

WOMEN INSPIRING WOMEN FOR GOOD!

W2W

WOMEN 2 WOMEN
MICHIGAN MAGAZINE

COMPLIMENTARY

Live Your Truth



Jodie

Eckleberry-Hunt

OWN YOUR STORY

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Debra K. Collins
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Dear Friends,

The theme of this issue, "finding your truth", is personal and different for each individual. Your thoughts, values, purpose, and intentions are a few elements that define your belief system. We have some great authors here who will help you identify your truth.

Dr. Jodi Hunt, our cover girl, gives us an unconventional way to express ourselves and get to our truth.

Readers, you asked and we listened. We have added new features with contributing writers Suzanne Young on the Law of Attraction, Abby Corcoran with spring style trends, and Melissa Hager of The Comedy Series. This issue is packed with great inspiration and information for you to explore.

Mark your calendars:

*Our Pick Your Passion Series is in full swing on the fourth Thursday of the month at Brickstreet of Grand Blanc. For more information and tickets go to our website: w2wmichigan.com.

*Reserving vendor spots for the fall Women's Summit & Expo at the Holiday Inn Gateway Center, Flint. Contact us at debra@w2wmichigan.com for information.

*Check out our "Who Is She?" radio show, with interviews of inspiring women, every other Wednesday at 2 p.m., on www.w4divas.com. Do you know a woman we could interview?

To stay current on all W2W happenings, "like" our Facebook page and check back often. <https://www.facebook.com/w2wmichigan/> Look forward to our next issue with a home and garden feature.

*If you have lovely pictures of your gardens from last year, submit them. They may make the issue!

*Do you have a favorite before & after project? As in "I did it myself"? Send it to us!

*Have a fun backyard party idea? Submit to be featured. Submit your photos to deb@w2wmichigan.com BY May 15. Happy Mother's Day! Be good to yourself!

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Deb

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W2W

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Contents



Cover >>>

8 Own Your Story

As a psychologist, I feel like I have developed the ability to really *be* with people and to try and see/feel life from the other person's perspective. I take that and find ways to help them see situations with new eyes but explained in ways that make sense to them. I attempt to do all of that by injecting appropriate humor so that people can accept their own (and others') humanity. I strive to teach some level of acceptance as we continue on our own journeys of change.

Features >>>

I Love You, Every Single Bit!	12
Sassy Spring Trends	14
Moonlighting Momma	15
How Being Healthy Before A Stroke Improves Recovery	26
How the Law of Attraction Helped Me Find My Truth	28
Get To Know Lisa Thompson	32
How to Paint Your Kitchen Cabinets using Benjamin Moore ADVANCE	34



Departments >>>

From Our Publisher	3
Shades of Faith There Is Always Room For More Love In This World	10
Love Your Life or Live Trying ... with Shuntai Love Is In the Power Of Our Tongue	11
Recipes Brunch Made Easy / 3 Savvy Ways to Simplify Breakfast	16
Living Balanced How to Enjoy Mother's Day	20
Diva Dialogue Finding Your Truth	22
Beauty by Design Cosmetics Need Spring Cleaning Too	24
Sparkle & Shine You Are More	30



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Debra K. Collins
Publisher/Managing Editor



Mimi Matthews
Administrative Assistant



Sheri Harvey
Creative Director



Sheila Smith
Business Development



Brittany Willingham
Production Coordinator



Amber Gadany
Account Executive



Suzanne Bowns
*Promotional Support
Distribution*

Contributing Writers

Deborah St. Hilaire • Stacey Kimbrell
Shuntai Walker • Tamra Klaty • Suzanne Young
Helen Hicks • Tami Sackett • Erin Caudell
Mary Ellen Jones • Tarnesa Martin
Abby Corcoran • Karen DeVault • Stacy Sawyer
Lisa Thompson • Tracy Fisher • Mimi Matthews

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Advisory Board Director
Teresa McClelland - Sargent • Charlene Kowalski
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around an idea to change
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anything is possible.***



OWN YOUR STORY

JODIE ECKLEBERRY-HUNT

“I’ve always wanted to write a book based on things I’ve learned across my career. I just never knew it would take the form of profanity.”



Tell us a bit about your history.

I am from rural Southern Illinois. I am a first generation college student, and it took. I loved school. I originally thought I would work mostly with children, but I found that too heart breaking. I fell in love with working with veterans while at the Memphis VA hospital. Then, I moved to Flint to do a post-doctoral fellowship in health psychology with McLaren/Michigan State University. There, I met my husband, Ron, to whom I have been married for 16 years. We have two sons and we live in Fenton.

I spent several years teaching psychology course at U of M Flint and spent 13 years teaching family physicians in training – things like communicating with patients, running an efficient interview, handling psychological issues. I’ve also had a small, part-time private practice since 2002. As well, I am Director of Health Psychology, Executive Health and Wellness for Beaumont Health.

I’ve always wanted to write a book based on things I’ve learned across my career. I just never knew it would take the form of profanity.

So, why do you do what you do? Do you feel “called” or compelled?

I chose psychology because I find the mind endlessly interesting, and it has been a fabulous choice for me. I feel both called and compelled. I do love to help people, but I believe helping is not solving their problems but helping them see things differently. I feel compelled in that I am constantly fighting perfection and Type A behaviors. I love a challenge and sometimes have a hard time managing that. Age has provided me with the wisdom to not spend all of my energy at once. Life is a journey. You have to budget your resources. Plus, it isn’t my job to save the world.

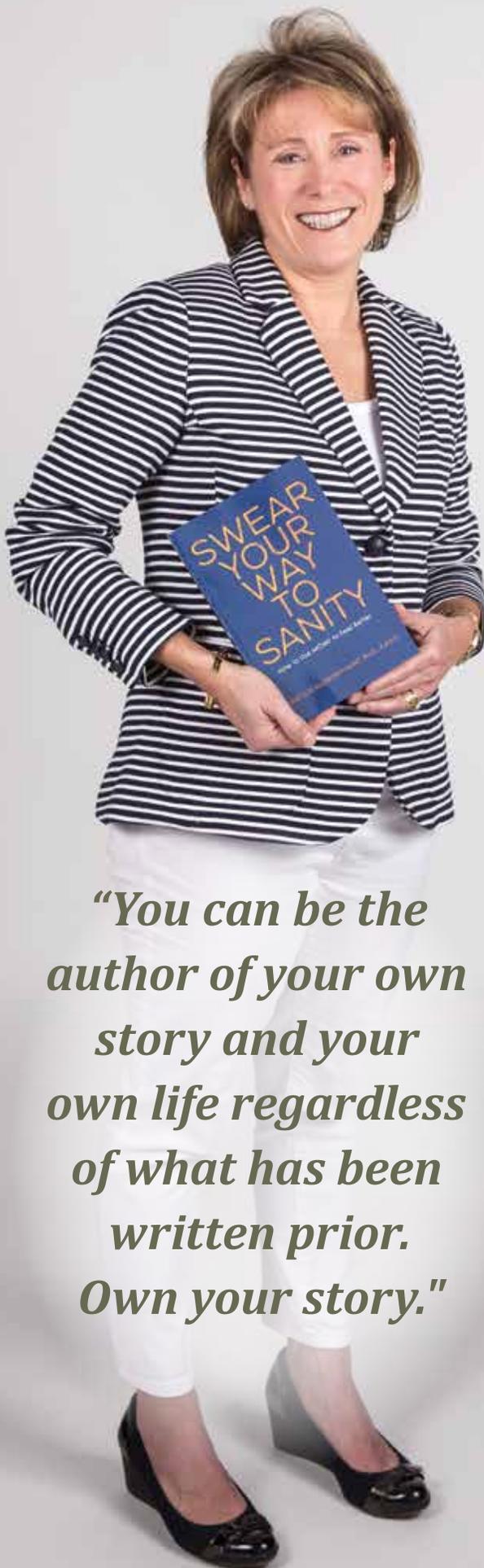
What has motivated you throughout your life?

