

WOMEN INSPIRING WOMEN FOR GOOD!

W2W

WOMEN 2 WOMEN
MICHIGAN MAGAZINE

Jump, Fly, Soar

COMPLIMENTARY

How I Learned To Live Again

JOYCE WEBSTER



Tracy Foster
Shannon Cooper-Toma

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Dear Friends,

Jump Fly Soar

It all starts with the Dream! That little whisper of excitement placed on your heart. Your happy place that is unique to you. Dreams are where the magic starts to make life more enchanting and joyful.

Our cover girls for this issue, Tracy Foster and Shannon Cooper-Toma, are passionate educators committed to making a difference in the lives of children. Benson's Adventures was created to inspire children to dream big.

Life can be full of successes, failures, adversities and roadblocks along the way. Sometimes life happens and can threaten to derail our dreams. It can present unimaginable challenges. Read how one strong woman, Joyce Webster, chooses to move forward on page fourteen.

This inspiration-packed issue is sure to encourage you to reflect on where you are in your own journey. Are you living a life created from your dreams?

Be brave! Never quit! Get up! Show up!

...Jump, Fly, Soar!

*We are booking vendors and sponsors for the fall Women's Summit & Expo at the Holiday Inn Gateway Center, Flint. Mark your calendars and save the date for October 5 & 6. Schedules and speakers are being confirmed now.

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Our Mission:

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

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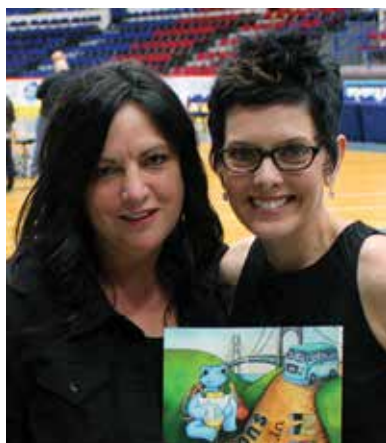
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DREAM BIG WITH T



“DREAM BIG” is the motto two mid-Michigan educators, kindergarten teacher Tracy Foster and elementary principal Shannon Cooper-Toma, used when they decided to inspire their students (and all children) with real life Michigan adventures and learning experiences. Using the DREAM BIG philosophy and their own teaching salary, the educators funded these unique travel (educational learning) experiences for students throughout the state of Michigan. The authors’ ultimate goal is to provide every child in the state of Michigan a copy of their two books, *Benson’s Adventures in Michigan* and *Benson’s Seasonal Adventures in Michigan*, through classrooms, backpack giveaway programs, MDA camps, food banks, hospitals, shelters, and community organizations. The two educators strongly believe in reducing the impact of high-risk factors such as poverty and they plan to continue to provide equitable resources to meet the needs of ALL children. They believe all children need to be given new opportunities to build background knowledge and vocabulary through experiences. This helps them to DREAM BIG successfully.

RACY AND SHANNON



We are passionate educators who are committed to making a difference in the lives of children and their families. We created Benson's Adventures and Benson's Literacy Foundation to inspire children to DREAM BIG. As educators, we believe children need to explore and experience what Michigan has to offer. Not only will these experiences allow children to develop their knowledge, but it will open their eyes to new possibilities and ignite a passion for learning. We want all children to feel empowered to follow their dreams, to be driven, and to be risk takers. We want children to understand that we too took a risk to follow our dreams. We had obstacles along the way but we never gave up. We surrounded ourselves with positive people who supported our project and believed in us.

Even though we had served as educators for Corunna Public Schools in separate buildings for many years, it wasn't until a major move by the district during the 2014-2015 academic year that brought us together. We quickly realized that we shared the same passion for children and education. The following spring, we took four of our Kindergarten students to Lake Michigan for a photo shoot for our upcoming Kindergarten Registration. For some of our students, it was the first time they had visited one of our beautiful Great Lakes. It was so much fun watching their eyes light up, looking out at the endless body of water. We enjoyed answering their many questions

about the lake (such as, "Are we at the ocean? Do sharks live here?"), skipping stones and splashing in the waves. It was on the way home when the idea of *Benson's Adventures in Michigan* was born! We wanted to create a resource for families and educators to ignite curiosity, pride and love for our Great Lakes state!

Since then, we, along with several mid-Michigan students from many different school districts, have logged over 11,000 miles in 38 different locations learning about and exploring all that Michigan has to offer. Some of these excursions included going dog sledding, taking a Pictured Rocks cruise, going through an old iron mine, touring the Shinola factory, biking with Jason Hall for Slow Roll Detroit, attending a basketball camp with Flint native former NBA player, Morris Peterson, Jr., visiting museums, enjoying a theatre performance at the Flint Youth Theatre, conducting science experiments on a tall ship while sailing on a Great Lake, taking in the beauty of several state parks, climbing the Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes, touring Kilwin's Chocolate Factory, and visiting national landmarks.

Coach Tom Izzo, MSU's Men's Head Basketball Coach, agreed to be a part of our second book to provide a student who is battling an illness with an opportunity she has always dreamed of. We even surprised two students with the trip of a lifetime to New York City to be in a private photo shoot with Ginger Zee on the set of Good Morning America!



We often hear how grateful parents are that we shared our experiences through the pages of our books. Parents have said our books have helped them to realize how simple experiences and excursions can make a difference in their child's life. We explain how important it is for parents to travel with their children. Not only do the activities ignite curiosity and a sense of pride for our great state, but it also provides children with rich vocabulary and builds their experiential knowledge, which are needed for our students to become confident readers and writers. Travel is a great avenue for such learning.

The Michigan Activity Pass is a phenomenal program that allows families to check out free admission passes at their local library to many of the locations featured in our books including museums, state parks, ferry passes to Mackinac Island, and other iconic attractions. This is a great resource that we share with families and educators along with our books to help

ensure students are able to get out of their communities and explore the bigger world.

Our books empower families to be engaged in their child's education by providing parents with knowledge about free resources in the community and throughout our state, by providing a parent's guide with each book, and educating parents on the importance of providing their children with unique learning experiences. No matter where students live, they should have access to the same high-quality educational opportunities as any other student in Michigan.



Benson's Adventures in Michigan

Through postcards, fun facts, and kid-friendly challenges, Benson the turtle shares family adventures that are uniquely Michigan. From the well-known sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore to Crane's Pie Pantry Restaurant for apple pie "almost as good as Grandma's" to outdoor fun at the Hiawatha National Forest to Sundown

Safari at the Potter Park Zoo to literally learning about time at the Shinola Watch Factory, *Benson's Adventures in Michigan* showcases destinations and adventures that can only be found in the Great Lakes State!

Benson's Seasonal Adventures in Michigan

Through postcards, fun facts, and kid-friendly challenges, Benson shares seasonal family adventures in Michigan. Whether you are dog sledding in the winter, watching a Detroit Tigers baseball game in the spring, sailing a Great Lake in the summer, or horseback riding in the fall, Michigan is a great place to explore all year long! Join Benson as he showcases destinations and adventures that can only be experienced in the Great Lakes State!

Benson's Adventures in Michigan and *Benson's Seasonal Adventures in Michigan* provide families and school districts with opportunities to provide children with travel experiences to ensure children learn about different professions, ideas and opportunities when they travel outside their own neighborhoods. A field trip or family excursion can awaken the desire in a child to try new things and pursue previously unconsidered dreams and even the playing field educationally for all children. Field trips can introduce children to job opportunities and can spark new interests and passions. Educational travel makes science and history come alive.

Both books feature a Michigan celebrity who inspires our youth to DREAM BIG. In our first book, *Benson's Adventures in Michigan*, we feature Ginger Zee, Chief Meteorologist for ABC News. She shares her story of growing up in Michigan and enjoying many of these adventures with her family. Watching the storms roll in across Lake Michigan, biking through the trails in Michigan's majestic forests, and camping over Memorial and Labor Day weekends inspired her to love science and to DREAM BIG to become the first woman to become a national meteorologist by the time she was thirty years old. She followed her dreams and never gave up. Her dreams came true!

In our second book, we feature Coach Tom Izzo, MSU's Head Basketball Coach. If he isn't on the court, you can find him donating his time to local charities or mentoring youth athletes at basketball camps. Coach Izzo believes that people who wish to be successful in life must pursue their passion, work hard, and DREAM BIG!

We want all children, regardless of any challenges they may be facing, to DREAM BIG!

