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Fearlessness/Discovery

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Jodi Dale

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Susan Lamphier
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Dear Friends,

There are so many things to celebrate for the months of February and March. Black History Month, Go Red for Women, Women's History Month and so much more. Fearlessness and Discovery could not be more perfect themes for this issue. We have come so far and yet there is still so much to continue fighting for each and every day. As we discover the fight everyone endures in their own lives and overcome our own fears to step up for what we believe in, to stand next to each other for support, to strive to make life better, we find our true power. What each of us decides to invest in ourselves and our community are the keys to what all of our futures will shape to be. This issue is full of uplifting articles that inspire each of us that All We Need Is Love from Mimi Matthews, Love The Skin Your In with Tami Sackett and putting on our Power Suit like Lonnie Johnson. It isn't about being more than you already are but seeing all that you truly have inside of you and not letting anything hold you back. To face a challenge, the fear, the anxiety and do it anyway. Developing, over time the strength to work through the pit in your stomach. The inner strength to know at your core...you've got this! Fearlessness is really just a confidence in your own ability to survive. It is knowing that you can and will accomplish whatever you choose. Here is to Discovering all of our very own Fearlessness.

Cheers

Debra & Susan

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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.

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Meet Jodi Dale, a creative woman who enjoys writing, boxing, working out, wine, 'therapy sessions' with her girlfriends, traveling, and a passion for the Florida Keys. Raised near Alpena, Jodi says, "my roots are country but I have enjoyed living outside of Detroit for the past 20 years."

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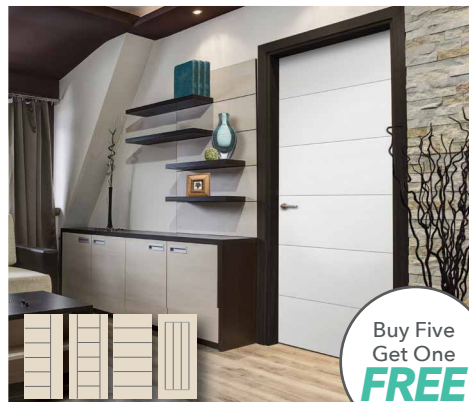
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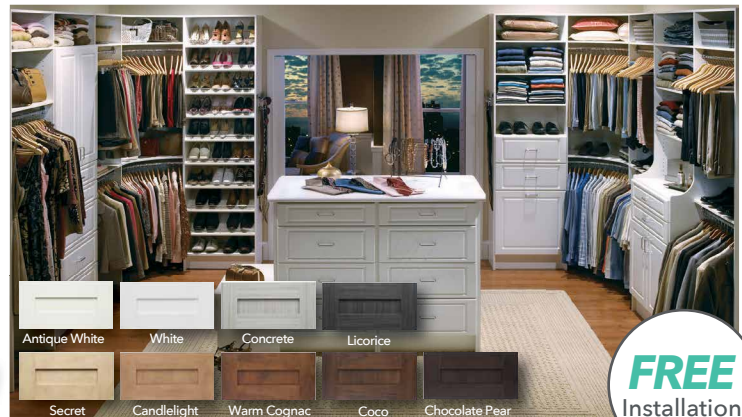
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Calendar of Events

February
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February 2

The Jackie Robinson Story at The Whiting

3

February 3

National GO RED for Women!!

First Friday lecture at Longway Planetarium

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February 4

Galentine's Day event at Sloan Museum

11-12

February 11-12

Romance Under the Stars dinner at Longway Planetarium

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February 13

Titanic Love dinner at Sloan Museum

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February 14

Valentine's Day

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February 14-15

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February 28

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March 1

Ash Wednesday

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March 2

Ladies Night at Williams Gun Site

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February 3

First Friday lecture at Longway Planetarium

3

March 3

Drumline Live at The Whiting

11

March 11

Third Class Bash at Sloan Museum

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March 14

Pippin the Musical at The Whiting

17

March 17

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April
6

April 6

Ladies Night at Williams Gun Site



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Love Battle

Meet Jodi Dale, a creative woman who enjoys writing, boxing, working out, wine, 'therapy sessions' with her girlfriends, traveling, and a passion for the Florida Keys. Raised near Alpena, Jodi says, "my roots are country but I have enjoyed living outside of Detroit for the past 20 years."

Jodi is also a mother who lost her beautiful son, Dane, to mental illness and heroin addiction. His struggle and death brought her soul's work sharply into focus.

For 12 years, they struggled together to find therapy and medication for his severe mental illnesses. "Five years into this struggle, Dane began self medicating with heroin so I had to scramble to learn everything I could about this horrifying development. Dane and I were in most every mental and rehab facility in Macomb and Wayne County as we searched for the right path to help him."

Soon they learned 'everybody knows somebody' struggling with drug addiction and mental illness. "The commonality is universal. No one is immune and navigating the red tape involved in getting treatment is very frustrating." They decided to tell their story in hopes of helping others and removing the stigma associated with these diseases.

The title, 'Love is the Drug' refers to how Jodi's love for Dane created her own battle as she became addicted to the addict.

"The book was born of my grief for my son. My therapist suggested that I pick up where Dane and I left off when he died and finish the story to help me sort out my grief. We endeavored to make our memoir as absolutely frank as possible. Although he got only four chapters complete before his passing, his words help you to get to know him. I then finished the rest of the story."

On the advice of her editor, she did not use traditional chapter titles. The book is broken up into Dane's ages and what he was experiencing at that time. What the reader



“Writing the book has been such a positive experience for me. Remembering my son and all the love we shared is now captured in a story as well as my heart.”



The late Dane Jacobs

experiences then is the fast timeline of addiction. Powerful!

Jodi is now deeply involved with Families Against Narcotics (FAN), seated on the Board of Advisors and speaking to those suffering from addiction and their families.

Like Jodi and Dane, most families struggle behind the closed doors of shame without support from family and friends. Now she advocates for them, speaks to and for them, and continues to seek out additional resources and funding.

“It’s my hope to educate in a different way,” she said. Reducing the stigma “only comes with awareness, when people realize this can happen to anybody, this can happen in Middle America. Until we take away that stigma, (sadly) there’s not going to be as much funding or attention to solving mental illness and drug addiction.”

Jodi sees herself as the most encouraging, positive and supportive person she can be to everybody. She loves to listen and has a reputation of being a woman who can be trusted with a secret. “I am becoming an expert on addiction as well as mental illness and how to direct those in need of help to the appropriate resources. I am also an advocate for the homeless.”

“Writing the book has been such a positive experience for me. Remembering my son and all the love we shared is now captured in a story as well as my heart.”

In addition to her work with FAN, Jodi has in the works a designer resale store called The Saucy Mermaid.

Her favorite quote: “At any given moment you have the power to say: this is not how my story is going to end.”