I have been extraordinarily blessed to have supportive family and friends who encourage my serious and crazy ideas. However, I think my motivation has always been my anxiety. It is like a constant fire in my belly. It tells me to “do something” all the time. The challenge has been to understand and direct it in more productive ways.

Please tell us a bit about yourself. What is your special “magic”?

As a psychologist, I feel like I have developed the ability to really *be* with people and to try and see/feel life from the other person’s perspective. I take that and find ways to help them see situations with new eyes but explained in ways that make sense to them. I attempt to do all of that by injecting appropriate humor so that people can accept their own (and others’) humanity. I strive to teach some level of acceptance as we continue on our own journeys of change.

I describe myself as an introvert with a shocking side. I say unexpected things – things that are true – but said in ways that cut through the crap. I am a recovering perfectionist and have high levels of anxiety. I am just like a lot of other women out there. I think too much.



“You can be the author of your own story and your own life regardless of what has been written prior. Own your story.”

Do you have any special experiences that have given you “validity” to do what you do?

I have my education, but I also have life experience – particularly being a mother – that gives me perspective. What I learned from books has been great, but then, there is life. My kids have taught me so much.

Where do you get your strength when going through tough life challenges?

I am a huge believer in mindfulness. *The Precious Present* by Spencer Johnson is the best book I’ve ever read. It reminds me that nothing is permanent – neither joy nor pain. So, I try to appreciate the joy, but I recognize that pain also won’t last. Patience is worth remembering, although it is the hardest thing for me to practice.

Describe your calling, your passion, and your mission.

My calling is to lead a well-lived life – whatever that is at the time. It may change. I want to live with integrity, always. My passion is to make serious contributions where I am needed, and that, also, changes depending on the day. Despite my efforts to eradicate it, I remain a pleaser deep down so I am deeply fulfilled if I know something I have done helps someone else. My mission is to be present in my life and to teach my kids, also, to be mindful. I am highly conscious of the effect of technology and video games to take us out of being present in our lives. I want them to use their imagination and develop their brains the old-fashioned way. I don’t need a computer to be intellectually stimulated, and I hope they don’t either.

What, from your life’s story, do you want most for women to know?

I want women to know that your life has been like a book that was started when you were born. Early on, family and caregivers wrote the chapters. However, at some point, you become an active writer of your own story. Be aware that the early chapters are influential but don’t control the rest of the story. At the point that you take control of your own story, you get to write the chapters. You can be the author of your own story and your own life *regardless* of what has been written prior. Own your story.

Jodie is the author of *Swear Your Way to Sanity*, which she wrote to address common issues we all face. She combines cognitive-behavioral and mindfulness techniques (the best evidence-based strategies we have in psychology) with profanity. The point of doing that is to help people become aware of the negative things they say to themselves and learn to let go by talking to themselves like a friend - call themselves out with profanity - so that they can laugh a bit. One of the repeated things she hears from people who have read the book is: a) I laughed so hard and b) I felt like you were talking right to me.

Her book is available on Amazon.

Jodieeckleberryhunt.com

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THERE IS
ALWAYS
ROOM
FOR MORE

Love

IN THIS WORLD

In January of 2004, a little baby boy was born in Chicago, Illinois to a young mother. She was only sixteen years old, already had a little son, and lived with her mother. The daddy of these two boys was a gentle, loving man named Lorenzo and it was hard for the two young teens to give up their little boy for adoption.

But they did.

While it was an open adoption, over the years, the distance between the adoptive parents and the birth parents grew wider and wider. I know because we were the adoptive parents and that small little baby boy with the head full of curls is our Nathaniel.

In the early years, we sent letters and photos, but never received any back. Still, we felt that the parents received our correspondence and knew that their child, our child, was loved and cared for in an amazing way.

However, as time passed and there were more adopted children and a special needs child added to our family, there wasn't as much time to write letters and send photos.

For the most part, we stopped thinking about the birth parents, but our son never did.

At first it was very subtle. He wanted to dress up on Halloween as a Chicago White Sox player. Then, he wanted his room decorated with Chicago teams. And recently, he asked me to look up his birth parents so he could introduce himself and say hello.

And so we did. We found the mother on Facebook but could not locate his father. Sadly, there was no response.

I write this article during the month where all mothers are celebrated –to say to Nathaniel's birth mother that Nathan has been raised to love you and respect you. He only met you that first day of his birth, but the invisible and inseparable bonds of love are still there for you – the mom who was too young to raise him at the time. He understands and does not judge you. He hopes to meet you someday and wrap his arms around you to thank you for the act of love you gave to him; for putting his needs before your own.

We will not be hurt the day that happens. You shared him with us these many years and we can share him back with you. Sometimes a child can have two mothers and fathers and grow up to be strong, confident and happy. And sometimes they can have one mom or one dad and do the same.

My wish for Nathaniel's birth mother this Mother's Day is this: "Your son loves you. He loves us as well. Deep inside, though, he needs to meet you and see you. He wishes to thank you for your gift of life and unselfishness and he holds no grudge. He's a tall lanky young man who would like to know why he loves sugar so much, why his feet are so big, and how his brothers and sisters look as compared to him.

The bond is more powerful than you know. I leave you with this. For Christmas I bought Nathaniel a frame that said 'Chicago' all around its edges. A few weeks later, he went to his baby book and took the only photo we had of you, his dad, and his brother. He quietly slipped the picture into the frame and it sits on the mantle in his room. It's the first thing he sees in the morning. And the last thing he sees at night. Happy Mother's Day, Vaneta. Our son will be waiting for you when you are ready to unleash the fear you might feel in your heart. And even if you can never bring yourself to reach out, which I pray won't happen, there is a loving son in Michigan who will always love you unconditionally and with the power that only God can provide."

There is always room for more love in this world.