Tracy and Shannon both had influential educators in their lives that inspired them to pursue the field of education and serve their communities. Both always dreamed of providing other children with opportunities

and the confidence to follow their dreams. They dreamed of becoming an educator as a young child and have always wanted to author children's books.

Shannon, a principal at Nellie Reed Elementary with the Corunna Public Schools, has spent 17 years in education. She also serves as the district's Early Childhood Specialist. Shannon grew up in Chesaning, Michigan but now resides in Owosso, Michigan. Tracy is a kindergarten teacher at Nellie Reed Elementary and has served over 20 years in elementary education. Tracy grew up in Byron, Michigan and continues to reside there.



While following their dreams, Tracy and Shannon do consulting, Family Literacy Night presentations, author visits to schools and universities, libraries, bookstores, summer camps, and community programs. They are always looking for innovative ways to give back to students and inspire parents and educators in all communities. They are currently working on their third book which will be a national book. Benson is off to explore our great country! More books will follow in the Benson's Adventures series to showcase each state. Together, Tracy and Shannon have presented at a variety of conferences and events including the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association and the Michigan

Reading Association.

The authors have now created a non-profit called, Benson's Literacy Foundation. With the help of local donors, grants, and businesses, Tracy and Shannon have donated over 4,000 books and other literacy-related services back to students in Michigan classrooms in the last year. So far, they have been able to donate books in multiple school districts in different counties. The authors have also donated books and other resources to community youth programs and camps for students with disabilities. The authors and educators feel that donating their books would allow all children (and parents) the opportunity to see the beauty of Michigan (if they weren't able to travel) and the endless opportunities Michigan has, to encourage all children to DREAM BIG. The authors hope to inspire other educators to use this book as a resource in the different content areas to excite students to become actively engaged in literacy activities. Organizations or individuals interested in donating to the cause can visit the non-profit website at www.BensonsLiteracyFoundation.org. Benson's Literacy Foundation can also be followed on Facebook @ BensonsLiteracyFoundation.

For more information on the Michigan-based children's books, *Benson's Adventures in Michigan*, *Benson's Seasonal Adventures in Michigan*, and the authors please go to www.BensonsAdventures.com (books may be purchased here and on Amazon). You can also follow Benson's Adventures on Facebook @BensonsAdventures. The authors can also be reached by email at info@BensonsAdventures.com

THINKING LIKE A TENNIS BALL AND OTHER KEY LESSONS IN LIFE

Have you ever met people who viewed the world completely differently from most everyone else? These are the people who honestly and genuinely do not care what other people think about their decisions or their ideas. They are confident, self-motivated, and completely free-thinking!

While these folks can be intimidating, they are also problem solvers and quite valuable, because getting issues handled is always a good thing in this very chaotic world.

Take Jack. Most people in the metro-Detroit community met Jack during or shortly after he created a company that was eventually sold to Campbell's Soup Company for millions of dollars.

I met him after that life-changing event!

At a lunch that took me months to secure, I was fascinated at how his mind worked. He had one idea which conjured another idea which created another idea. If I could have drawn what I was seeing, I would have penciled in a person playing tennis. The ball was the first thought and the racket was the idea which created the next thought, and so on and so on. Though dazed by "watching" him, I felt inspired by this man's mind. He was willing to explore each idea without fixating on it and was always ready to jump to the next one.

Jack agreed to support an event that he would ultimately attend. On the day of the event, Jack announced that rather than being the sole person to be with us from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., he had arranged for different people to attend for different time periods. That way our cause could be looked at by people with varied talents and gifts.

No one else had thought to do that, but it didn't surprise me because Jack walks his own mile all the time.

Although this is a women's magazine, and Jack is not a woman, the lesson I have learned from this very intelligent and profound human being can be shared with all women and men.

As you move forward in your lives, try to think differently. Force your mind to go around the block a few times to size up a challenge from the back, from the sides, and not just head-on.

While Jack made millions in salsa, he could make millions in any field. Why? Because he approaches the world "another way".

This summer, let's all try to be more like Jack. Take the back roads on an issue; march sideways when the challenges of life roll your way; and never, ever, be like the masses who see only one solution.

Thank you, Jack. You're a gift to us all.



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

FAILURE TO LAUNCH: TIPS TO HELP ADULT CHILDREN LEAVE THE NEST

Statistics

Today's young adults are more likely to be at home for an extended stay compared with previous generations of young adults who resided with their parents, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. census data.

Being a parent of adult children can be challenging at times. Especially if your adult child has issues leaving the nest. I should probably add that in some cultures the adult child is expected to live at home until they have saved enough money to move out, completed higher education or until they are married. Increasingly, there are more adult children living at home compared to other generations.

What is the cause of this uptick? A variety of factors may influence young adults' decisions to live at home, including their success in the labor market, the cost of living independently, debt obligations and health reasons. In this case, I am referencing young adults who have become complacent in the comforts that being at home has provided. Parents may have to check themselves for enabling behaviors that could have contributed to this extreme narrative.

What can parents do?

- Develop a launch plan with a time line.
- Eliminate the all-inclusive mind-set.
- Set healthy boundaries and expectations.
- Provide minimal support as needed
- Allow your adult child to take responsibility for their debts.

If you or someone you know is having a difficult time launching your adult child from the nest, contact a mental health professional or mediator. They are trained to help families to resolve family conflicts and relational issues.

Love your life or live trying,

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Millennials are the generation most likely to live at home

% of 25- to 35-year-olds living in parent(s)' home



Note: "Living in parent(s) home" means residing in a household headed by a parent.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 1964, 1981, 1990, 2000 and 2016 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

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HOW I LEARNED TO

Live Again

Two thousand five hundred and seventy-seven days ago my precious child departed from this world and entered the next. He was so very young, only 16, a sophomore in high school. He was so full of life and promise with a mouth full of braces (for the second time) and a head full of dreams. He was intelligent, thoughtful, and kind. He was one who always found the best in any situation or person. He was resilient and headstrong, funny with the most infectious laugh, and sensitive. He had the sweetest heart and gave the best bear hugs ever. And now he was gone. The only thing we had left were the memories of his staggering example of courage, love, and determination.

On that fateful day, sobbing, I clung to Eshton's chest listening to my baby's last heartbeat. Grief-stricken, brain numb, his dad, his twin brother, and I stood around his hospital bed trying to listen to the nurses and doctors explain what would happen next. Every cell of my being was screaming in protest. But to no avail. This was his time whether I liked it or not or even understood. He was gone and we were not. The End.

In the past I'd traveled extensively lobbying for the FDA approval of a drug Eshton and seventeen other people needed in this country. In speeches I'd say, "In my life I have found that there is nothing more painful to endure than to watch your child suffer, knowing there is something available to stop that suffering and be unable to obtain it." I was wrong. And it's shaken and humbled me to my core. Losing a child is a kind of pain that never really ends. It is entirely unnatural and wrong on every level. Adding to that pain was watching my other son suffer. I had no idea how my mind, let alone my heart, would survive.

The following days ran into each other with no real end or beginning. I wasn't sleeping most nights, and when I did it was to awaken in the morning with a renewed shock that Eshton was gone. I had amazing friends coming to my house every day and another child that was suffering deeply or I would have remained in bed. I don't know what was more painful at that time; losing Eshton or watching my other son trying to come to terms with losing his brother and best friend. He was so

terribly confused with absolutely no idea of what he was supposed to do next. He became my only reason to do anything, which wasn't much. But I got out of bed so he could see me doing it—the act of going on.

Being severely depressed and heartbroken, I lost my career and business as an independent healthcare consultant, which meant losing our savings, retirement, and security. Because we had dealt with personal issues for years, it didn't take much more for my marriage to finally succumb. The cascade of loss sucked out whatever understanding and love we had managed to hold on to. After twenty-four years of marriage, I moved out of our home the day after my forty-third birthday.

Life did not get better, or even easier for that matter. When my twenty-five year old nephew, Ryan, whom I was especially close to, tragically died very suddenly, it added yet another huge layer of loss and devastation that almost did me in. I spent that first year living with friends. I was finally able to rent a small home in a part of town where gun fights were common and lead was discovered in the water—which had caused my hair loss and eczema.

This is what my rock bottom looked like: heartbreak, despair, rage, depression, crushing debt, city violence, and poisoned water. I struggled with guilt and self-recrimination any time I happened to feel joy or desire. It was going to require a radical



thought and perspective adjustment to find my way out of the black pit called Life.