To buy a copy of Jodi Dale & Dane Jacobs’ book, *Love is the Drug: A Mother and Son Memoir*

(\$21.00 including tax and shipping), contact her at: jodidale69@gmail.com

A Kindle edition is available at: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Contact Jodi to address your group or for a book signing at: (586)854-7330



► 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



Everything Has *Beauty*, But Not *Everyone* Sees It- Confucious

The quest for a flawless and perfect body begins and ends with societal and cultural standards of beauty. It is unfortunate that in Western culture these standards are both extraordinary unrealistic and damaging to young girls and women alike. If one was to look at any fashion magazine it is evident that our culture tends to glorify; young, thin bodies, flat stomach, flawless skin, long legs and large breast. According to the National Institute on Media and Family by the time girls reach the age of seventeen approximately 78% are unhappy with their bodies. Additionally, research has found that girls as young as 6 years of age are exposed to these standards through magazines and other media sources. Unfortunately, not all teenage girls are fully developed. However, because of the media. They do not see themselves as beautiful or worthwhile. Instead a large majority of girls find themselves feeling less than or unacceptable at an early age. As a result, they are at an increased risk of depression, low-self-esteem, eating disorders, decreased psychological well-being, obesity and unhealthy dieting behavior. Even more alarming it can also lead to an increase in suicide.

Contradictory to the Western standards of beauty the average American woman wears between sizes 12-16. In contrast, the average size of a fashion model is size "0". We can no longer let our daughters suffer by feeling uncomfortable in their own skin. As a woman, we are every woman and every woman should be represented. Diversity in beauty means that there is beauty in everything. In order to save our daughters. We can no longer accept the stereotypical standards of beauty. There is beauty in everything. But not everyone can see it if they are only given one lens.

► Shuntai Beaugard, MA, LLPC
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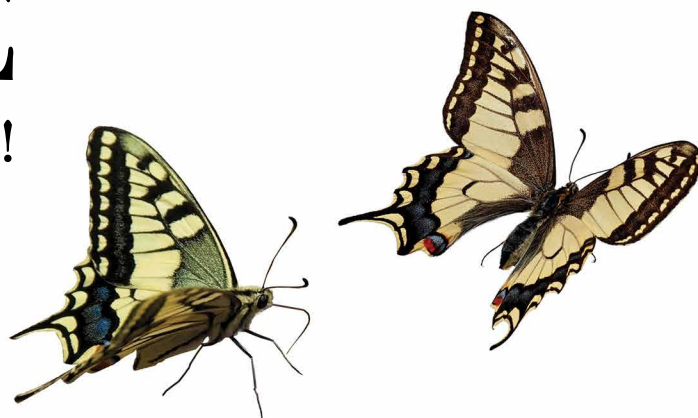
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We all have goals, right? Things that we want to achieve or places we want to visit or books we want to read. We have a picture in our mind of something we don't have now, and when we think of it we....

We wonder how the heck it'll ever happen.

There's not enough time/money/energy/motivation/knowledge/space/you name it. The way our life is currently, there just isn't any possible way we'll read those books or go visit that place.

And **THAT** is the key. The way life is currently.

Here is the big secret of people who have done amazing things... They changed. I'll say it again.

THEY CHANGED.

It's true you don't have time to read. The way your life is currently is too full. You'll have to cancel your Netflix binge or begin a new lunchtime habit.

It's true you don't have enough money to travel. The way your life is currently you barely have enough to cover bills. You'll have to quit your coffee shop habit and look outside the touristy trips.

The same goes for the fitness clients I work with.

NOBODY

has time to exercise and

EVERYBODY

loves junk food. The difference between people who remain stuck and the people who have amazing physical transformations is the ability to **CHANGE** the current status quo.

They got up an hour earlier to work out, or did it right when they walked in the door after work, no matter what. They threw out all the tempting food in their house, came up with a plan and stuck to it. They stopped buying foods that didn't match up with their goals. They sought out accountability and surrounded themselves with motivation.

You know what doesn't work? Saying someday and later and maybe when you have more money and time. Another unexpected bill comes up and another family emergency occurs. And you're stuck. Still. What did you change? Nothing. What changed in your life? Nothing, really.

It's not working to achieve what you want anyway, so why hang on to doing what you've always done? Staying in a comfortable place is only possible because we have no idea how amazing we could be. Think about that for a second. Then embrace the fear, dive into the unknown and start reveling in those changes.



◀ *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 facebook page at www.facebook.com/DesignedHealth*

What do Snoring and Sleep Apnea have to do with Weight Gain?

Do you sleep well and wake refreshed? 25% - 46% of Americans do not sleep well and have some form of Sleep Disordered Breathing (SDB), according to the American College of Chest Physicians.

A poor night's sleep can slow down your metabolism. Your body is designed to reset hormone levels while you sleep. This in turn allows energy levels and metabolism to work in harmony.

Sleep deprivation doesn't mean you aren't getting to bed on time. You can aim for more sleep, but what if there is a physical reason why you can't breathe properly at night?

Sleep Disordered Breathing (SDB) occurs when there is a restriction of the air to and from the lungs through the nose and pharynx. More commonly called Hypopnea (low breathing), Apnea (stopped breathing), or Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) these interruptions to the sleep cycle can lead to heart disease, high blood pressure, type-2 diabetes and weight gain.

Losing out on sleep can make fat cells 30 percent less able to deal with insulin, according to a study in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

"The more sleep-deprived you are, the higher your levels of the stress hormone cortisol, which increases your appetite," says sleep specialist Michael Breu, PhD.

Physical signs include snoring, or a narrow mouth and high upper palate. This can be a consequence of being bottle-fed, or from a pacifier or thumb-sucking. It can develop from poor diet or mouth breathing. Dentists used to remove some crowded teeth during orthodontics. The smile was straightened, but jaw never fully developed.

Your physician might not notice, as it's a dentally-related problem. If you suspect you may have SDB, tell your physician. He or she can order a sleep-study, which is the gold standard of testing. Don't worry if you've been advised to wear a C-PAP, but just can't do it. There are alternatives. Dentists certified in the treatment of breathing disorders have methods to help your jaw to develop to its genetic potential, even for a grown adult. These include The Heathy Start, and DNA and mRDA appliances.

Sweet dreams!

Learn more at www.RegianiDental.com



◀ *Sherry Regiani has been in the dental field since 1970; first as an assistant then as a hygienist. Over the past 30 years, Sherry transitioned into dental management and serves as practice administrator for her husband, David W Regiani DDS.*

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5 Keys to Headache Relief

We've all been there, the point where your day is over because of a horrific headache, and all you want to do is lock yourself in a quiet, dark room. When someone talking to you, makes you feel like you are front row at a heavy metal concert; lights seem brighter than the sun; stress from deadlines are mounting all around you, and your head feels like it is going to explode. Don't let your day be ruined any longer, with these key tips to preventing and treating the headache catastrophe:

1. "Pop" the pound

-The pounding in your head, like someone is taking a jack hammer to it, begins and you need relief. What do you do? Call your chiropractor (McKee Chiropractic Unlimited)! Many headaches come from tension in the muscles of the neck and/or over stimulus within the pain pathways of the neck due to spinal restrictions. Chiropractic care can be very beneficial in abating these causes, by adjusting the restricted spinal segments which decreases the pain stimulus, allowing for proper nerve flow. Along with adjustments, soft tissue work of the muscles and postural correction will decrease the muscle tension in the neck causing headaches. If you are sick of that constant thumping in your head, let your chiropractor help you out.