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

Life Is In the Power of Our Tongue



Life is in the power of the tongue. What does your life say about what you speak? I need you to do a little exercise. Find a quiet place, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Next, you need to visualize the life you dream. If that dream involves living a life with someone you once loved or loss, then you are living your life in the past. If your dream encompasses you moving forward towards greatness but you open your eyes and find that it is impossible then you're not speaking and taking action towards your ultimate destiny. Sometimes I have found that people say what they want but when they really open their mouths, it says something different. What do I hear? I hear; fear, procrastination, insecurity, hopelessness, doubt, and a lot of "I can't's" and "If only". If you found yourself in my words then I would encourage you to use the power of your tongue and vocalize what it is that you imagine your life to be. Now, I want you to take action and prepare yourself for your greatness. Remember, everyone will not be as enthusiastic as you are because it is your dream. In the beginning, it will be difficult and you may become distracted. However, if you are focused, passionate and determined to achieve your greatness then you will not allow the power of someone else's tongue to destroy your dream. You will turn that negative energy into positive fuel to move your life in a way you have never witnessed before. You have the power to be great; just sync your thoughts, tongue and actions in concert with one another to produce the story of your best life.

Love your life or live trying

▶ *Shuntai Walker, MA, LLPC*
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I Love You, EVERY SINGLE BIT!

I began saying these words to my children from the time they came to live in our home. Because of their difficult beginnings, I was determined to overcome their abandonment and feelings of rejection with lots of words of affirmation and tons of hugs and kisses. I believe the best thing we can do for our children is help them know they are **precious treasures**. Because when children know that they are amazing and wonderful and *cherished*, they have a healthy foundation for self-love and courage, and understand that they have a safe place supporting them. And isn't that what unconditional love is all about—loving each other completely, even the difficult bits and pieces?

Something else I've learned from personal experience and study: we hear things while in the womb and as very young children and form opinions about ourselves based on what we hear. Thus, it's extremely important as parents to watch our words, even with infants. It can be damaging for a child to hear that they were a surprise, or a mistake, or an "oopsie". And it can be empowering to a child to know they were greatly anticipated. If you were blessed with a child, however that happened, they are a treasure to be cherished.

Am I always diligent about letting my children know I love them, every single bit? No, of course not! I make mistakes, lose my temper, say things I shouldn't ("you kids are driving me crazy!"). But I really try, and often apologize. I want them to know the gift they are to me.

Side note: Does that mean always sacrificing my needs for theirs? No. I believe that making them a priority even over my own needs teaches entitlement, and gives them an expectation that the world will revolve around them, which we all know is not true. I model healthy self-love by taking time for myself and doing things that help replenish my spirit and restore my brain so I CAN take care of them better.

So, what do you think? Won't you join with me in telling your children, no matter their age, that you love them, "every single bit"?



Mimi Matthews has been compelled to share and live truth for many years. A retired elementary school teacher, she is now in the "encouragement business" as the owner of [Empowordment Cards](http://EmpowordmentCards.com) which features greeting cards that inspire and encourage. While being the only parent of two adopted teens keeps her busy, she is also a speaker, workshop leader, writer, and one of our W2W staff members.



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SASSY SPRING TRENDS



From living in Michigan my whole life I have come to understand that we don't have 4 seasons. Being that it is officially Spring now and I still can't wear my open-toed booties or Spring "cute" clothes I am not admitting defeat, but simply adding some pieces to my wardrobe that are on trend so I can feel like the warmer weather is on the horizon. Here are my favorite ideas for this season that are easy to add to your closet.

First off, denim is an item that will never go out of style. One of my favorite go-to pieces is a well-fitted denim jacket. When trying on a denim jacket I make sure to try a size or two smaller than I really am. You want the jacket to be open in the front. Doing this will show off your shirt and accessories.

Tropicana florals are taking the stores by storm. There are so many variations of this you can fall in love with. A floral maxi dress, blazer or pant are just a few ways to add this trend. I would keep my jewelry simple and delicate depending on the size of the floral.

Power red is one of my favorite colors to wear. There are numerous approaches to pulling this strong color off. My favorite is wearing a bold shoe, blazer or pant. When wearing one of these bold items, gold is always a great match.



"You have no control over other people's taste, so focus on staying true to your own." -Tim Gunn

Daytime glitter is here and I am excited! Being an accessory stylist I love shiny and glittery things. You don't have to save that gorgeous top just for party season. Put your daytime spin on it. Add a blazer or jean jacket to a sparkly top to make it more casual. If you are afraid of wearing glitter and sparkle in your clothing, do it with your accessories! Add a glamorous necklace to your white tank. Throw on your fitted jean jacket and red shoe and you are ready to slay the day!

► *Abby is a stay-at-home mom to two wonderful boys. She loves being creative with her crochet business, Chic Mom Designs. Abby has been an accessory stylist with Premier Designs jewelry for 7 years now and loves how she can make women feel just as gorgeous on the outside as they are on the inside. Visit her website and pick some new bling for yourself. And come to our Speaker Series to meet her in person! accessorystylistabby.com*



MOONLIGHTING MOMMA



Sunday through Thursday I am a stay-at-home mom. I am married to an amazing man and together we have two boys. Right now they are 3 and 5 years old. Theirs is the age when you realize terrorism is real. Everything in our house is booby trapped. They have discovered almost every way possible to get me to step on Legos, walk through a random wet spot (I can never tell if it's water or pee until I get on all fours and sniff), and jump out from

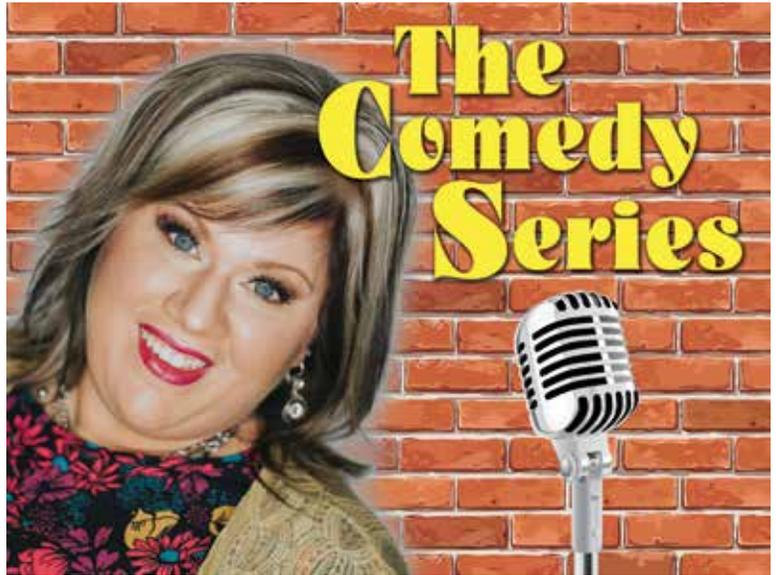
behind large objects to scare me.

After my second son was born I knew I needed a way out--out of the house that is. Just a little bit of fresh air each week to renew my faith in motherhood. Now, I am not fishing for compliments, but I am a genius. Friday and Saturdays each week I ditch my duties and hit the road. Not only did I find a hobby that gets me out of the house, often it takes me out of town. My boys roam our woods and explore. That is me now, all over Michigan!

Did you guess what I do yet? I am a standup comedian. Surprised? It is not very typical—stay-at-home mom all week then standup comedian each weekend. But both jobs have a lot in common. My boys demand entertainment from me on a daily basis. I engage with them much like I engage with an audience with the goal being smiles and laughter. Obviously, I keep it PG at home. They laugh when I pretend to have ninja moves just the same as an audience laughs when I talk about my love for full brief underwear.