I have found that real progress and wisdom in life only come in small, hard-won morsels created from following through with difficult decisions and doing what needs to be done regardless of how I feel about it. I had to put my head down and plant one foot in front of the other, believing that there would be a path for my foot to fall onto, or “shadow walking” as my friend calls it.

Shadow walking is when you continue to push through life after being dragged off course with no GPS to guide you, and is one of the hardest things I’ve ever had to do. It requires a toll that can only be paid in emotional, spiritual, and physical currency and will transform you either positively or negatively which is up to you. Every day for months I’d say to myself, “Bitter or better, which will you choose?”. I didn’t always choose the better, but I kept asking the question and allowing the outcomes of those choices to transform me.

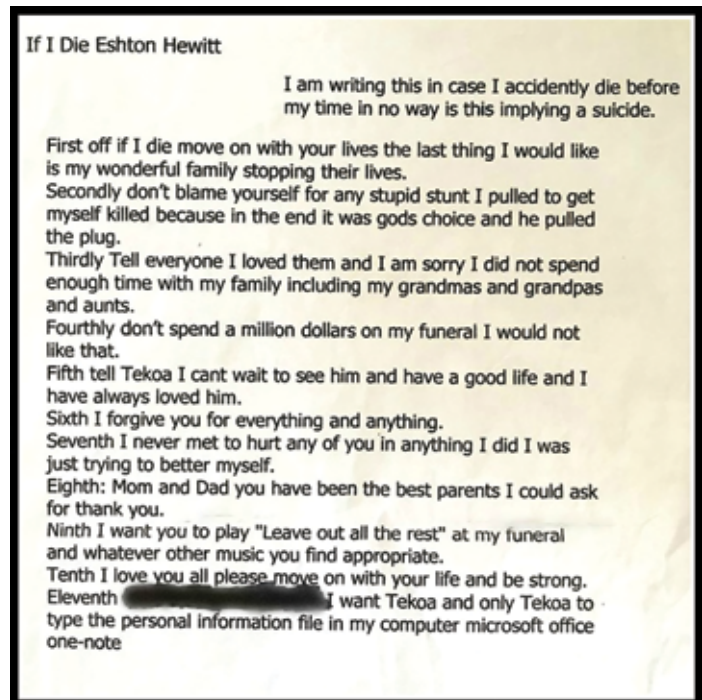
And then one day I had the thought that maybe we’re not supposed to go back once we’ve been derailed from our previous lives. Perhaps that life was only meant for a time which had ended. As this new idea began to resonate in me it gave me permission to let go of that life and those things. To re-examine who I thought I was and what I thought I wanted. These were especially difficult tasks for me.

Because Eshton had a combination of two extremely rare disorders—a bleeding disorder and a connective tissue disorder—he grew up too fast and endured too much. So at the age of nine he came to terms with what it meant to die. At thirteen Eshton gave us a list he’d written, unbeknownst to us, of things he wanted us to remember or do when he died and was adamant that it was only to be read upon his death. Only three years later we opened that envelope and found a note he had written to “help us move on”. I held onto the list and tried to keep the very first thing he wanted us to do at the forefront of my mind: **keep living**.

Of course that wasn’t as easy as it sounded. I couldn’t figure out how to forgive myself for not being able to stop the inevitable and how to not feel guilty when finding joy in any aspect of life. Depression and rage were steadfastly affixed to me and were now charting my course.

A few weeks later during a road trip by myself I started talking to Eshton like I often do. I told him that I wished he was there with me enjoying the beauty of the autumn leaves. And then I thought, “So does he”. And so do the others I’ve lost. They all would have LOVED to have had one more chance to see the sunrise, smell a rose, or feel the sun on their skin. And here I am, with all of those things literally at my fingertips, and I have the gall to whine and feel pathetic because it’s hard. Shame on me!

I immediately apologized to the heavens and vowed to never forget what an incredible gift life truly is. In



that moment my new mantra became, “I am a spiritual being having a human experience”. I will always be a spiritual being but my opportunity to experience life as a human is finite. So I will choose to savor and learn from every encounter and be thankful for the chance to do so.

My life didn’t suddenly become amazing, and my debt didn’t disappear overnight, and I still miss Eshton every single day. But what did happen was that I started living again. Since Esh had died I had been simply surviving. I began to force myself to participate in life instead of just enduring it. Every time I did it got better, less painful. I stopped feeling guilty for enjoying life and instead embraced the opportunity to be fully in the moment.

Eventually the dynamic duo of depression and rage broke up and went their own miserable ways. They still stop by from time to time to check in and see if I’ve missed them. They usually bring a bag and try to set up house again, but I remind them that an overnight visit is as long as they’re welcome here anymore.

And then as I see them to the door, I know I’m finally honoring Eshton by doing exactly what he asked me to do: **continue living**.

This article has been edited for the magazine, but the complete version is available on our website under “Full Stories”. www.w2wmichigan.com

▶ Joyce Webster is a native of the Flint area. She has recently started “living again” in Florida with her loyal companion, a rescued Pitbull named Roxie



BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF



I remember when I would lie to myself all the time.

While I was unhappy with how I felt and looked,

I would say I didn't need to watch what I ate.

I would tell myself that being concerned about my weight was simply society's expectations being imposed on me. I quieted my conscience about going days without exercise by saying I was far too busy. Further, I valued my freedom too much to be a slave to the scale, a nutrition plan, or *gasp*, a workout schedule.

There came a time I had to face the facts. I wasn't healthy, and it wasn't because I was free or a rebel. And it certainly had nothing to do with how busy I was.

I had to admit it was fear that was holding me back.

I was not healthy, and the reason was because I was lazy. I didn't want it bad enough. I wasn't ready. All of those things. But mostly?

Deep down I knew I was afraid. What if I tried and couldn't do it? What if I kept failing?

Once I admitted that, I could truly tackle each fear and own it. Yes, I DID need to watch what I ate. Everyone needs to. So? It's not weakness, its strength.

So what if people fat shame? They also skinny shame. People are shamed for everything, from the music they like to the clothes they wear. It's hip to shame hipsters now!

None of those things give me an excuse. What I choose to do or not do is on ME. I could either do what I know I needed to do to obtain health, or I could blame; Blame my age, blame society or whatever I was struggling with at the moment.

Once I let go of the fear and the blame, I finally saw WHY I really wanted to eat right and exercise consistently. I wanted HEALTH. I wanted my kids to see me walk the talk. I wanted to be able to run, play and have the energy to tackle the day with them. I wanted to look forward to aging gracefully and being an active grandmother. Heck, I just wanted to feel good and look good in my own clothes!

I don't listen to the lies now. I'm not driven by fear. I eat well, I exercise regularly, and I live life to the fullest.

Being fit has far less to do with exercising and eating well than it has to do with breaking out of our comfort zones and being honest with the deepest part of our inner selves.



◀ 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

Let It Go and Get Inspired!

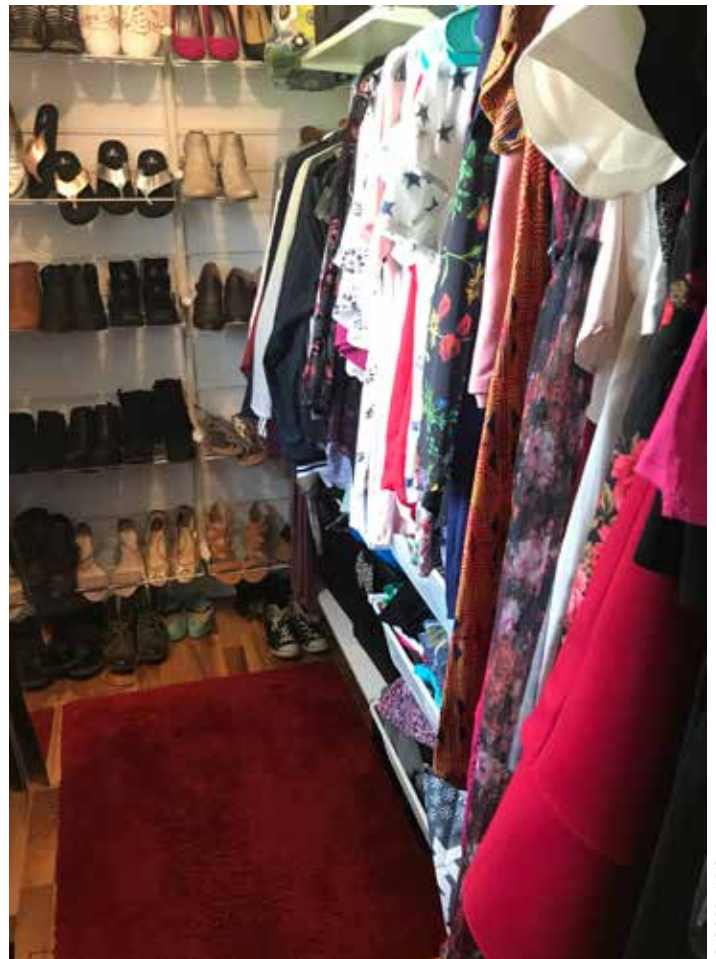
I recently took my own advice and performed a service for myself that I provide in my business, Premier Designs, and that's a Wardrobe Consultation for women. This is when I go to a customer's home and rummage her closet. I make new outfits with items she already owns—showing her the worth of what she already has—and then pair them with amazing jewelry, amplifying her style with accessories.