2. "B" Better

-Give me a "B"! A B-vitamin that is! Many people suffering from headaches, primarily migraines, are lacking serotonin and general energy reserves. B-vitamins are crucial in formation of neurotransmitters such as serotonin and cofactors within the energy pathways. Therefore a Complex B-vitamin can drastically help the headache misery. Not to mention the extensive list of other benefits of B-Vitamins, such as immune boosting, hormone production, bone health, and blood cell production. B-vitamins can be found in your daily diet as well, with foods like fish, green leafy vegetables, eggs, and grass-fed meats. Prevent headaches with a B-Complex vitamin and "B" better!

3. H2 Ohhhh!

-You currently are on your second cup of coffee and plan to have your daily Mountain Dew this afternoon to boost you through the day. This habit can cause you to have a headache in two ways, whether you are experiencing a rebound headache or mild dehydration headache. That's right; you're dealing with a double edge sword. Caffeine in soda and coffee can become addictive and therefore when you begin to crave it, you experience symptoms-headaches. Not to mention both soda and coffee, along with alcohol, flush out the water in the body. Water is vital to the body as, we are roughly 60% water. If we are not drinking enough our body lets us know through fogginess, confusion, and, you guessed it, headaches. Drinking the recommended amount of water (half of your bodyweight in fluid ounces, at least), can

prevent headaches, and other ailments. Now that we've had that "ohhhh" moment, let's put down our third coffee and replace it with a tall glass of water, and refill it. Good start!

4. Flame Off

-Turn off the flame in your body! Inflammation due to a pro-inflammatory diet can be contributing to that vice-grip feeling in your head. Inflammatory foods can disrupt neurological pathways that result in headaches, primarily migraines. Want to avoid that high pitch sound in your ears, the extreme sensitivity to light, and the debilitating headache? Avoid foods that contain aspartame (an artificial sugar substitute), histamine, and sometimes even gluten; such as processed meats, refined grains, and canned foods. Rather fill your diet with healthy omega 3 rich foods, grass fed meats, fish, fruits, and vegetables. These anti-inflammatory foods will not only help alleviate your headache, but they will decrease the general aches and pains in the body. Don't be the Human Torch, get rid of the flame!

5. Needle away the nag

-There are many things that may nag us during a day, whether it is kids screaming and fighting or a boss constantly on your case, but nothing is worse than a nagging headache. Torturous headaches can be due to a multitude of factors, such as an imbalance in qi (the body's energy), blood, or ying and yang. These imbalances can cause stagnation or over stimulus in the body causing the body to project them through pain, i.e. a headache. The good news is this can be treated with acupuncture. Utilizing different points depending on your clinical presentation, acupuncture can be effective treating migraines, tension, and other various chronic headaches. The benefits of acupuncture are endless, and it is very effective with headaches. Avoid the constant nagging headaches, unlock yourself from that dark room, and let Dr. Shannon throw some needles in you!

For more key information on how to get relief from that skull pounding headache, and any other aches, pains, and health concerns you may have please contact: Drs. Shannon and Nate McKee at McKee Chiropractic Unlimited (810)223-2439, and make your appointment today!

► Dr. Nathaniel McKee graduated from National University of Health Sciences with his Doctorate in Chiropractic. He has an additional certification in Cox Decompression Technic. Dr. Shannon McKee also graduated from National University of Health Sciences with her doctorate in Chiropractic and a Masters of science in Acupuncture. They both practice together at McKee Chiropractic Unlimited in Davison. www.mckeechirounlimited.com



Hurley Medical Center Rehabilitation Services has been privileged to offer the full complement of therapy services to the Flint Community for more than 50 years. Our services include Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy.

Hurley outpatient therapy services are provided at six different convenient locations throughout Genesee County as listed below. All locations offer Physical therapy, with pool therapy being offered at Sportscore Flint, Sportscore North and Lapeer. Our Linden Road, Family Rehab facility offers all three therapies, including Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy. Linden Road Family Rehab also offers the highly specialized services of pediatric therapy and hand therapy with Certified Hand Therapists.



Christina Tilton, Burton

At all locations, our highly trained therapists are able to treat sports and orthopedic conditions of every area of the body including back, neck, shoulder, elbow, wrist, hand, hip, knee, and ankle/foot. They also treat neurological conditions such as stroke, head injuries, balance deficits and chronic pain. Our certified hand therapists treat hand specific injuries/conditions including tendon and nerve injuries carpal tunnel, arthritic and conditions needing custom hand splinting, edema/wound/scar management. Our Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists are also trained in and provide the Graston Technique, a specialized technique for soft tissue repair and healing.

Hurley's dedicated team of pediatric physical, occupational and speech therapists provide therapy to children with developmental conditions, traumatic and birth injuries, and can include treatments of serial casting, sensory processing, and therapeutic listening. We are also the only area pediatric therapy service to offer the

HURLEY

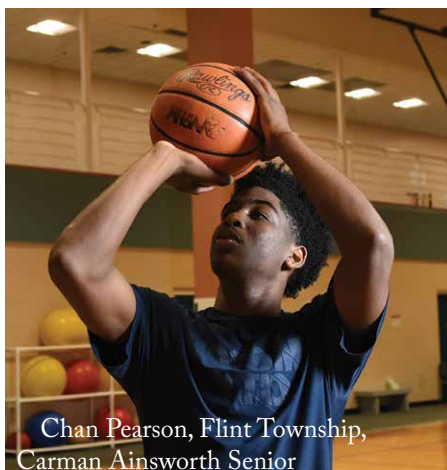
PHYSICAL THERAPY

Photos courtesy,
Douglas Pike, Hurley Medical Center

highly acclaimed Universal Exercise Unit utilizing the Therasuit, to provide a more intensive therapy regimen.

Our adult physical therapy team now offers additional specialized treatment for patients with TMJ (temporomandibular joint) pain from jaw stress, grinding, or dental dysfunction. We also have certified therapists offering treatment for vestibular/vertigo disorders and Women's health – including treatment for urinary incontinence, chronic pelvic pain, vulvar pain and painful bladder syndrome.

Our newest program is CARE. Hurley and Genesys, through the Hurley - Genesys Cancer Institute, have combined services to offer CARE (Cancer and Rehabilitation Experts)



Chan Pearson, Flint Township,
Carman Ainsworth Senior

specializing in the rehabilitation of patients recovering from cancer. This unique service offers rehabilitation that will address the physical, cognitive, and emotional concerns caused by the disease and treatment both during and following acute cancer treatment. This program will help patients return to their full ability and will enhance their quality of life.

Regardless of the diagnosis, each patient that chooses Hurley Rehab Services for their rehabilitation needs will receive a caring and individualized treatment approach using state of the art equipment. Our highly satisfied patients achieve excellent outcomes. Perhaps the most distinguishing reason for choosing Hurley Outpatient Therapy, in addition to our award winning reputation, is for our post rehabilitation exercise program. Upon completion of any Hurley rehabilitation program, each patient is offered a one month free membership to an area fitness center, (the YMCA or IINN), so the patient can continue to exercise and maximize their therapy outcomes.



Harvir Williams, Flint Age 9

To schedule an appointment, please call our central scheduling office at 810-230-2350. Our friendly staff will verify your insurance and help to get you to the location that best suits your individual needs.