I also feed my boys...3 times a day if they are lucky. Just kidding. In reality it is more like an all day feeding trough. How come they never get full? The, "Mom, I need a snack" is constant. I think they should get that phrase in a tattoo someday. Gosh!

Anyway, back to my point. Food is nourishment for the body--healthy food is healthy nourishment. It gives you energy, improves your learning ability, and clears your mind. LAUGHING does the same things for us all. Good, deep belly laughs will take all your worries and make them disappear. I have an inbox full of testimonials to prove this. I have even suggested that



health insurance companies should offer to pay for comedy show tickets for patients suffering from depression and anxiety instead of paying for those mind-altering pills.

I have a loyal fan-- just love her to pieces. When she came to her first show, she had not been out of the house in over a year. She had unexpectedly lost her mom and husband within months of each



other. Her gal pals forced her out to a comedy show. Ever since she has self-diagnosed herself a script:

"Attend live comedy show"

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Do not wait any longer! Find a live comedy show I'm performing in and get there. Test my theory. I work with two to three other amazing, hysterical comedians each show.

www.TheComedySeries.net

Laugh A lot,
Melissa Hager

BRUNCH MADE EASY

(Family Features) Gathering friends and family doesn't need to be fancy. With its prime positioning between breakfast and lunch, brunch is a more casual and lighter alternative to the typical dinner party. When charged with hosting a mid-day gathering, a little pre-planning can go a long way toward ensuring your brunch get-together is as simple as it is scrumptious.

Get creative with decor. When prepping your table scape, think outside the box. Opt for unexpected serving dishes such as tart let tins and vases, and transfer syrups and jams from their everyday containers to glass bowls or creamers. Fresh flowers and produce can add natural pops of color to the table and a bowl of fruit can make for an eye-catching centerpiece.

Plan a variety of dishes. Make sure you have a mix of both sweet and savory dishes on the menu that can please a wide variety of palates. Earmarking some recipes that can be made ahead, like pastries and casseroles, can be a simple way to avoid waking up extra early to prepare. Save the morning of your event for dishes that are best served fresh, like this Herbed Spanish Omelet, which features potatoes; fresh, spring herbs; and red onions, and packs protein, B-vitamins and cancer-protective phytochemicals.

Serve it buffet-style. Setting your spread out on the counter and allowing guests to help themselves not only makes it easier for the host to mingle, but it allows guests to customize their meals as they wish and gives the gathering a more casual vibe. Try themed stations, such as a coffee or mimosa bar, parfait bar or bread bar, in addition to more traditional dishes to let guests take the customization to the next level.

For more brunch ideas and recipes, visit Culinary.net.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

Herbed Spanish Omelet

Reprinted with permission from the [American Institute for Cancer Research](http://AmericanInstituteForCancerResearch.org)

Servings: 4

- 1 pound potatoes, peeled and diced or shredded water
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 large whole eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 egg whites, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh chives
- salt, to taste (optional)
- fresh herb sprigs, for garnish (optional)

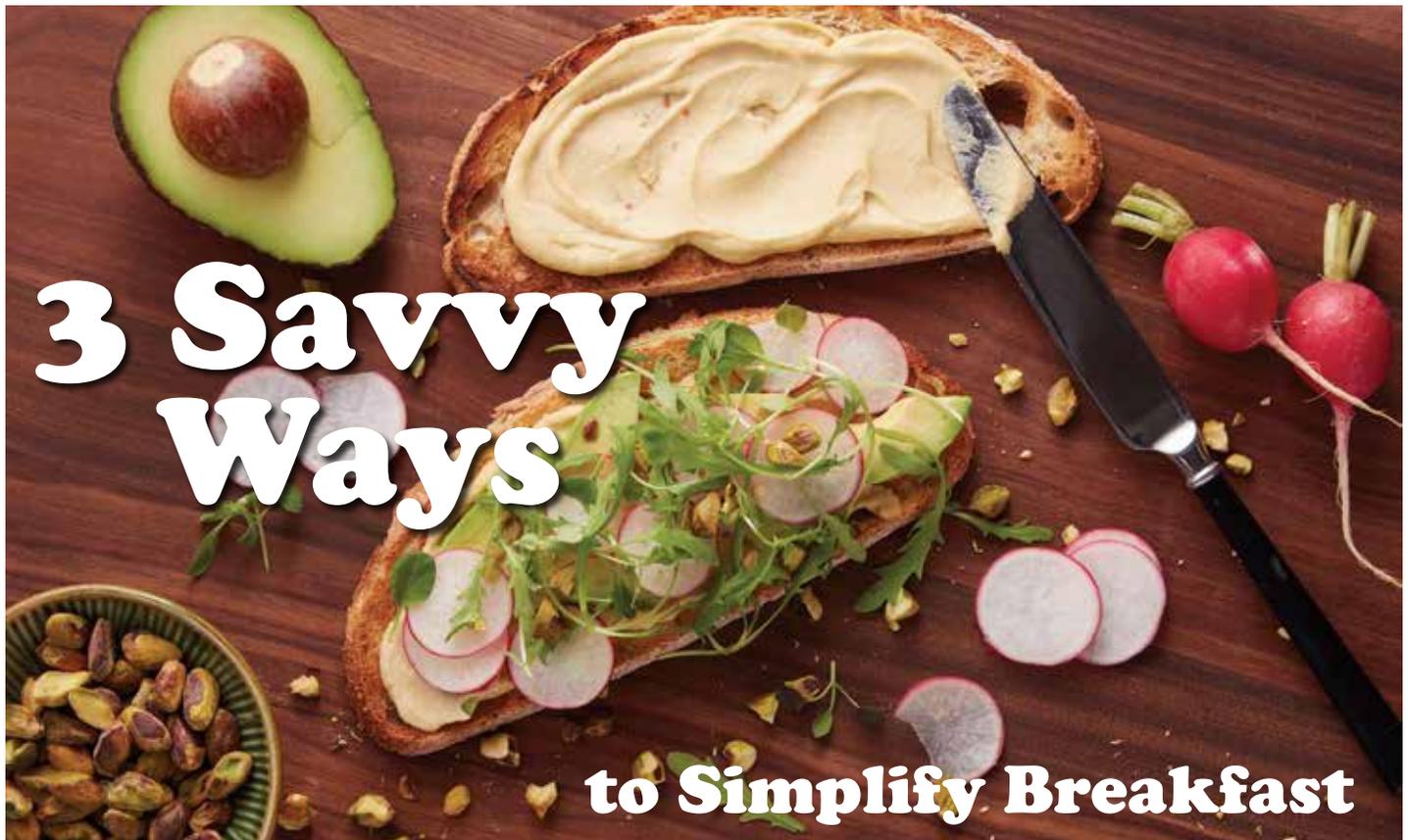
Place potatoes in large pan. Cover with water. Bring to boil and cook, uncovered, 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand about 10 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Drain well.

In deep, 10-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add onion and garlic. Cook about 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add potatoes and cook 5 minutes.