My closet was about to get an overhaul! How eye opening it was! For years I've been holding onto items because I "might" fit into them again one day. I tried on every piece of clothing and if I didn't like the fit it was put into the donations pile. This is the best thing I have done for myself in a while.

"Keeping clothes that are too small in the hope that you'll fit into them 'someday' is like punishing yourself for being who you are," says professional organizer, productivity consultant, and author of *The Clutter Book: When You Can't Let Go*, Marcie Lovett. Another great piece of advice she gives is, "If they're several years old, it's time to let them go. If you do lose weight, you want to wear clothes that remind you of your successes, not your struggles."

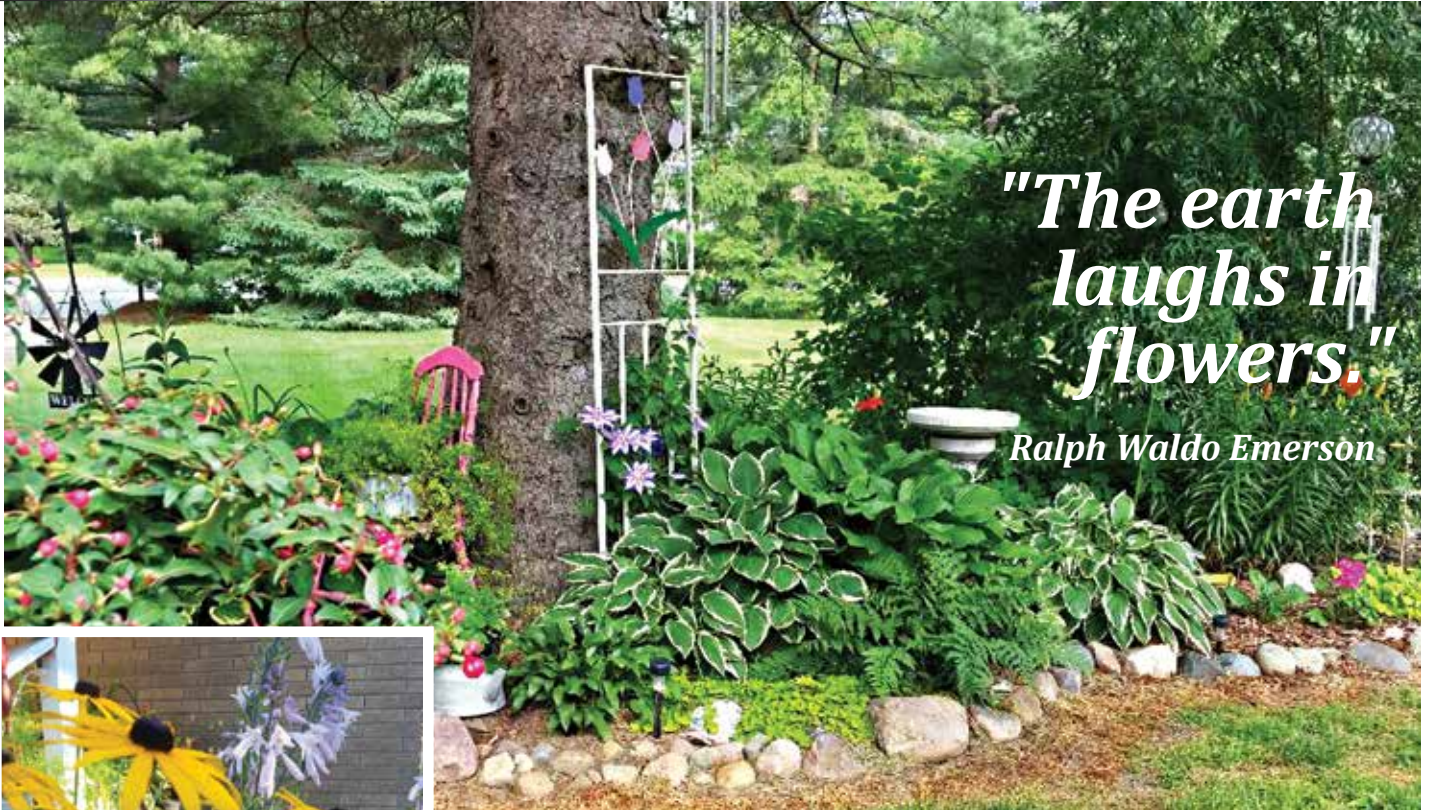
Being a curvy woman most of my adult life has been enough of a struggle. I don't need my subconscious battering me and my style. I have to admit after doing a full cleanse of items that weren't fitting anymore I have an easier time getting dressed in the morning. I feel better knowing that every item in my closet fits, and what it can be paired with. It doesn't have to be spring for you to clean out clutter and get out of your comfort zone. Be true to yourself!

When you leave the house with your adorable outfit and striking accessories it shows your confidence and that you care. I challenge each one of you to do this for five days straight and notice the difference. I have found this process has helped keep my depression away. And, I get treated with more respect when I look pulled together than when I'm just in my yoga pants and a sweatshirt. Spending a few more minutes on your personal appearance benefits your outlook. We are all worth it!



► 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







Fairy Garden

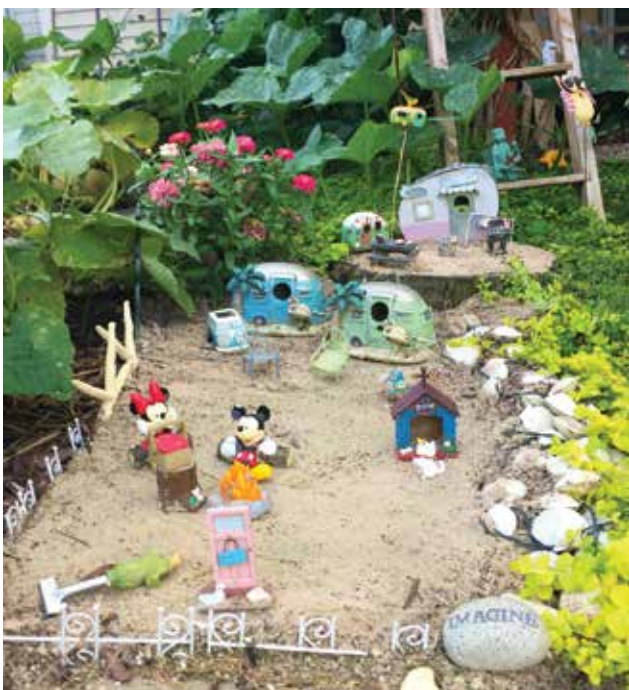
Here are pictures of my fairy garden. This garden area is very special to me because it was created through the eyes of a child I spend time with weekly. She is now ten years old, but we began creating this special space (which comes out from under my deck) four years ago. Each year her ideas would grow and we'd get to work making a lot of the projects together.

She especially wanted a carnival in the back area for the fairies to visit. We have a tiny mailbox you can see in one picture and she exchanges mail with the fairies.

This garden has drawn a few other little girls from the neighborhood who love to add their ideas and play in it regularly.

I hope you enjoy it, and let me know if you ever want to visit in person! The fairies are back for the season and every morning our flowers get a blessing.

Photos and story provided by Trisha Grzybowski. Garden assistants—Sophie, Morgan, and Taylor



What Are Your Top 10 Positive Attributes?

If you were asked to write down your "Top 10 Positive Attributes," would you struggle? Do you believe you're good at anything? Well, if you hesitate at all, that is a problem.