Six Convenient Locations – One Easy Central Scheduling Number:

Sportscore Flint

4500 S. Saginaw St.
Flint, MI 48507

Family Rehabilitation Center

1085 S. Linden Rd.
Flint, MI 48532

Sportscore North

5219 W. Pierson Rd.
Flushing, MI 48433
(located in the YMCA Pierson Rd.)

Park Plaza Physical Therapy

G-1071 Ballenger Hwy. Suite 105
Flint, MI 48504

Crowne Point Physical Therapy

6240 Rashelle Dr. Suite 103 (off Hill Rd.)
Flint, MI 48507

Lapeer Physical Therapy

396 Lake Nepessing Rd.w
Lapeer, MI 48446

How to Become a Modern Day “Warrior Woman”



In my 30+ years as a martial arts instructor, not a week goes by that I don't connect with a woman who either has been victimized herself; has a child who is being bullied at school or on the bus; or is simply fearful that she or her family might become the next target.

That's why I've become passionate about teaching women how to transform themselves. I help them transform from Women...into "Warrior Women."

What do I mean by "Warrior Women?"

That term might make you think about "packing a pistol" or spending thousands of hours training to fight.

Although some of my best, long-term martial arts students started out by simply wanting to learn some self-defense moves, learning to fight is NOT a requirement to be one of today's "Warrior Women."

My definition:

A "Warrior Woman" is fully equipped

with more powerful energy, creative inspiration, incredible self-confidence, and deep intuition and vision - so she is no longer an attractive target for any kind of predator.

Our lives have become so incredibly busy that all of us have become distracted. We're checking our phones, listening to music, playing games, posting selfies on Facebook, or having a text-chat with a friend.

We get so distracted that our situational awareness — that important activity of "tuning in" to what is happening around us — has disappeared.

You aren't giving your intuition a chance to alert you about the guy who has been watching you pick-up your kids at school, or the stalker who has been following 50 steps behind you since you got off the bus — because you are completely distracted.

I want to help you change all of that.

Any woman can learn to be a Warrior Woman.

I'm going to teach you the simple steps, strategies, and techniques over the next year — in several ways.

I've teamed-up with "Women 2 Women" in 2017 to empower and transform its subscribers — like you.

First - watch for my articles in each issue where I will focus on a specific "Warrior Woman" transformation exercise.

Second - "Women 2 Women" is sponsoring/hosting my "Power-Up" classes throughout the state all year long. I'd love to meet you at an upcoming class in-person. (Go to: www.warriorwomenonthemove.com for more details)

Third - Follow me on Facebook www.facebook.com/masterlyle and register for updates by going to MasterLyle.com.

I was bullied and victimized throughout my entire childhood. I've dedicated my life to prevention.

This year, I want to help you transform into a "Warrior Woman."



Ladies Night

W2W attended Ladies Night at Williams Gun Site to try their hands at pistol precision and empowerment. They went with anticipation and excitement over the experience. The group had a split of first timers and seasoned shooters. Thanks to Jeff Swyrtek for the special assistance in guiding them in their technique and training. All came away feeling powerful and more knowledgeable. W2W enjoyed being by each other's side as they stepped into the world with a greater understanding of how each and every one of us can learn to empower ourselves with new skills.



The first Thursday of every month at Williams Gun Sight is "Ladies Night". Ladies night is geared towards first time shooters or even experienced shooters. This night is also a ladies only night, so no men allowed! This allows for all ladies to enjoy an after hours event at Williams Gun Sight without the pressure of their normal business hours. Ladies can bring their own firearm and ammunition or Williams has firearms available to rent. For any questions or to sign up for the next "Ladies Night" please contact Jeff at j.swyrtek@williamsgunsight.com

GIRLS DO IT BETTER

Ladies Night on first Thursday of every month!

- Instructors available for beginners.
- 20% off range fees and firearm rentals.
- Free open registration. Contact Jeff at jswyrtek@williamsgunsight.com to register!

CPL Classes and Basic Handgun Classes

- Contact Jeff at jswyrtek@williamsgunsight.com for more info and reservations.



7389 Lapeer Rd. Davison, MI 48423 - (800) 530-9028 - Mon-Sat: 9am-6pm Sun: 10am-5pm



FEARLESSNESS:

NOW IS THE TIME

I find myself at odds with the authors of the Merriam Webster Dictionary. They define fearlessness as “the absence of fear, brave, courageous.” I have to disagree.

How are you brave or courageous if you have no fear? If you don't feel the panic or dread induced by a pending threat - real or perceived, how are you a hero?

Yael Dayan writes this about her father, Moshe Dayan, former Israeli political and military leader:

“My father, I remembered, had no fears at all. In that he differed greatly from me.

But he could not be called a courageous man because he had no fears to overcome.”

New Face in the Mirror

Fear is a vital response to physical and emotional danger. If we don't feel it, we cannot protect ourselves from legitimate threats. Women especially understand this.

Yes, traumas or bad experiences can trigger a fear response within us that is hard to quell. And sometimes that anxiety is paralyzing. Yet facing our personal demons is the best way to move past them.

Feelings of fear can also signal personal growth as you move outside your comfort zone. If you really love your comfort zone, you may not be tapping into your potential.

Fearlessness is having the strength of mind to carry on in spite of danger or anxiety.

We are fearless when we stand up and turn to face our fears. We are courageous when we do the work to overcome our dread.

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.” Eleanor Roosevelt, *You Learn by Living*

Unfortunately in our culture, appealing to fear is a common practice in politics and product marketing. In other words, fear, not based on evidence or reason, is used as the primary motivator to get us to accept an idea,

proposition or conclusion.

This is so sad because fear divides us.

Ignorance, not knowing what is true, divides us.

And divided, we will be defeated.

Anna Sewell, author of the 1877 classic novel *Black Beauty*, writes:

“I am never afraid of what I know.”

Where should we begin? How do we determine what's real, what's true?

Fear of the unknown is something we can control. We can transform our fears by educating ourselves beyond our usual sources of information.

When we stretch to learn new things or walk a mile in someone else's shoes, we may feel some anxiety until we become more familiar. Yet it is the only way.

We also transform our fears by connecting with each other – by getting to know each other and by building relationships.

How willing are you to become familiar with the unknown?

Will you step out of your comfort zone to see what life feels like to those with different skin color, incomes or religions? Will you be brave?

We must be brave because we stand at the crossroads of division.

We cannot be silent or isolated. We cannot hesitate or be timid. The only way to tackle fear is to face it together. Isn't it grand that women do togetherness so well!!

Now is the time to speak up and question, to reach out and connect with those new to us. Now is the time to be seen and heard and to know what is true.

We can do this because we are women and we are fearless!!

Together we are unstoppable against this monster called fear.

*“You gain strength,
courage and
confidence by every
experience in which
you really stop to
look fear in the face.”*

Eleanor Roosevelt

► 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



All We Need Is

Love . . .

Women need a tribe because we crave those who will listen to, support, and encourage us. We do those things for many other people, and sometimes we become resentful if we aren't allowed the same privilege.

There's freedom and strength in having friends who listen to you, allow you to voice your dreams without stifling them, and encourage you to be your best--whatever that looks like. If you don't have a group of friends, or at least one special friend, I encourage you to seek out people you relate to, who share your spark and interests, and who will honor and treasure you. Perhaps you will find these friends in an online group, a club friendship, or co-workers. I found a tribe like this in an online group called Women On Fire. I also love the Women 2 Women community and have found my tribe here. Finding your tribe takes being open to making friends, cultivating relationships, and seeking ways to meet other women of like mind and heart. If you are determined to find your tribe, you will.