Combine whole eggs and egg whites. Stir in parsley, basil and chives. Season with salt, to taste, if desired. Pour mixture over potatoes in hot skillet. Reduce heat and cook, uncovered, about 10 minutes, or until bottom of omelet is golden.

If desired, brown top under toaster oven. Garnish with fresh herb sprigs, if desired.

Nutritional information per serving: 260 calories; 12 g total fat (2 g saturated fat); 28 g carbohydrates; 11 g protein; 2 g dietary fiber; 106 mg sodium.



3 Savvy Ways

to Simplify Breakfast

(Family Features) While it is widely known that starting your day with a balanced, nutritious breakfast can have a positive impact on overall health, it may be difficult for some people to make it a priority. Whether you generally run low on time in the mornings or have little ones to keep on track before heading out the door, it simply isn't always an option to piece together a grandiose morning meal.

Rather than overhauling your lifestyle, consider some simpler ways to incorporate breakfast into your daily routine. These tips can help you start the day strong – and on time – without sacrificing the day's first meal.

Prep the Night Before

Not everyone is fortunate enough to have ample time in the morning to prepare what some studies consider to be the most important meal of the day. If you're typically short on time before heading out the door, prepare breakfast the night before so you can ensure you're starting each day with proper fuel and nutrition. Even if it's as simple as setting out a bowl, spoon and your favorite cereal before you go to bed, you can set yourself up to shave a few minutes off your morning routine.

Take It To-Go

If your kids are a handful or that snooze button is just too easy to reach each morning, sitting down at the table – even for a quick breakfast – might be out of the question. Preparing in advance by packing a to-go container with your favorite morning foods can be a simple solution to keep everyone happy without adding more strain to the day.

Keep It Simple

Breakfast doesn't have to be elaborate to get your day going in the right direction. Simple options like avocado toast take little time to create yet can go a long way toward adding nutrients in the morning. For a different spin on traditional avocado toast, combine it with a unique taste like Sabra Classic Hummus, which can help you add fiber and protein before the day truly begins. Even if you aren't an avocado person, just by swapping out the jelly you might put on your morning toast for hummus instead can help you reduce sugar intake without compromising on taste.

Find more solutions to busy days and recipes for any occasion at sabra.com.

Hummus Toast

- 2 tablespoons Sabra Hummus (any flavor)
- 1 slice whole-wheat or hearty bread, toasted
- 1/2 cup avocado, sliced
- 1 sliced radish
- 1/4 cup tender arugula
- 1 tablespoon chopped pistachios
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste

Spread hummus on toast.

Top with avocado, radish, arugula and pistachios.

Sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste.

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How To Enjoy MOTHER'S DAY!



I used to loathe Mother's Day until 11 years ago. Of course, I couldn't wait to have children. Before I became a mother, I thought, "I'm going to be the best mom ever." I was loving and fun. I loved playing outdoors, being crafty and sharing life lessons with others. I thought, "I am made for this."

By the time my oldest child reached the age of 6, I began to feel guilty and didn't believe I deserve this special day. After all, I was constantly agitated and annoyed with everyday situations life brings. I had a hard time rolling with everyday demands of having children, a job, housekeeping, etc. I was very disappointed because I was not the mother I thought I would be. In August of 2007, everything changed.

I learned about chemicals that can be found in everyday products that we consume. I discovered that many of these ingredients are neurotoxins and they kept my younger son and I in combat mode.

Fast-forward to today: we live chemical-free and I now enjoy being a mother. I have a few tips for you. Whether you're new to motherhood or a veteran it's never too late to make changes, apologies, learn something new and move forward.

► *Stacey Kimbrell is a Natural Health Professional, Chemical Awareness & Essential Oil Advocate, International Speaker and Author of Living Balanced. Stacey's desire for you is to "Live with Hope & Zeal in all things." To schedule an appointment or educational workshop 810.423.5721 Stacey@staceykimbrell.com
LivingAnointed.com LivingChemicalFree.com OurDailyDrop.com*



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- 1** Try to live a chemical-free lifestyle with what you eat, drink, and put on your body.
- 2** Make a list of your top 10 stressors. Evaluate and deal with them.
- 3** Life is too short, learn to forgive. First, you must accept the situation, surrender it, and then you can forgive.
- 4** Learn how to spend time with yourself and relax.
- 5** Exercise and breath in fresh air.
- 6** Get organized—enlist a friend or hire a professional.
- 7** Don't try to do it all. Hire outside services when needed.
- 8** Learn your family's "Five Love Languages" (book by Gary Chapman).
Focus on the top 2 for each of you.
 - A. Receiving Gifts
 - B. Quality Time
 - C. Words of Affirmation
 - D. Acts of Service
 - E. Physical Touch.
- 9** The key to good family communication is to understand each individual's Personality Characteristics. The "Personality Plus" book by Florence Littauer provides keys to understanding how to accept-and even enjoy-the 4 personality types; Melancholy, Phlegmatic, Sanguine, and Choleric, that make each of us so different.
- 10** Enjoy your family! Each day we have the opportunity to make amazing memories.



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Vol. 9 Issue 2 • WOMEN2WOMEN MICHIGAN



FINDING YOUR TRUTH

I was going to write about staying focused. Oh look! Something shiny! It seemed like a better idea to address the issue of “finding your truth”. What does “finding your truth” mean to you?

I once thought it was knowing what I believed. But beliefs are perceptions, personal views that can change over time, circumstance and condition. Beliefs are not always true. Take for example, limiting beliefs, which are true only in the believer. What about the Flat Earth Society or people who are color blind or anorexic? Beliefs may be recognized as true to the believer, yet not to the masses. They are perceived truths.

A truth is a truth. It does not waiver or change. It is constant regardless of time, circumstances or conditions. I will always be a mother, a daughter, a sister, niece and cousin. This truth will never change. As long as I live, I will be the daughter of Ernest and Helen, sister of Regina. That is the truth. I will always be a friend. That is a truth, however, friends may change, they are not constant. The fact that we are friends right now, does not guarantee we will be next year, each friendship is a belief. See the difference?

I recently distinguished the difference between a belief and a truth. As a result, I have been reevaluating my beliefs, in order to find my truth. I would like to share this quest with you, in order that you might begin a quest of your own. Here are a few of the questions I have been contemplating, along with the answers and decisions I have made and discovered along the way.

Who am I? I am an eternal spirit, inside of a body, named Deborah.

This answer is quite different than I would have answered a year ago. I would have simply given my name and occupation. We often define ourselves by what we do. That is not the truth, we can change what we do many times throughout a lifetime. Wayne Dyer says that if you define yourself by what you do, then when you don't, you aren't. Makes sense, doesn't it? My self-defining moment came when I realized that my inner being or spirit, my guide, my intuition was

deeper than the Realtor I was and the coach I am. I am this being, no matter what I choose to do. I am my truth.

Why am I here? I was put here to serve, learn, share and seek the truth.