What is it that stops you from believing in yourself? Is it bad luck, the world around you, or could it be coming from within? Most people learn the art of self-sabotage as a child. People usually resort back to what they know or have learned from their parents. Generation after generation, self-sabotage has been a *toxic* family heirloom. Not only does it hurt you mentally, physically, and spiritually, but it also hurts everyone who is trying to help you.

Determine to replace old negative beliefs and self-sabotaging thought patterns with new, positive, and powerful transforming affirmations to help change your mindset. If someone compliments you, accept it, believe it, and repeat it!

What We Think

Your thought life has a constant impact on your self-confidence. Thoughts like; "I can't do that", "I'm not cute enough", "I'm too fat", "I'm too short", "I'm not smart enough", "I can't spell", "My hair is too thin...too curly...too straight and not the right color", "I always fail", "I'm not strong enough", "I have no purpose", "I'm just not worthy", are negative thoughts that lower your frequency and can create acidosis.

What We Do

Your actions can set the tone for your day and your life. Some examples of harmful actions are; being a perfectionist, avoiding conflict at all costs or searching out conflicts, procrastinating, focusing on the trivial things, embracing negative relationships, comparing yourself to others, lacking boundaries, not respecting yourself enough to have/make others respect you, being timid, fearful, anxious, self-injury, lacking financial self-control, and having addictive behaviors.

What We Say

Today will be a new day to stop this self-destructive behavior and start feeling good about yourself and begin fulfilling God's purpose for your life! We are all different, with different heritages, cultures, skills, talents, and gifts. We are meant to complement each other.

Commit yourself to forming a new habit for the next 21-30 days.

Get a notebook and write down:

1. 10 or more positive attributes about yourself.
2. 5-10 long-term goals and 5-10 short-term goals-include your intentions & time frame.
3. Make a list of positive changes (self-improvement goals) you want in your life. Pick the top 2-5 positive changes you want to make and write down 10 times on 3 x 5 cards. Place cards everywhere, so you will see it daily. Every time you look at the cards, spend 2-3 minutes reciting the desired changes with confidence.

Tell your family, friends, and yourself what you are trying to accomplish, and ask for their support and encouragement. This positive accountability will help motivate you. DO NOT allow or participate in any negativity, gossip, or drama in your life. If the conversation is not encouraging or uplifting, remove yourself from the situation. Stand firm and respect yourself enough to have others respect you! Do not allow others to bring you down.

► Stacey Kimbrell is a Natural Health Professional, Chemical Awareness & Essential Oil Advocate, International Speaker and Author of *Living Balanced*. Stacey loves to provide a simple and practical approach to living a healthy, chemical-free lifestyle. DRINK, THINK & DO! 810.423.5721 Stacey@staceykimbrell.com LivingAnointed.com



"Pick Your Passion" Speaker Series

At our event in April,
Lisa Thompson with
selflovebeauty.com talked
to us about self-love at
any age (see page 25).

Our final speaker series
event is June 28.
Don't miss it!!



Some of our W2W staff with Lisa. Our staff photographer wasn't available, but we got some trusty phone pictures.



Thanks for sending this in to us, ladies.

Women2Women Michigan Presents

"Pick Your Passion" Speaker Series

Attracting Abundance!

June 28, 2018
5:30-8:30

**I focus on
ABUNDANCE
and PROSPERITY
and thereby
attract
it to me.**

Back by request, Suzanne and Kevin Young (speakers at our first event on the Law of Attraction) will teach us how to attract abundance and prosperity into our lives. If you are an entrepreneur, business owner, budget-maker, or feel as if you never have enough money, this event is for YOU!

Tickets available at the door
or Eventbrite. \$10 each!

Located at Brick Street of Grand Blanc
1223 E. Grand Blanc Rd., Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Cocktails and menu will be available for ordering.

PUT ON YOUR BIG GIRL PANTIES



Thinking “outside of the box” is supposed to be good for us...right? Yet, far too often, we find ourselves in the same routine, becoming complacent, comfortable and perhaps a little bit lazy.

It's all too easy to dwell in the comfort of...let's say, an old pair of panties.

Well, Women2Women made me think “outside of the drawer”. Hang on, you'll understand in a second.

Several months ago they approached me to take part in their “Pick Your Passion” Speaker Series. I was thrilled...until Southern-born Mimi, whom I love, gave me the title “Put Your Big Girl Britches On”. ‘Yipes!’ I said, “I don't talk like that.” As charming as her slight Southern manner is, I would not use the word “britches”. I pulled mine up and said so. Now, this is tough to do, but it is something that I have been practicing...so...I know where she was coming from first hand. We agreed to substitute the word “panties” instead. That ended up being only the beginning...

I had a block. My creative drawer was closed...padlocked and sealed with Gorilla Glue. I had nothing. For a month, I would sit down to begin...blankness, empty pages, thrown away pages, creased forehead, grimaced faces, pouting lips...you've got the picture. I had procrastinated for nearly three months. Panic began to set in. It was Sunday, my big day was Thursday.

It was all I could think of.

Then, as I opened up my panty drawer, reaching for an old, holey pair to wear under my Sunday sweats cleaning outfit, my hand moved aside my good, work undies...there it was, my entire speech in one place, staring at me, drenched by a bright light, beckoning me to the lesson they were about to teach me. As I pulled them out, each pair had a story. I laughed, sitting down on my bed, and thought to myself “who knows or cares what panties I have on? Why did I pick these today? Why do I even still have them? Oh, look at these fancy ones...They were

so full of promise. I bought them for a special occasion. I put so many expectations into those panties. They let me down. They were expensive and I don't even wear them anymore. I need to let go of that and start wearing them. They make me feel pretty, and damn it, I deserve to feel pretty every day!

So many objects, in our lives, represent much more than what they are. I was forced to examine each of my panties, realizing that I had held on to some for too long. Some didn't fit, others bothered me, some lay hidden, forgotten for the true gems they are. They were like friends, habits, goals...some needed to be discarded while others needed to be redeemed.

This drawer, like the history of women's undergarments, showed my evolution. It reminded me that I am who I am NOW, just as we are who we are collectively. Our past brought us here but our past doesn't matter anymore. I cleaned that drawer out, reminisced a bit, saw that there were not very many comfortable ones left, and went shopping. I only got the ones that suited who I am now...casually selecting a precious few knowing that as I evolve, my taste in undergarments will too.

As we grow together, as a gender, allow your man to see you, love you, and evolve at his rate. Raise your children with love and allow them to be who they are and will become. For just as our panties change, so is the world.

So, thank you, Mimi! I took another look at who I am and where I'm heading. Plus, I had a great time giving this talk! With 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



FRESH FRUIT FLAVORS

(Family Features) When it comes to fresh fruit, watermelon is a top pick in many households.

It's available year-round and makes for a nutritious snack, but its great taste is the reason most people buy watermelon, according to research from the National Watermelon Promotion Board.

Not only is watermelon a tasty snack by itself, it's a great complement to other flavors, making it easy to create flavorful pairings. This sweet take on pizza combines watermelon with a host of other good-for-you ingredients for a delicious treat. Healthy enough for breakfast and sweet enough for dessert, this pizza can make its way into your weekly meal rotation.

For another nutritious option, consider this Buddha bowl featuring watermelon, which contains higher levels of lycopene, an antioxidant, than any other fresh fruit or vegetable. Watermelon is also an excellent source of vitamin C, and it provides vitamin B6 and potassium. It's the perfect sweet addition to balance the savory flavors of this traditional plant-based Buddha bowl.

Each of these recipes leaves plenty of room for personalization; experiment with your favorite flavors to make each dish your own. Also remember that watermelon travels well, so these recipes make for ideal take-along snacks when you're on the go.

Find more fresh, fruity recipes to enjoy any time of year at watermelon.org.



WATERMELON BUDDHA BOWL

Citrusy Tahini Dressing:

- 3 tablespoons tahini (ground sesame seed paste)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoons freshly grated ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons salt

BUDDHA BOWLS:

- 2 cups seedless watermelon, cubed
- 4 mini cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 1 cup sweet cherries, pitted and halved
- 2 avocados, sliced
- 2 cups cooked black rice
- 1 cup sliced, toasted almonds

Citrusy Tahini Dressing

To make Citrusy Tahini Dressing: In bowl, whisk tahini, orange juice, rice vinegar, soy sauce, ginger and salt. If dressing seems thick, add more orange juice or water to reach desired consistency.