A TIARA

You are fabulous!! Don't believe it? Maybe you should change your self-view. For you to be your most authentic and confident self, you need to love and value the person you are. Take inventory of and celebrate your strengths and skills (ask a friend for help if needed). Declare yourself amazing and delightful and strong! Make life happen for you. Remember, although you are a queen worthy of a crown, you are also a warrior woman with killer stompin' boots.

and A COOKIE...

So eat the cookie, already. Buy those flowers, soak in the tub, and take a nap! Women are characteristically nurturing souls. But who nurtures us? Most likely no one. It's up to us to nurture ourselves and that means self-care; giving yourself permission to do the little things that restore your joy, your health, and your energy.

Here's looking to a great year where your sparkle shines for the entire world to see.

► *Mimi Matthews believes in the power of words to change lives. She calls herself "Passionista At Large" because she is always on the prowl to encourage and empower, inspire and ignite anyone she comes in contact with. Mimi's life experiences have given her rich material and wisdom to help others learn truth. You can read her life stories and uplifting posts on her blog <http://particularpassions.me/> and buy her encouraging and empowering words on unique cards and gifts on her Etsy shop here: https://www.etsy.com/shop/EmPOWordmentCards?ref=bdr_shop_menu*



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What About You?

This article shares the experience of going through a midlife crisis. Although, it may seem a little embarrassing to share it's necessary to help women overcome the shame & pain of going through a midlife crisis.

I believe most women are familiar with the term called midlife crisis and some have consciously tried to prepare themselves and their loved ones for it.

Despite many women's beliefs about being prepared for a midlife crisis. I personally don't think it's any thing you can emotionally or mentally prepare for.

There is no systematic approach to handling the stressors of a midlife crisis but with family support and God you learn how to go through the ups and downs that's trying to turn your life around.

I am hoping that my story and Diary Confessions of Women Walking In Faith ignite hope within and give you confidence to successfully conquer and confront life challenges, addictions & setbacks that come as a midlife crisis to kill, steal and destroy your joy.

Be strong and courageous in the power of love, being steadfast and unmovable in love, hope and peace.

What About You?

It's time to keep it real and honest with you, so that you can become the Woman that God has authentically created you to be without apology, compromise or regret.

I'm sure you have heard many times, you only have one life to live and you have to make the best of it. When life gives you a lemon you make lemonade, it's not where you are right now but where you are determined to go.

But what happens when life happens and everything you have tried to secure for you and your family experiences an interruption, that makes you feel stagnated & defeated.

I'm not talking about hormonal changes that cause you to walk around fanning and having private summers even in the winter.

I'm talking about a midlife crisis that comes and shakes the stable ground you have been walking on, when you see cracks in the concrete, that requires you to reevaluate your life, the way you think, talk and walk. It's best explained as an unexpected pain that has no medications in formulary to control the stabbing, aching & sharp emotions that's regulating your emotions & mood swings.

The only resolution is to go through the process and learn how to effectively cope with the crisis, accept what you can't change, change what you can, work on it and become the best you that you can become without compromise, apology or regret.

Why Now?

I had a personal conversation with God that went like this? Why Now God? Do I have to go through a midlife crisis. Do you realize I have been married for 23 years? Do you realize I'm focusing on retiring? Do you realize I'm living in a lovely home and building a powerful women's ministry? God did you even consider that I'm about to send my son off to college in about two years? Is this the best time for me to have a midlife crisis?

I thought to myself, why does good things happen to good people, I have been doing what's required of me and now in the prime of my life. I'm dealing with marital issues, financial concerns and family concerns that have me up one day and down the next.

Why Now? Why Me, why does it feel like I'm all over the place trying to be a successful woman, wife, mother, manager, minister & mentor.

Why Now? Why Me, at the age of 46 do I feel empty, lonely and like I'm fighting a losing battle trying to balance my life, my marriage, my family, my finances and my career.

God whispered to me and said, you have been living a life that's unbalanced for a long time but you were too busy to recognize it and do something about it, you kept putting it off and focusing on what everybody else needed.

You constantly looked over what you needed and focused on what everybody else needed. You often pursued love in all the wrong places, trusted the wrong people and got distracted by all the wrong things.

God told me my midlife Crisis, was a Christ IS! A pause in my life that had to come and save me from me. I was wearing me out and not taking the time to restore rejuvenate my mind, body or souls with peace, love and prayer.

I was always mentoring and trying to help others overcome their trials and tribulations that I never saw mine coming. Or maybe, I ignored them because I didn't want to deal with my own issues. But God knew if I was going to get to my better years it was going to require a perfecting for me, for me to get to a place in my life, that I could only perfect the things that concerned me. God makes everything beautiful in its timing.

It was my timing to become beautiful to me. God wanted me to see me. I had thought I had mastered the daily challenges of being a woman of faith, a mother, a mentor and a minister teaching and transforming lives with the word of faith. However, unfortunately I had not mastered me.

The me that could enjoy and embrace life. The me that could plant flowers with my mom. The me that could smile & laugh at corny jokes with my children. The me that would accept me just being me, embracing flaws, failures and fears without shame or guilt.

It was time to mature and let go of unhealthy people, places and things that was trying to rob me from reaching my destiny.

A season of pain, misery and strife hit my life and took me to a place of unfamiliarity. I temporarily became an undercover walking time bomb. I was double minded and unstable in my ways and thoughts. I tried desperately to seek interventions that would cover up my pain and take away my crisis away. But I had to go through the process of change and get to a place of faith, that covered me and comforted me with Gods love.

You are probably wondering why am I breaking the silence and sharing my secrets in my diary. It's because I want you to hear the real and not become dismayed unexplainable days of tears, fears unnecessary frustrations. It's normal and sometimes comes with the experience of a midlife crisis. **To Be Continued.....**

► *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. Contact info: Phone 810-624-1613 Email: martin2477@comcas.net*



The Birch Run Expo Center is pleased to present



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



7 Things

You see, I evolved from a free spirited daredevil girl into a mom, and now, I'm heading toward the free spirited daredevil woman. She looks a lot different than the girl did. Her butt is bigger, her arms are flabby, boobs baggy, she has grey hair and wrinkles. Sometimes, as I look into the mirror, I still see her. Sometimes, as I belly laugh, she can still be heard. Sometimes, as I cry, I can still feel her reaching for her mother's arms. I know she's in there...somewhere...You know that girl...She's you too.

Well 2017 is the year I'm bringing her back!!! I'm a bit afraid, to be honest. I know it will take hard work and dedication. There will be times when I'll want to give up, but now that it's in writing, and I'm sharing it with you, I won't be able to. It's time to add less to my fear, to become "fearless". That's the goal...to get stronger, healthier, do more, see more, be more...to live with more childlike anticipation and excitement, with less fear.

Should you care to join me, here's my plan:

Instead of focusing on weight, focus on strength and endurance by committing to an hour of exercise every day. It can be a walk, the gym or a class. Whatever... Plus have an accountability buddy! Eat fewer nutritionally empty foods and more nutritionally dense ones. Less snacking.