A new way to look at my life as well. A year ago, I would have answered "To find my passion, live with kindness and help people." It's different now. I'm different now. I have found my truth. I still believe that it is important to find one's passion... in order to live one's truth. It is vital to live in kindness and love. It helps us to walk without fear. And I still want to help people, knowing now, that we each have our own path to walk. Your journey is not mine. Through my experiences, I may be able to help you understand yours, I may be able to give you coping skills as well as discover growth opportunities. I am your sounding board for a fresh perspective. I cannot "help" you get rid of your pain. However, I can offer you a map to navigate through them. That is the truth.

Is there a God? There is a divine source, call it what you will, that created the world.

I no longer recite catechism, nor do I recite repetitious prayer. Instead, I have an open dialogue with Source, God, and The Universe. This changed when I lost my dad. It finally dawned on me that this is the relationship God wants with us. I now meditate (pray) daily, without asking for favors, as the child me once did. I now trust, that what I need and who I'm supposed to meet, will be brought to me, at the right time. It may not be my time...but it will be THE right time. This is faith. This is the truth.

We all have a set of beliefs. Deep inside each individual lies the knowledge of our own separate truth. Your truth can be so totally opposite of mine, yet still be the truth. Your truth. We are as individual as snowflakes, as unique as our finger prints, yet we are all the same. We are made of the same material, we are all connected. We all must discover ourselves. It does not matter if you believe it or not, for it is the truth.

How important is it to know our own truth? That, too is unique unto yourself. Maybe it doesn't matter to you. That's fine. There is no judgment. You walk your own path.

If you are a thinker, a seeker of knowledge and truth, this is vital. In a society of easily found Google answers and vast memory banks such as AWS and your cell phone, we aren't using our brain enough or enough of our brains. We are gliding through life unsure of who we truly are, so how can we expect to form lasting bonds with like-minded individuals? How can we communicate—about who we are, what we need, want and hold true—if we don't examine ourselves? How can we evolve, as a species, without finding answers from within? That's where the journey begins and ends. Know you, then become the best version of that person.

Much Love,
Coach Deb

► *Deborah St.Hilaire has been a women's empowerment/life coach since 2010. She can be reached for personal and group coaching, speaking engagements and retreats. thedivalution@gmail.com or 419.366.8091*



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COSMETICS NEED SPRING CLEANING TOO



You've awakened from a long winter's hibernation that kept you glued to the TV. Now it's time to thoroughly rid your home of the dirt and dust that have accumulated over the long, dark season. Perhaps you've been gripped by the urge to spring clean your home.

Spring cleaning doesn't need to stop at our household. What about your make-up and skin care? One question I seem to hear most often is, **"Do cosmetics and skin care have an expiration date?"** Well the answer to that is simply, yes. While some items can be stored and reused after a long period of time, others can turn bad in just a few months.

If you are like me, and I image a lot of you are, you have more cosmetics than you will ever use. You may have gotten sucked into that great advertisement on the next greatest wrinkle cream, bought it, tried it, and it never saw the light of day again.

In order to assist you in cleaning out all that old and unused make up or skin creams, I am going to give you a straight-forward, and hopefully simple, approach as to what to keep and when to pitch it.

Cosmetics and skin care products can trap bacteria that can cause skin irritation, break outs or infections. If the product shows separation, has a change in texture, or has a funny smell, these can be dead giveaways. The expiration date of a product starts the first day they are opened.

Since some cosmetics and skin care do have a shorter shelf life you might want to write the date of when it was opened somewhere on the product. This way you don't have to guess as to when it should be tossed out. Be sure to store your products in a cool dry place out of direct sunlight and heat.

Below are some average time frames on the products we use the most:

Mascara- 3 months

Eyeliner-6 months

Jar Creams-6-12 months

Foundation-12 months

Lipsticks and Nail polish-approximately 1-2 years

Remember to use your best judgment. Also, if you bought a product recently that has any of the above attributes, or you just didn't care for it, most stores will refund or replace the product.

One last note; in the next issue of W2W we will be discussing how to break out of your comfort zone. If you're ready for a change with a new hair style or make up technique then please share your questions by emailing me at: tamilyn66@yahoo.com. Remember to include your name, the city you reside in, and contact information.

Follow our link at: http://issu.com/w2wmichigan/docs/w2w_vol_issue_1-weba/3452

▶ *Tami Lyn Sackett is a free lance writer and beauty expert with over 30 years in the industry with a passion for making every woman look good and feel better about themselves through practicing good Health and utilizing the right products. Contact Tami @ tamilyn66@yahoo.com*



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HOW BEING HEALTHY BEFORE A STROKE IMPROVES RECOVERY

When you think of a stroke patient, who comes to mind? A man? An older woman? A middle-age fitness expert? The fact is, stroke can affect anyone and is the No. 5 killer of Americans. Rose Davidson of Coleman, MI says she was the last person she would have thought could have a stroke.

“I was the fittest I’ve ever been, at a great weight, exercised daily, taught fitness classes and ate right. But I have a family history of cardiovascular disease,” Rose explained.

Family history, along with age, gender, race, genetics and prior stroke or heart attack all lead to an increased risk of stroke. And that

She didn’t notice any drooping in her face. Her speech was fine. But her arms and hands were having problems and her vision was still impaired. She called her husband to tell him she thought she was having a stroke, which he replied “Call 911!” But Rose didn’t call 911.

“I knew I was having a stroke, but I couldn’t think clearly. I passed multiple people that could have helped me, but I had it in my head I had to get to my boss’s office.”

Fortunately, upon seeing Rose, her manager immediately dialed 911. Within 10 minutes EMS arrived, but so did all the signs of stroke. In the ER, things went from bad to worse. Now her entire left side was paralyzed. Doctors found where the stroke had occurred in her brain, but they could not figure out why she was paralyzed.

Because getting FAST treatment of a stroke improves patient’s recovery and survival, Rose was offered tPA, the clot-busting drug that needs to be administered within 4 hours or sooner to reduce the long-term effects of stroke. But in Rose’s condition, there was an 8 percent chance of tPA causing a brain bleed and doctors still weren’t sure what was causing the paralysis. She declined the drug.

“I told them to keep looking for the root cause of my paralysis” explained Rose. Finally, a neurologist suggested checking her carotid arteries. There they discovered she had an inch-long tear in 2 of the 3 layers of the right internal carotid artery and a blood clot – a rare event when not caused by some type of trauma.

Looking back, she realizes she had a warning sign a few days before her stroke. “I noticed my vision in my left eye wasn’t quite right, but brushed it off because I’ve always



family history is what *almost* got Rose. Last July, she was practicing yoga on her lunch when she started to feel strange. It started with her vision. Then her left hand wouldn’t work properly. She went through the signs of stroke – FAST. Face drooping. Arms uneven or numb. Speech slurred. Time to call 911.



had horrible vision. I just figured it would go away after a few days.”

It took 6 long months to recover but today Rose has little residual issues. All of her doctors agree this is because she was in great health before the event. While she had an increased risk of stroke because of her family history, her healthy diet and regular physical activity helped her body recover faster than if she had been overweight or lived a sedentary lifestyle.

“My doctors all agree that my good health is what saved me. Had I not been taking care of myself, I would not be here today,” stated Rose.

The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise each week. For better overall cardiovascular health, aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise five days a week. You can even benefit if you divide your time into two or three segments of 10-15 minutes.