To arrange Buddha Bowls: Separate watermelon, cucumbers, cherries, avocados and rice in four bowls. Sprinkle with toasted almonds and drizzle with dressing. Serve immediately.



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COLOR C O N T O U R I N G

Summer's here and the time is ripe for change. But are you ready?

Webster's dictionary describes change as; "a desire to become different, an alternating of character or appearance." Notice what Webster omits, that stepping out of our comfort zone can be scary, no matter how big or small the change is.

My suggestion is start small. For instance, since the weather's warming up, maybe you're considering a new hair color—something a little beachy or flirty. Then let's try something I like to refer to as color contouring!

Highlighting or color contouring is probably one of my favorite services to perform. With a few strategically placed highlights you can discover a whole new you! Now is the best time to reinvent yourself and give that tired old hair color some UMPH. Highlighting is also great for giving your hair color that sun-kissed look. Or give that grown out ombre a just-in-time-for-summer retouch to help you achieve that summer blonde you've been dying for. I also prefer highlighting prior to a drastic hair color change so that my clients can see their hair gradually lightening instead of all at once.

I love to incorporate highlights to accentuate certain facial features, like the eyes. Highlights or color contouring can also add some flair to your new summer hair do. When doing this type of color placement I place foils in a pinwheel pattern. This way when the highlights are rinsed and dried the effect is quite stunning and can turn your slightly ho-hum hair style into a kaleidoscope of color.

Whatever you decide to try this summer, just remember; taking baby steps can still get you to slowly move out of your comfort zone into something new and exciting!

Don't forget to email me with any of your beauty questions to: tamilyn66@yahoo.com

Happy summer and I look forward to hearing from you soon!



► 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 Heath and utilizing the right products. Contact Tami @ tamilyn66@yahoo.com



HOW TO HAVE SELF-LOVE AT ANY AGE

I recently was part of the Women 2 Women pick your passion series where I spoke about “self-love at any age”.

I am the CEO of Self Love Beauty, an online brand with the mission to ensure everyone has self-love through feeling confident in their own beauty and empowered one story at a time. I started this brand at the age of 22 and since then have watched it transformed to change lives including mine.

Self-love is a journey and for the past six years of Self Love Beauty, my journey has been different at every age, but truly beautiful. I also have had the opportunity to watch women and young girls of all ages grow in their self-love journey as well.

Age is Just a Number

You have probably heard this before, “*age is just a number*”, and if you really think about it that is absolutely true. Five years ago, I didn’t expect my life to be where it is now; even last year I didn’t know. But the thing about self-love is that it’s a journey and every age has a different tale, a different turn, a different story. Look back at your own life and where you are now. Has age ever been a reason to not have self-love? How do you want to define yourself moving forward?

What is Self-Love?

Everyone has their version of what self-love is and what it is not. But here are a few things to keep in mind when it comes to self-love:

- Self-love cannot exist in the presence of self-abuse
- Self-love requires self-respect
- Self-love requires commitment
- Self-love requires acts of kindness
- Self-love requires self-care
- Self-love requires self-acceptance

The Blueprint to Self-Love

Once you realize that age is just a number, that everyone deserves to have self-love, and what self-love is, then you have the opportunity to take the next steps in your journey to have more self-love than you have had before.

The blueprint of self-love is made up of four components:

- Health
- Purpose/Passion
- Friends/Family
- Affirmations

All four of these make up your self-love journey. Sometimes in our lives we are much better at one component than the others. One may come more easily than another. Both are



okay, both are part of the journey. If you want to grow even more in your journey, here are some questions to consider:

What about your self-love journey do you feel the most confident with?

What is holding you back from having a better self-love journey?

Out of the four blueprint components, which one do you feel the most positive in and why?

Out of the four blueprint components, which one do you feel you could use the most help in?

What are the next steps you want to take in your self-love journey? [pick one to focus on first]

I would suggest writing these out on paper and working through them or speak out loud your answers.

It is YOUR Choice

The best part of your self-love journey is that it is your choice on how to make your journey and story. No one else gets to define it for you. You have the choice everyday to work on these components, to better yourself and become the best person you want to be...because at the end of the day no one else gets to be *you*. I think that is a beautiful thing. And lastly, remember age is just a number and should not define whether you deserve self-love or not.

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

► *Lisa Thompson: Self Love Beauty's mission is to ensure women have self-love through feeling confident in their own beauty and empowered one story at a time knowing they are not alone in their journey to reach their full potential. Founder and CEO Lisa Thompson started this brand 6 years ago to share her journey to self-love and inspire others. She speaks to women and men of all ages on many topics related to self-love and confidence. Visit this brand today or email them at info@selflovebeauty.com.*



MAKE THIS SUMMER YOUR HEALTHIEST YET

Warmer days mean we're firing up the grill, lingering outside a little longer and enjoying some of summer's delicious treats. But some of those delicious treats can wreak havoc on our good health. For instance, a grilled burger can have as many as 300 calories, a bowl of ice cream has up to 20 grams of sugar in it, and that s'more – well, let's just say moderation is best.

So, with all these temptations it's easy to see that scale go up. But you can make your summer barbecues healthier this year. The best part is it's not hard to do and it tastes great!

First, focus on lean protein. Fish is an excellent source of good unsaturated fats. Unsaturated fats can help lower bad cholesterol and triglyceride levels. You should strive to eat 8 ounces of non-fried fish each week. Albacore tuna, herring, lake trout, mackerel, sardines and salmon are all loaded with essential omega-3 fatty acids that are great for your heart.



Next, add some color to your plates. Eating healthy doesn't have to break the bank. The summertime is the best time to stock your refrigerator with seasonal produce. Berries, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, figs, grapes, green beans, melons, peppers, summer squash, tomatoes and zucchini are all in season in the summer and can usually be found at a lower price at your local farmer's market.

Then when you're firing up that grill, think outside of the box. Many fruits and veggies can be grilled. Just cut the fruits and veggies into large chunks so they cook quicker and brush them with a healthy oil, so they do not stick to the grill. Try out asparagus, avocado, bell peppers, corn, squash and zucchini. Looking for something sweet? Try watermelon, pineapple or peaches on the grill for a heart-healthy alternative to dessert. The natural sugars caramelize in the high heat, making them even sweeter and more delicious.

Don't forget your side dishes. Swap out a potato salad with a healthy leafy green salad. Swap your regular buns for whole grains. Or better yet, skip the bun all together and opt for a lettuce wrap instead.

Last, but certainly not least, dump out the sugary drinks.



Instead of reaching for a pop or cool glass of lemonade or sweet tea grab a water. Challenge yourself to cut out all pop, energy/sports drinks, sweetened coffee or tea drinks and fruit drinks. Keep in mind, many of these drinks have more than twice the amount of added sugars women should consume each day. In fact, a 20oz pop has the same amount of added sugar as 6 donuts or 18 chocolate chip cookies.

Making changes like these are ways you and your family can create healthy habits, one step at a time. Choose one or two unhealthy habits you'd like to change. Once you have successfully changed those habits, look at the next habit you want to break. Being healthy doesn't mean you can't enjoy life, it means you can enjoy more of life.



► 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 from one activity to another. She is a heart health cheerleader.





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Life is Sweet... with these Easy Sugar Swaps!

If you're cutting back on added sugars or calories, try these swaps to get the sweet taste you love:

Baking and Cooking

Unsweetened applesauce can substitute for some of the sugar in a recipe. You may need less oil, too—adjust the recipe as needed to get the taste and texture you like. Or try using a no-calorie sweetener suitable for cooking and baking.



Dressings and Sauces

Swap store-bought bottled salad dressings, ketchup, tomato sauce and barbeque sauce — which can have a lot of added sugars — for homemade versions so you can control the amount of sugar added to them.



Soda/Soft Drinks



Swap sugar-sweetened beverages for plain or sparkling water flavored with mint, citrus, cucumber or a splash of 100% fruit juice.



Get recipes and more tips at
RECIPES.SPLENDA.COM

Desserts and Sweets

Instead of indulging in a traditional sugar-based dessert, enjoy the natural sweetness of fruit. Fresh, frozen and canned (in its own juice or water) are all good choices. Try them baked, grilled, stewed or poached.



Snack Mix and Granola

Make your own, without all the added sugars. Combine your favorite nuts and seeds (unsalted or very lightly salted), raisins and dried fruits (unsweetened), rolled oats and whole-grain cereal (non-sugared/non-frosted) — and skip the candy!