Get rid of old stuff that is cluttering, clogging, doesn't fit or doesn't fit in. Go more for the minimalist look and feel. Why? My priorities are different. Initially, it will take some time, but I'm soooooo ready for simple. Not to mention less cleaning time is more me time.

Be braver with my choice of clothes and hair. It's as though I am emerging from a deep sleep of "not-me-ness" and "play-it-safe-dom", time to kick it up a notch. It's because of my poor body image; I'm working on that as well. In the meantime, I'm adding color to the blacks, grays and browns. I'm

buying fun shoes, although still going for the comfort factor. I'm even stashing some cash for some cool summer clothes after the arm flab is gone...and it will be!

Not spending time with people who weigh me down. Notice, I didn't say "drag". I don't let anyone do that anymore. Weighing is different. I'm distancing myself from the naysayers, the "poor me's" and the "I should have's". They are the ones who keep my feet on ground and frankly, I'd rather soar.

I'm making time to spend with my friends and family. People who make me laugh and do fun things. Get out of my comfort rut. Go out more often.

Go on a real vacation, possibly someplace new. Maybe, a cruise. It would also be fun to visit old friends and/or my long distance relatives. A girls' weekend spa trip would be fun as well.

Make sure to play outside. Feeling the earth beneath one's feet is not only healthy, it replenishes one's spirit. Dance in the moonlight. Walk on the beach. Work in the garden.

Seven things, in 2017, to ignite the spark of reclaiming our me-ness. Yes, this will be a year of the fearless, abundant, joyous woman. A woman of clarity and purpose. A woman who lives in the now with a smile on her face, a bounce in her step and a twinkle in her eye.

Should you decide to accept this mission, make certain to have fun finding your fearless self. Please let me know how it goes. Hugs.

► *Deborah St.Hilaire is a women's holistic life and transitions coach, author, host of The Divalution Show and CEO of W4DIVAS.com. Her mission is to empower women. She can be reached at 419.366.8091 for coaching, workshops and speaking engagements.*





SNOWSHOEING IN MICHIGAN

Strapping my little boots into the snowshoes is always awkward, but within moments, the sinewy, woven winter walkers are almost a part of me. My family is crunch, crunch, crunching through the snow, our heavy footfalls somehow lighter than air as we barely displace the powder. The flakes are packed tightly, and all is quiet on this frigid Sunday morning.

In fact, nothing even seems to move in the lovely silence, the forest frozen in time completely, hibernating cozily until spring time. The only sound is our snowshoes and the white powder beneath them. Our breath comes out in a warm, ghostly fog, our breathing becoming more labored as we make the ascent to the top of “booty-buster” hill as my father calls it. The dogs have long left us behind, bounding soundlessly through the trees. One of the labradors is white, and so except for a flash of movement, she moves almost invisibly; the other labrador is black, and so she too blends with the stark, naked trees and dark evergreens.

The sun is bright and is made even brighter by the vibrant whiteness of the snow. The light is almost painful to my eyes, and I am forced to squint under my woolen hat to see clearly. We are edging ever closer to the forest, our slow measured steps clearing a path in our wake. We do not often go snowshoeing. My father prefers cross country skiing, my stepmother and husband prefer downhill skiing, and I much prefer to toboggan down the hills than to climb them in unwieldy shoes. But, this is a kind of ritual, this annual wintertime walk through the forest. The landscape is rugged and wild, and there are never many people in these woods this season. The tourists have long left this Northern Michigan lakeshore community, and the locals are bundled up near their fireplaces, not easily pried away from the warmth of their cozy homes.

An hour or so later, our faces frozen crimson, even as we sweat with exertion beneath our layers, we waddle back to the car, our snowshoes expertly guiding over the snow. We are tired and cold, but we are elated. Silent again, all lost in the experience of a frozen forest covered deep in winter, and the tranquil stillness of a world sleeping until springtime.

► 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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A Manatee Moment

In a wetsuit and snorkeling gear, I was glued to the ladder at the boat's stern, partway in the water. What surrounded me was not what I had expected. I had snorkeled before, in the Caribbean years ago, but this was very different. When I booked this manatee swim at one of Florida's hot spots called Crystal River, the name prompted me to expect clear, sparkling water. Instead, the water I was supposed to enter was murky marshland.

It also contained marine mammals weighing up to 650 lbs. Our captain had informed my husband and me that manatees are docile and their primary defense mechanism is to swim away. Even so, my imagination was running amok, recounting incidences I knew of in which usually harmless creatures inadvertently injured humans.

My husband had no such reservations. An experienced snorkeler, he was in the water with the manatees. I wanted desperately to join him, but before I could overcome my hesitation, the manatees had swum away and he was returning to the boat.

Over the next half an hour spent scouring the river for other manatees and finding none, bitter disappointment began to set in. The reasons for my earlier hesitation seemed so insignificant now, especially with the shrinking prospect of another chance.

But I was about to be reminded that losses are often temporary, and something better may be waiting. Far from rare, opportunities can appear out of nowhere and things can, and do, change in the blink of an eye.

Our captain had spotted another manatee. It was a smaller juvenile feeding on the bottom. The water was clearer here, less forbidding. I got in.

The manatee was down deeper than my limited snorkeling experience would allow me to go. Instead, I had to be content watching my husband dive down and stroke the manatee, which clearly enjoyed it. At least I was in the water.

But I had forgotten something about manatees. Manatees need to breathe.

The manatee below started to surface – on a path directly toward me. When it reached me, it stopped dead in the water an arm's length away. It hung



there for perhaps fifteen seconds, studying me with intelligent eyes. Young manatees are known to be curious, and I was thrilled that this one was curious about me.

Neither was this manatee quite finished. As it completed its ascent, took a breath, and dove down again, it was easily within reach. I was able to explore its sleek body and rubbery tail. The manatee had given me back more than I had lost.

I realize that there are losses far greater than an opportunity to swim with a manatee. I've experienced those too, many times. I'm not trying to minimize them with a cute story. But a principle exists here that I believe anyone in any situation can relate to. It's a reminder that there is always hope. Where there are dark waters, there can also be an unexpected manatee moment, just waiting.

► Karen DeVault is a published author who earned her BA degree in English, with honors, from Oakland University in 2007. She lives with her husband in White Lake, with two daughters and grandchildren nearby. Karen enjoys motorcycling, fishing, target shooting, bicycling, and running. She is currently writing her first novel.



Love THE SKIN YOUR IN

As skin matures and ages, we need to pay extra attention to the skin care products we use. However, you don't have to break the bank to obtain that youthful glow. Pay attention to your specific skin care needs and purchase accordingly. Most aging skin becomes dehydrated and loses its firmness and elasticity, causing it to sag and look dull. Cell renewal dramatically drops while depleting collagen and proteins. All skin types need protection from the sun's harmful rays, but especially as skin matures.

Below are some helpful tips and suggested products that will keep your skin looking youthful.

1. Cleansers; Cleansing products with oatmeal are beneficial because of the oatmeal's anti-inflammatory properties. Oatmeal also moisturizes and helps to remove surface skin cells, showcasing the smoother skin below. Products like *AVEENO'S MOISTURIZING BAR* works beautifully on all skin types and can be used daily.