With spring here, today is a great day to start incorporating more physical activity into your daily routine. Being physically active in midlife could improve your brain function decades from now. In fact, exercising in your mid-30s to mid-40s can reduce your risk of stroke and help you avoid or minimize age-related declines in cognition – including the ability to think, reason, remember and process information.

Aerobic exercise as well as weight and resistance training contribute to a healthy brain throughout your life. Here’s

what science tells us about physical fitness and brain health in midlife:

- Poor fitness level in midlife is linked to a smaller brain at age 60.
- Aerobically fit older brains think like young brains.
- Light resistance training slows age-related changes in the brain.
- Lack of physical activity may be a stronger predictor of cognitive problems over the years than obesity or high blood pressure.
- Declining memory and cognitive ability in midlife may increase the risk of stroke in adults after age 65.

Other ways you can reduce your risk of stroke are managing your blood pressure and cholesterol, don’t smoke, and eat a healthy diet. The American Heart Association has resources to help you adopt and maintain healthy behaviors to keep your brain sharp and healthy, which could lead to more independence as you age.

Learn more at StrokeAssociation.org/BrainHealth.

▶ *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.*



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HOW THE LAW OF ATTRACTION HELPED ME FIND MY TRUTH

I am so thankful that I had a friend introduce me to the Law of Attraction many years ago because it was the missing ingredient I needed to turn my miserable life into a happy and successful one. Finding my truth came to me in small steps, just like it did when I was a baby learning to navigate life on my own two feet.

Truth #1 - You can't have a happy ending to an unhappy journey.

I learned this the hard way after my second marriage ended in a shambles. To make a long story short, I discovered that my husband of nine years was leading a secret life with another woman, in another house, in another city. I'd had a long history of always putting other people first, starting with my parents. As I found various ways to please them it seemed to make me feel lovable in their eyes.

So in my childhood mind I thought that by making other people happy, I would be happy. This way of thinking finally backfired in my second marriage. We'd been married nine years and we owned a retail business together. He was drinking a lot and very verbally abusive but I chose to pretend that we were happy and to ignore all the signs of my failing marriage. I did everything I could to please him in hopes that he would quit drinking. I thought that if I was patient, worked really hard and grew the business, we'd eventually sell it and retire and then we would be happy. This only brought me more misery and at the point that my life flipped upside down I began to ask myself this important question.

What do I need to learn about life and myself so I never repeat another painful relationship?

Truth #2 - Recognize when you are living in denial

The Law of Attraction works like a mirror because it's always reflecting back to you experiences centered around the emotions you're feeling. (When you frown into a mirror it will not reflect a smile back to you.) Once I understood how the Law of Attraction worked, I understood how I attracted two marriages full of lies and deceit because **my truth** was, I **too was living a lie**. Like attracts like and I

was not being truthful with myself. I hated the continual verbal abuse I'd gotten over the years of two failed marriages and I hated that these husbands were both alcoholics, which I had no control over. I didn't know what to do so I felt stuck in a rut of unhappiness that I tried to push aside through eating and working hard. I didn't realize then that if I would change the quality of my thoughts, I could change the quality of my life.

The final truth I've learned about life is something I discuss in my book *Stepping into a Life of Joy* available on Kindle. A newly revised paperback version is soon to be released.

Truth #3 - Freedom and happiness come when you live an authentic life.

Being authentic means allowing yourself to find your truth. It means being true to yourself. It means becoming aware of who you really are and loving yourself down to the deepest part of your inner being. It means choosing your own thoughts and building your own beliefs according to your values and personal preferences. It means no more excuses, no more pretending, no more lying to yourself, no more people-pleasing, no more judging yourself, no more feeling guilty, and no more worrying about what other people think. Being authentic frees you to be yourself.

When you find your truth and become authentic, you too can step into a life of joy, just like I did.

▶ *Suzanne Young an intuitive life coach. She specializes in the Law of Attraction and empowering others by helping them learn how to reconnect with their Inner Guidance. She is also an inspirational speaker, author, and co-owner of Personal Success Programs, since 2007, with her husband Kevin Young. You can email her at suzanne@psprograms.com and their website is www.psprograms.com. Her office number is 248-349-6225.*



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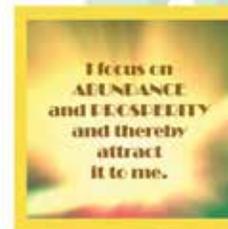
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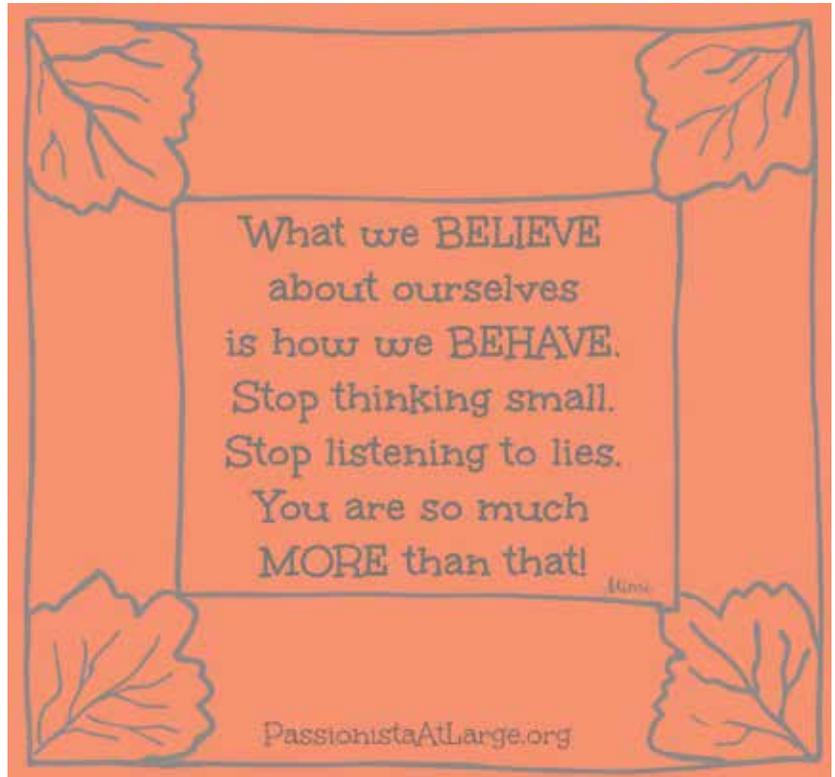
It doesn't matter what is being said about you.
It doesn't matter what others think of you.
What matters is what you think of yourself!
And if you believe *lies* about yourself, then you will act on *those lies* instead of the truth.

Any words that make you seem "less than" the amazing person you were created to be is a LIE!

Those words may come from the chatter in your brain, just regurgitating things you have heard. They may come from actual people who are small-minded and have their own agenda saying things to you.

But whatever the source, you need to STOP listening to the derogatory lies and begin to speak truth to yourself. Because when you believe lies, you think small about yourself.