Tea and Coffee

Swap sugars (including honey and agave syrup) for a no-calorie sweetener. One packet adds about the same sweetness as two teaspoons of sugar — and typically saves you more than 25 calories.

NO-CALORIE
SWEETENER



The American Heart Association recommends cutting back on added sugars. Using low- and no-calorie sweeteners is one option that may help in an overall healthy diet. Foods and beverages containing low- and no-calorie sweeteners can be included in a healthy eating plan, as long as the calories they save are not added back as a reward or compensation. The FDA has determined that certain low- and no-calorie sweeteners, such as sucralose, are safe.

It's important to eat an overall healthy dietary pattern that **includes** a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes, fish, skinless poultry, nuts and seeds, and fat-free/low-fat dairy products; and **limits** sodium, saturated fat, red meat and added sugars.

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Laugh Your Way Through Summer

Here we go. Kids are out of school. The weather is warm and sunny. The days are longer. Seems like a perfect combination for FUN! But the reality is that summer break can be stressful.

Many parents are still stuck at a nine-to-five job, looking out the window at the nice, sunny sky, wishing they could be out there. Kids are often in daycare hoping for that moment mom/dad walks in to get them.

Some of us do plan summer vacations to the beach or to one of the many warm Michigan lakes. But those seven days go by so darn fast.

STOP.....HOLD ON.....Take a breath. It will be just fine. As fast as summer can go by and leave you in a tizzy, it could also go by and leave you with a permanent smile. How? COMEDY!!

Live local comedy that's going on all over mid Michigan. Most often in late night shows. Get a babysitter or drop the kids off at grandma's house. It is time to LAUGH! Laughing releases endorphins. Endorphins can help lift our spirits, clear our mind, and best of all, make us better parents!



Do not let summer fly by you. Do not let the busy everyday routine get you down. You have options. Check out The Comedy Series for the next professional comedy show appearing near you. Tell your kids I said «Hi» and have an awesome SUMMER!!



◀ Melissa Hager is the owner of Frankenmuth's The Comedy Series. She says she is making her dreams—bringing laughter to many people at once—come true. Melissa believes comedy was just what Frankenmuth needed. The Comedy Series is always a slam dunk night out. www.frankenmuthcomedyseries.com/ for show schedule.

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HOW TO JUMP, FLY, AND SOAR USING THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

After about 56 years of life I found myself stuck inside a cocoon of old beliefs and habitual negative thought patterns that made me feel like I was trapped. Once I began practicing the Law of Attraction I slowly, one step at a time, began to break out of my self-induced cocoon. I put together a list of all I'd learned and called them "Law of Attraction Principles" in my book *Stepping into Life of Joy*. These principles helped me step away from two long, verbally abusive marriages, something I thought was impossible. They essentially helped me learn to spread my wings, and begin to jump, fly, and soar into a new and happier life.

Principle #1 ~ The Power of Dreams

Unfortunately most of us give up dreaming after we've been judged, criticized, and/or have experienced failure. We become used to living in an uncomfortable comfort zone. We begin settling for less and learn to tolerate pain and suffering. So let's find a new way to think about dreaming. I like to think of our dreams as the engine to manifestation.

Think of our body as the car we are using to navigate through life. A car cannot reach the desired destination without a running engine to move it forward. When we experience something we don't want, it's like placing the key in the car's ignition and getting mad that the car isn't moving. Instead of getting upset that the car is not moving, begin to dream about what we do want. As we dream about what we want, (how good it will feel with the car moving forward) the LoA will bring us solutions in the form of ideas. Suddenly we'll remember that we need to turn the key over to start the engine so we can move forward. This is a simple analogy of how the dream became the engine to manifestation.

Principle #2 ~ The Power of Imagination and Emotions

People feel stuck when they keep focusing on the things they don't want, just like when the wheels of your car spin helplessly around when they're stuck in a rut. The LoA always brings us what we are focusing on so when you're stuck in a rut, you'll want to choose to imagine and then focus on the end result that you'd like to experience. You can use the LoA for leverage to lift you out of a rut. Your imagination now becomes the bridge that takes you from where you are now, to where you want to be.

The next step is to begin imagining how it will **feel** when you're living your dream. What emotions will you be feeling? Will it be freedom, peace, and joy? What body language will

you be experiencing? Will the worrisome wrinkles on your face be gone? Will you be standing up tall and proud? Will you be smiling and living in a state of appreciation? The Law of Attraction brings you results that are equal to the emotions you are feeling each and every moment of your life. The key to attracting the results you want is to start smiling and appreciating every little thing you can see in your current life. **Feeling and acting as if it's already happened** is the key to all of creation. It is the energy that will attract the ideas, the experiences, and the people who want to rendezvous with you and help you create your new reality.

Imagine yourself sitting in the most beautiful and serene place you can dream of. Maybe it's on top of a mountain overlooking a gorgeous green valley. As you stand at the top

overlooking this fabulous view, you are in a state of love and appreciation for the beauty Mother Nature has provided. This **feeling** place is the one you want to

go to in your **mind** to produce the energy of creation. Why?

Because the Law of Attraction works like a boomerang. It's always lining up rendezvous for you to receive when you stay in a good feeling emotional state. When you

throw a boomerang off the rooftop of a building, it will only come back if you stay up (where it feels good) on the roof top. If you move to the bottom floor you'll miss the rendezvous with the returning boomerang. Stay on your own top floor where all the good feelings exist and you too can begin to jump, fly, and soar into your own new and improved life of your dreams.

My greatest joy is helping others learn how to attract a happier and healthier life so if you'd like the entire list of principles please email me at suzanne@psprograms.com and I'll be happy to send them to you.

► 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.



NEVER APOLOGIZE FOR WHO YOU ARE!

Oh darling, don't you know that who you are is the most amazing and fabulous gift to the world? Who you are is full of wonder and possibility. You have a totally unique set of characteristics and curiosities and desires. There are certain things you dream of or long for, ideas that stir your soul, passions that rumble inside you to be expressed. Never apologize for those things. They are part of the amazing creation that is *YOU*.

Sometimes it's tough. I know some of you are not in an ideal situation. Perhaps some of you feel as if the ground is swallowing you up and closing in over you. Expressing your gifts seems highly impossible.

I know because I've been there. And it took action and big steps (in little baby steps) to get me out of that hole. But I am here to tell you that *YOU* can start today to change your situation so that the *real* you can shine. There are people who will help you. And please do not feel the need to apologize for who you are or what is going on in your life. Life happens.

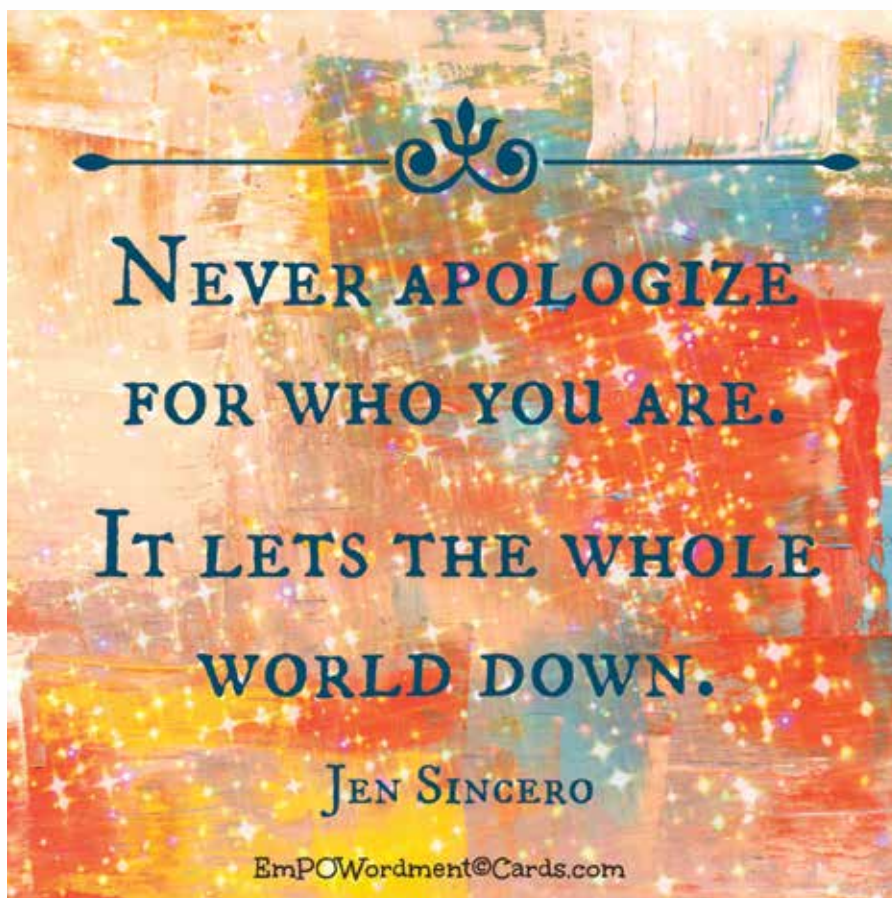
Do not try to do it alone. Are you one who feels as if you must be strong and do this "life thing" by yourself because that's how you always do things? Well, you limit *yourself* when you limit your possibilities for help.