2. Serums; Daily doses of Vitamin C will assist in the production of collagen and protein that aid in the growth of new skin cells which gives skin its firmness and elasticity. When looking for topical serums with Vitamin C (L Ascorbic Acid) be aware that in order for Vitamin C to work at its fullest potential, it should come in a powder form. L-ascorbic acid will only stay effective in skin care products for a short period of time after the product has been open and exposed to the environment, especially water. When you purchase products with l-ascorbic acid, it is best to find it processed to the right pH, ideally 3.5 or less. The acidity helps the skin better absorb the topical product, but if it is too high, it will irritate the skin.

3. Moisturizers; Dermatologists and skin care specialists recommend a daily

moisturizer with an SPF 30 to protect skin from the damaging effects of the sun, so be sure to look for moisturizers with a minimum SPF 30. Petroleum based products like mineral oil and paraffin, will temporarily soften skin but can also clog pores and cause outbreaks, so avoid these ingredients when making your selection.

4. Facial Scrubs/Masks; depending on skin type and sensitivity scrubs or masks can be used on a weekly or monthly basis. Ingredients like Green Tea or Oatmeal will assist in sloughing off dead skin cells, tightening and detoxifying to give skin the appearance of a youthful glow. Depending on your skin care needs *ST. IVES*



FRESH APRICOT SCRUB or *OATMEAL SCRUB & MASK* work wonderful and are affordably priced.

Lastly, remember no one product can do it all, if they claim to be chances are they are not. Also, a patch test to check for allergic reactions or skin sensitivity is recommended. If you are experiencing serious skin care issues or are looking for a more in depth skin care routine, it is best to consult with a professional.



► *Tami L. Sackett is a freelance writer and a hair and skincare expert with over 30 years in the beauty industry. She is always on the lookout for better products at a value price that keeps you looking young and feeling good. You may reach Tami at her email: tlsackett@yahoo.com*



POWER SUIT



Over the holidays while shopping on Amazon, I ran across a short little book that caught my attention. “Mind What You Wear” The Psychology of Fashion by Professor Karen J. Pine. It brought back a life changing memory for me.

In 1994 I was in college (Business Program) and newly elected as head of the campus’ President Council. This role would require me to lead meetings and speak in front of the leaders of the university’s extra-curricular programs as well as the Dean of the university. I was scared beyond words! Most of these people were older and much more established than I was at this time. I wasn’t really sure how to prepare myself for the first meeting but I knew I needed to up my game. I went a bit extreme and cut my hair pretty short which in retrospect was overkill but I also went shopping for something new to wear. It needed to be powerful and professional. It also needed to reflect my style and not make me feel even more uncomfortable than I knew I would already be. I found my confidence in a beautiful Tyrian purple suit that made me feel incredible. It made me feel strong and I walked a little taller each time I wore it. I made it through the meeting with a few hiccups, however, this was the changing point where

I stepped outside my comfort zone and went for something I wanted in spite of being scared crazy. I have taken many leadership roles since my college days and rely very much on my wardrobe to introduce me and be seen as a confident, self-assured woman who people relate to.

There is power in fashion. It is a great form of self-expression that has the ability to boost our moods or make us feel confident and special. However, it also invites others to quickly form perceptions of us and our lifestyles. I see such wonderful changes in clients all the time when they feel confident and radiant by a simple piece of clothing, the affect is real. Understanding how our choices can speak for us as well as others can be a pretty powerful tool in our wardrobe toolboxes so to speak.

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Melissa Mays:

Working for Clean Water



Death threats, attempts on her life, and health scares. They have become part of Melissa Mays life. Mays, a local activist, and organizer of the group, Water You Fighting For, has been working on the Flint Water crisis since January of 2015 when her family received a letter from the city of Flint about the possibility of a cancer causing bi-product in their water. But, there were signs before this letter. In 2014, Mays middle son broke two bones in his wrist. The doctor,

Mays recalled, couldn't understand why his bones were so brittle. The family was suffering from muscle aches, rashes and hair loss. The letter from the city of Flint was what sent Mays in to doing research on what exactly was going on with the water situation and what the health facts were regarding the water. Mays attended her first protest and realized that the situation was more serious than many realized. She knew that Flint needed help.

"Within a week, we contacted Erin Brockovich, (an environmental activist, who was instrumental in building a case against the Pacific Gas and Electric Company of California), and Lois Gibbs, (the woman who brought the nation's attention to the Love Canal story of a toxic waste dump underneath an elementary school) and from there it just exploded."

The group began speaking in churches, reaching out as much as possible to help people understand.

Mays husband, Adam, built the website, Water You Fighting For?, so people could receive accurate information.

"The city and state were lying about what was safe," Mays said. Mays three children have been affected by the contaminants. Her oldest child's pancreas is not still not working properly.

The pivotal turning point, Mays stated was in March 2015, when she tried to talk to an official at the Department of Public Works, who told her, "You know more about this water stuff than I do." Mays said at that point she decided she would take all this knowledge and help fix the problem, help people protect themselves and pull out all of the people responsible.

"I didn't even think about it, I needed answers."

Mays has started a movement in Flint that has

started making people all over the country sit up and take notice. In the last two years, she has personally become a stronger person.

"I don't take experts or officials words for anything. I do research and learn everything I can."

She advises those who suspect they have contaminated water to get involved.

"Don't sit on your butt, go out and do something. Women are a hell of a lot stronger than they realize. Don't take "no" for an answer."

Asked how she felt about the House passing the \$170 million Flint Aid package, Mays responded with, "It's not enough. They need to replace everything. Go a block at a time. This is how Lansing did it and it worked well."

Since all this has happened, Mays has been contacted by other states and is assisting them. Recently Kansas City contacted her wanting information on how to go about starting a group to fight their problems there.

Although officials are stating that the lead levels are down and at acceptable levels, Mays said that when it is colder, contaminants are lower, but wait until the warmer weather and they will be back up again.

"If you suspect your water is bad, dig for information. Research everything. Educate everyone. Get monthly reports. The scariest person you can be is an informed person."

Mays recently returned from the Women's March in Washington D.C. where she spoke along with fellow activists, Angela Davis and Gloria Steinem.

Mays was named by People magazine as one of, "25 Women Changing the World" and was surprised when she saw it.

"I was in Walgreens when I saw the article, and I freaked out. I thought it was going to be about regular women. Did you see the list?"

Despite the publicity, Mays remains focused.

"I was a concert promoter before all of this. But, you have to do what is right for your kids. I won't stop because we have no choice."

For more information on the Flint Water Crisis go to the Facebook page, Water You Fighting For?

► "Charlene A. Kowalski is the Director of Marketing/Customer Service for the Mass Transportation Authority. She can be reached at: www.ckowalski@mtaflint.org



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FINDING THE MOTIVATION TO *Get Fit*



Michelle Stewart

With the new year arriving, many of us are making our resolutions to get in shape. Unfortunately for many of us, starting and keeping up with an exercise program is typically harder than we would like. According to the American Heart Association, 80 percent of Americans aren't getting the recommended amount of physical activity.

Instead of getting overwhelmed with starting your journey to physical fitness, use these five tips to help keep you motivated.

Set a goal

Before you start a workout program, pick your ultimate goal. It could be "I want to lose 20 pounds," or "I want to be able to fit into my skinny jeans again." Leave reminders for yourself throughout your house to keep you motivated. Hang your favorite pair of jeans that don't fit right anymore where you can see them and motivational post-it notes that cheer you on.