You may have dreams and goals (I hope you DO!), but it's pretty hard to attain those by thinking small. You may never rise to doing those things the world needs from you--your purpose for being created. We all have a purpose, you know.



You may be thinking, "But I don't WANT to leave my comfort zone! It's comfortable."

Ummm, yeah. And it's restricting and limiting. (Redundant, I know, going for the effect.)

And leaving your comfort zone is like jumping off the high dive.

But don't you *want* to be the best you can be? Don't you want to realize amazing and wonderful things about yourself--things you never knew?

When we "rocket" ourselves (because that's what it takes!) outside of our comfort zone to do those things that our heart really, really longs to do, all kinds of new worlds and information opens up to us! It could become quite an adventure--mine has!

And the wonderful thing is that our hearts and spirits become more fulfilled as we begin to venture out and try things our heart is leading us to do—things the lies make us *afraid* to do.

Lies like:

"I am not smart enough for that.

People would never listen to me. I don't have anything to say.

I really do not have the "look" required for that.

I don't have the time for that.

No one needs me.



I'm not qualified.

I'm just a _____." Oh how I hate that word!

The lies (excuses) are limitless. But so are YOU!! Limitless. The only thing holding you back is you.

Stop believing lies and restricting the amazing, capable, beautiful person you are!

Change your mind set. Retrain your brain to believe all the good things about you: your strengths, your heart, your creativeness, your compassion.

You CAN do this! I know, because I did. And if I could do it, so can you!

► *Mimi Matthews believes in the power of words to change lives. 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=hdr_shop_menu*



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GET TO KNOW LISA THOMPSON

Lisa is the April 26 speaker for our “Pick Your Passion” Speaker Series, held at Brickstreet of Grand Blanc. Her story is quite interesting, and you get to meet her here even before the event!



I am Lisa Thompson, founder and CEO of Self Love Beauty, an online brand whose mission is to empower others to have self-love and confidence. This started as a blog in 2012, where I shared my story to self-love. Since then this blog has transformed into a brand that creates an outlet for others to share their stories, be involved in our campaigns, and spread awareness to empower others.

I am a small town girl that has always had dreams of helping others in all aspects. I graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelors in Communications and Public Relations and I currently work at a Fortune 100 company. I am a fitness instructor, I help with a non-profit in Haiti called Reach Out LaFond, I'm an avid runner, and I absolutely love pushing myself through the miles. My passions include helping others see their true beauty and my mission work in Haiti. I love getting to know new people and learning about them.

I feel it's important to be my true self and an authentic person. I built Self Love Beauty by being me and I want women everywhere to feel empowered to be themselves and to trust our brand. I was given this gift of writing, speaking, and passion to put to this use and I intend to do it because I have a passion for helping other people see their true beauty and potential.

I love to write—I always have. I wasn't expecting the brand of Self Love Beauty to be what it is today but I think that's the best part. It has grown because not only have I put a lot of time and effort into it but I have built a community that has helped drive its success.

I started as the only writer at Self Love Beauty and from there it has grown to have multiple contributor writers, an outstanding ambassador program, an online shop featuring the Beautiful Me collection, a campaign called Beautiful Me where people of all ages, shapes, and sizes come together to promote self-love through a photo shoot, wonderful partnerships, a newly formed podcast called the “The Confident Girl”, and self-love courses and experiences. My background in public relations has helped drive a lot of the planning and content, but so have the relationships I have built.

I've been motivated over the years because I never want anyone to feel as though they are alone or that they are the only ones feeling a certain way. I love stories, I love getting to know people, and I love helping people. Through this, I have learned that many of us go through similar experiences but seem to think we are the only ones. I wanted to change that mindset, so I first started with my own story and then opened it up for others to share theirs.

My strength comes from my strong faith, my amazing friends and family, and all those that I surround myself with. Ultimately though, the strength comes from within. I've definitely grown to become a more self-loving person during my journey, which can be seen in the way I respect myself, make decisions, treat others, how I treat my body, and where I spend my time.



Here are some key life-lessons I've learned along the way:

1 Stop comparing yourself to others and own your life for what you want it to be! For so many years I compared my life to others. I compared my body, my level of success, and the amount of friends or relationships I had. I did a lot of comparing. When I started my self-love journey I decided that no one else gets to be me, and that is the best thing! My life isn't perfect all the time, but I made a promise to myself to live the life I wanted. Every day I wake up with the choice to love my life, and I do.

2 Your journey is different from everyone else's for a reason. Sometimes when we hear someone's story we think ours doesn't matter because theirs is more dramatic. However, we must realize theirs is different and so are the things they have learned. Each of our journeys is important because we take what we learn from ours and help someone else.

3 Mental and physical health is important. Sometimes we have to say no to things, we have to take care of our body, and we have to find what works for us.

4 Surround yourself with people that make you want to be a better person or you won't reach your goals or become that better person. You may hear this all the time, but hearing it and actually making an effort to do it are two different things. I want you to actually do it. I promise your life will be one hundred percent better.



To sum up who I am: my calling is to serve the purpose God has for me, my vision is to create a world where women are empowered to love themselves and achieve anything they desire, and my mission is to use my gifts, strengths, and talents of speaking, writing, and connecting with people to empower women to love themselves, get unstuck, and take action.

Lastly, I really think you should become part of Self Love Beauty in any aspect you feel comfortable. We are a bunch of beautiful humans trying to improve self-love, empowerment, and confidence in ourselves and those around us!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SelfLoveBeauty/
Instagram: www.instagram.com/selflovebeauty/
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HOW TO PAINT YOUR KITCHEN CABINETS USING BENJAMIN MOORE ADVANCE

Painting wood cabinets with a fresh coat of paint is really a hot trend right now. It's also a very inexpensive alternative to having new cabinetry installed.

With the help of the experts at the Paint Centers, here is an easy step-by-step for painting your cabinetry:

STEP 1: Clean the wood to remove the layer of polyurethane (clear). This can be done in two ways. You need to dull the poly by using a degreaser or sanding. We have a TSP substitute that is a concentrate. Mix a 4 to 1 ratio of water to TSP, wipe it on the cabinets, let it sit 10 minutes, wipe off, and ta-daa! Ready for step 2.

STEP 2: Prime the cabinets. In order to have the paint stick properly, you must use a primer. We recommend Benjamin Moore Fresh Start Primer (oil or latex) or Insl-X Aqualock. Apply primer with a mini mohair roller or brush. Sand lightly after it's dry to get rid of any imperfections you may see.

STEP 3: Paint the cabinets. Apply THIN coats. If you apply it too thick it will sag and run. It self-levels so just trust the paint to do its job. More is not better in this case. You will need two coats of ADVANCE, which takes 16 hours to dry per coat. This gives the paint time to cure out. So don't rush the process or it will not cure correctly!

Again, use a mini mohair roller and/or a brush. Give your cabinets a very light sanding between coats. Once you apply the 2nd coat, let it dry for another day. ADVANCE takes 2 weeks to fully cure. It comes in Satin, Semi-Gloss, and Hi-Gloss. The shine level will dull down over the two weeks as well. It hardens and cures like an oil, so no top coat is needed.

That's it--three easy steps!



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