Start talking to people. Start saying what you want and need. (I promise lightning will not strike you). Don't you want to feel fulfilled, to be able to do the things that satisfy your soul? Start with someone you trust and get them involved in seeking ways to help you improve and/or get out of your situation. Brainstorm with others for ideas on the steps to take to reach your goals. Women are the best networkers in the world! For goodness sake, even "Google" it! There *are* solutions.

The biggest thing is to start realizing how valuable you are and how much the world needs your special, unique gifts and love. Start telling yourself the TRUTH—that you are amazing and have wonderful abilities and gifts for this world. Even if you think your specific abilities are quite unusual and sometimes feel weird.

Start seeking ways to BE who you really are; to pour out your beautiful spirit and shine your gorgeous light.

Because darling, you are perfect, just as you are! Never apologize.



► 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>



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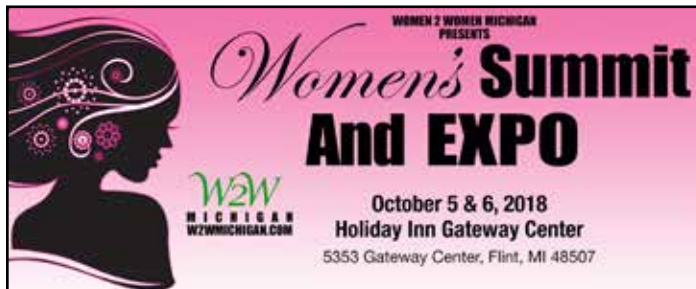


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Let's Ride!



The Sirens, a club founded by Jennifer Clor and Kim Golden in 2004, are an amazing, fun-loving group of ladies who own motorcycles. W2W got a chance to meet them at their 10th Annual Wheels and Heels Lady Bike Show. As with any group of women, this is an eclectic bunch of ladies, including diverse vocations, backgrounds, and ages. These bike shows always benefit a charity, this one honoring the Shriner's Hospital. Also, members of the Sirens, Lori Cupp and Dawn Thomas, teach motorcycle awareness to driver's education classes, and other members attend with them for support.

Why do ladies join The Sirens Motorcycle Club? They love the sisterhood and wanted women to ride with. They can just call a group member and say, "Let's ride!" The Sirens usually have two road trips a year. Let's meet a few of the members:



Marcia Umphrey rode on the back of her boyfriend's bike for about ten years. Six years ago she decided it was time to own her own bike. Her gorgeous blue/purple bike, "Bob", has been her love for four years now. It has a custom Harley paint job, #102/200, and is a 2000 Fat Boy CVO.



Cindy Wendzik has been riding all her life and says she was her daddy's tomboy. She has a dark green motorcycle named Dragula with a fantastic dragon painted on it. The back fender is its tail, the front fender its feet and claws, and of course the body has the dragon's head.





Melanie Hinman's bright yellow 2003 Road King has a beautiful custom-tooled leather seat, depicting many of the things she loves, including a gypsy, a mermaid, her tattoo, and "RACKM".

Kimberly Clark says that her husband created this motorcycle-riding monster (her). She's been through three bikes in three years, and rides about 12,000 miles a year, going up into Canada and the Upper Peninsula. She now owns a 2017 Street Glide Special.

I'm sorry we couldn't meet everyone, but this is a short glimpse into the lives of the sisterhood. And please forgive me for any mistakes. I was a bit distracted by all those gorgeous bikes! By the way, SIRENS stands for Solo Independent Riders' Exclusive Naughty Sisterhood.

Are you a woman who owns a motorcycle? Maybe you'd like to join them! They can be found on Facebook.



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5353 Gateway Center, Flint, MI
48507**

Women's Summit Friday

9:30 am - 2 pm,

Vendor Show Saturday

9 am - 5 pm

FLINT LGBT PRIDE FESTIVAL

June 23 • 2p-8p |

RiverBank Park

by PFLAG

Pride events provide a positive stance against discrimination and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT). Celebrate diversity, affirm LGBT individuals, increase visibility and build a sense of community.
www.facebook.com/flintgaypride



SLOAN MUSEUM AUTO FAIR

June 23 & 24 • 8a-5p

NEW LOCATION!

Crossroads Village &

Huckleberry Railroad

by the Friends of Sloan Longway

See hundreds of beautiful cars, trucks and motorcycles and other unique automobiles. Family fun includes children's activities, swap meet, food vendors and more vehicles than ever before. sloanautofair.com

July

FLINT JULY 4TH FESTIVAL

July 4 • Atwood Stadium

by Flint DDA and Flint Institute of Music
Concert, fireworks and family fun. flinttown.com

TUNES AT NOON

July 9-August 17

11:45a-1:15p M-F

Willson Park in

Downtown Flint

by Greater Flint Arts Council

Come eat lunch and enjoy 90 minutes of FREE music Monday through Friday for six weeks. A diverse blend of music by Michigan musicians including jazz, blues, rock, gospel & more. geneseefun.com



FLINT ALLEY FEST

July 14 • 4p-10p

Buckham & Brush

Alleys in

Downtown Flint

by Friends of the Alley

A free festival in Buckham and Brush Alleys with music, arts, food and more.

GENESEE COUNTY

GOSPEL FEST

July 14 • Noon-7p

RiverBank Park

by New Life Tabernacle Ministries

One glorious day of family fun featuring more than a dozen national and local artists with delicious food, unique vendor wares and healthy living information. geneseefest.com



MICHIGAN

STORYTELLERS

FESTIVAL

July 20 • 6p-8p

Flint Public

Library

by The Flint Public Library

Entertaining stories

for children and adults of all ages plus storytelling workshops. Just bring your imagination. fpl.info

37TH ANNUAL FLINT

JAZZ FESTIVAL

July 26 | JAZZWALK

July 27-29 | RiverBank Park

by Greater Flint Arts Council

This festival gives attendees a chance to see local, regional and international artists perform. Food vendors, local non-profit organizations and handcraft vendors add to the magic and color. Headliners are Lin Rountree, Matt Baker and Donny McCaslin. geneseefun.com



Aug



DROP FEST

August 11 • Noon-10p

Buckham Alley

by Jerin Sage Productions

The seventh annual mid-Michigan electronic music festival with three stages.

www.facebook.com/flintdropfest

BACK TO THE BRICKS FESTIVAL

August 14-18

Saginaw Street in

Downtown Flint

by Back to the Bricks

Committee

Celebrating its 14th year, the festival is recognized as one of the top 50 cruises in America drawing more than 500,000 fans. backtothebricks.org



CRIM FESTIVAL OF RACES

August 24 & 25

Downtown Flint

by the Crim Fitness

Foundation

The festival

features the world-

renowned CRIM

10 Mile Road Race along with eight other running/walking events, a sports expo with more than 60 vendors and two days of ongoing entertainment! crim.org

Sept

BIKES ON THE BRICKS

September 7-9

Saginaw Street in

Downtown Flint

by the Bikes on the

Bricks Committee

Celebrating its 12th

anniversary,

this unique event

combines a

motorcycle show

and law enforcement

motorcycle skills competition!

Also enjoy vendor and sponsor displays, contests,

food, music and more! bikesonthebricks.com



FLINT FESTIVAL

OF QUILTS

October 11-13 • 9a-5p

Downtown and

Flint Cultural Center

by Greater Flint Arts Council

and Flint Public Library

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- Help us supply women and their families with personal needs items such as toothpaste, shampoo, diapers, formula, and toilet paper, as well as clothing and household goods.
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