The American Heart Association encourages you to simply move. But if you're looking for something with more impact and a team environment, consider joining a gym. With CrossFit in particular, coaches work with each person to guide their workout to meet their independent goals. "CrossFit is a hard workout, but anybody can do it. We have some members who are athletes and some people whose goal is to get healthy," said Michelle Stewart, owner of Mission 1 CrossFit in Caro, Michigan.

Now, you may be thinking "CrossFit! No way!" But sometimes going all in can keep you motivated, explained Stewart.

Find a workout partner

When motivation is low, look for a friend or your gym-mates to help keep you motivated. Stewart explained one of the reasons she started CrossFit was because her friends were going. "At first I wasn't interested, but after a couple weeks I went with them. I found having that community made working out more fun and kept me motivated."

Even if your workout buddy doesn't live near you, commit to either heading out the door to go for a walk or run at the same time or doing the same at-home workout program. Try to set a consistent time to work out together.

Push through plateaus

Plateaus are a major reason why people will stop their new exercise routine. Stewart says, "when you hit a weight-loss plateau, look at how you feel. When I started CrossFit I actually gained 10 pounds, but you

wouldn't be able to tell by looking at me because the weight-gain was all muscle."

Look for ways your body is changing that the scale doesn't reflect. Have you increased how much weight you can lift? Can you now make it around the block? Is your mile time faster than before? Do your pants fit a little better?

Eat the right food

Getting in shape cannot be achieved by exercise alone. In fact, your diet has a larger impact on your over-all health than exercise. Make sure you are providing your body with the right fuel to help reach your goals.

Stewart suggests bananas for workouts. "Before and after a workout I like to eat a banana because it's fast, healthy sugar that my body uses up fast instead of storing for later."

Also make sure you are getting enough water. The common thinking is drink half of your body weight in ounces. So if you weigh 200 pounds, drink 100 ounces of water each day. Keep in mind that people that tend to sweat more or have diabetes or heart disease require more water than others, according to the American Heart Association.

Make little lifestyle changes

The American Heart Association recommends getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity at least five days a week. The good news for people just starting out is you don't have to complete those 30 minutes all at the same time. Squeeze in 10-15 minutes of exercise two or three times a day. Take a walk on your breaks at work.

Little changes like taking the stairs and parking at the back of the parking lot when you go into the store can really start to add up. Not everyone has the desire to become an athlete, but everyone wants to be healthy.

If you're looking for some encouragement, accountability and support with your diet and activity, join the American Heart Association Mid Michigan's Go Red Get Fit 21 Day Challenge group on Facebook. The event kicks off February 1 for American Heart Month. In 3 short weeks you can develop a healthy habit that can stick with you throughout 2017 and beyond.

▶ Stacy Sawyer is the senior communications director for the American Heart Association in Michigan. A mom to two and husband to one, you may see her on television, hear her on the radio or pass her on the road as she taxis her kids to one activity to another. She is a heart health cheerleader.



Rainbow Chard - Nature's Disco Star...

When we started farming we knew we wanted to grow some exotic and adventurous veggies that were challenging to grow. To lessen those risks we also planted some easy winners. One of the easiest to grow is swiss or rainbow chard. We grow chard in two formats; baby leaf for salad greens and large leaf for cooking. It has become one of our favorite things to grow. It is tolerant of the cold Michigan winter and it is resistant to pests that attack at the height of summer. Chard grows really well in most conditions all year round on our farm.

Some veggies become trendy because they have nutritional value and are good for your health. Some do it because they look cool. Whatever the criteria for becoming trendy, Swiss chard should be next in line. Let's start with appearances. The stems of the chard plant come in a "rainbow" of colors, red, pink, green and a few shades in between. The healthy aspect of chard is fantastic and is high in iron, vitamins K, A and C and has lots of anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. For individuals that are struggling to keep their blood sugar levels regulated, chard contains a compound that has been reported to help slow the breakdown of carbohydrates into sugars.

Hailing from the same plant family as beets and spinach, chard has a mildly earthy flavor common among chenopods. Chard is easily added to juice, salads, eggs, and soups. The stems can be cooked too, and need a little longer than the leaves. A little olive oil and ginger with a bunch of chard is a quick and easy side dish. Most preparations that work with spinach work with chard so it's easy to include this succulent green to your diet. When introducing chard to someone who's never tried it, we go with the scrambled eggs. For maximum benefit cook lightly or eat it raw.

Chard and Eggs

- 1 tbs. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, pressed
- 4-6 leaves swiss chard chopped.
- ¼ C fresh parsley chopped
- 6 eggs, beaten
- ½ C parmesan cheese grated (optional)
- ¼ tsb. salt
- fresh ground black pepper

Heat oil in a medium skillet. Add onion and garlic and sauté about 5 minutes. Add chard and herbs. Sauté until wilted, about 2 minutes. Add eggs, cheese, salt, and pepper. Cook, until eggs are set.



► 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.



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Being Okay With Fearlessness



Several of the staff at Women2Women were asked to write on the themes of Fearlessness and Discovery for this issue. I find myself discovering a fearlessness to attempt to fill our faithful submitter, Ron Estrada's shoes in his absence since he could not make deadline this issue. At best, he may never miss a deadline again for fear of my meddling.

Watching all of the individuals around the world come together for the Women's March has had such an impact on me. Many have felt trepidation for the coming year and what it may bring. Seeing so many people stand as one to be heard, I had such an overwhelming surge of love, hope and unity wash over me. This year's march had such a calm but strong feeling to it. No matter what side you stand on, to see individuals unite together positively is awe-inspiring. I believe we are on the cusp of change that transcends borders. The world needs everyone to band together and stand up for rights of all because we all matter. I think we could finally be heading towards that horizon.

It is never missed upon me that every person meets a challenge nearly daily in their lives. I see the people closest to me struggle, fall, pick themselves back up and keep going. I appreciate them all. They have no idea of the inspiration that they spark in me. The fire they set in me to discover all that I have inside so that I, too, can conquer what comes. I try to be verbal about all the wonderful people that positively motivate me but I don't know that they actually see how bright they shine in my eyes. This is what I wish for them to discover...

their inner beauty. I think that could be one of the greatest aspects of fearlessness. To realize our inner beauty, our full potential and never overlook it. To never let those little words of doubt slip in our heads that we are not amazing. To conquer our fears that we are not enough, that we can't, that we will not see a change. Because all it takes is one person believing that they can, they will, that they can make a change and suddenly it is a sea of people banning together in a positive manner to make it happen. Let's do more of that.

It is so easy to doubt, to negate, to dismiss the potential of what can be and instead just accept what is. I don't know about everyone else, but I am, quite frankly, done with accepting what is and ready to be apart of what can be and make it happen. I am one person in the right direction of a new horizon. I have a voice and it can be used for positive results. I will see struggles. I will falter. I am human. It is okay. So on the days that I lose my cool, get mad at someone for moving my things, forget my son's snack for school, eat a whole cake by myself, I still will not give up. I will not let self doubt creep in to tell me that I might as well give up because look at how I failed. No. I have not failed. I am simply discovering my fearlessness of not giving up each and every day.

So until next time...don't tell Ron I wrote this.



Susan Lamphier is an Editor for Women2Women Michigan Magazine

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