your loved one receives the best care, ask what training the agency requires its aides to have. Ask for a detailed description and if they are knowledgeable about senior care and provide continuous training.

5 It is expensive and only wealthy people can afford it.

Reality: According to Genworth's 2015 Cost of Care survey, the national median hourly rate for home care is \$20 per hour. In contrast, the national median cost of a one bedroom residence in an assisted living facility is \$3,600 per month. So, for the same money, your loved one could receive 6 hours of care per day and stay living in their own home. Six hours a day could be divided into two 3 hour shifts. If they only needed 3 hours per day, it would be \$1,800 per month.

6 If I am the caregiver, there is no need for additional help.

Reality: According to the Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide, a caregiver, including a family member, should never be on-call 24 hours a day. People who are emotionally and physically exhausted or guilt ridden cannot provide good care. Everyone needs respite and relief. A professional can provide a break from the rigors of full time caregiving, without having to remove your loved one from familiar surroundings. The simple fact is that most seniors want to STAY in their own home.

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