

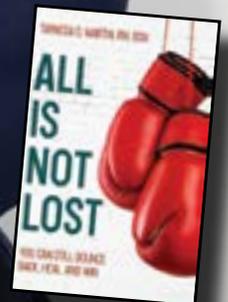
WOMEN 2 WOMEN MICHIGAN MAGAZINE

W2W

**Cultivate An
Adventurous Spirit**
Colleen Kilpatrick

**She Means
Business**
Sharp Farm Chic

Dance
Joy Dettling



Tarnesa Martin
All Is Not Lost



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note from our publisher & editor



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summer theme

Adventure

What do you think when you hear the word “Adventure?” Perhaps you feel as if you need *more* in your life. I hope you don’t believe you have to live without it, or are too *old* for adventure. Just Google search “92 Year Old Skydiving”! There are at least eight YouTube videos showing sky divers aged ninety to ninety-four! Each person said their time might be short and they wanted to do everything on their bucket list! Our editor’s eighty-eight-year-old great-aunt rode a camel in Egypt when she visited. Clearly, age has nothing to do with adventuring!

The Kidpreneurs article (page 13) tells how Addisyn started an adventure she never dreamed of through helping the homeless. In “Breaking Down Barriers in Marriage: How to Foster Adventure and Keep Your Marriage Exciting” (page 6) Stacey shares ideas from her own experience. Even birds have adventures according to Suzanne (page 26). Perhaps you need to see “adventure” through a different perspective (page 23).

If you feel stuck, our amazing writers have a lot to say about adventure. Step out. Try something new. We will leave you with this quote from the fabulous book by Lisa Wingate, *The Sea Keeper’s Daughters*:

*“The path to the extraordinary waits just beyond
the well-meaning prisons of our own making.”*

Life is about living, not playing it safe. Happy adventuring!

Hope to see you soon!

Mimi & Deb

contributors

Contributing Writers

Deborah St. Hilaire • Suzanne Young • Tarnesa Martin • Mimi Matthews
Colleen Kilpatrick • Joy Dettling • Stacy Kimbrell • Kristin Prieur

W2W

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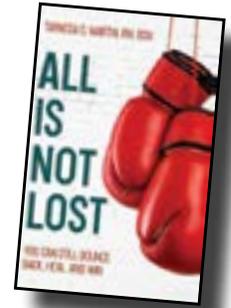
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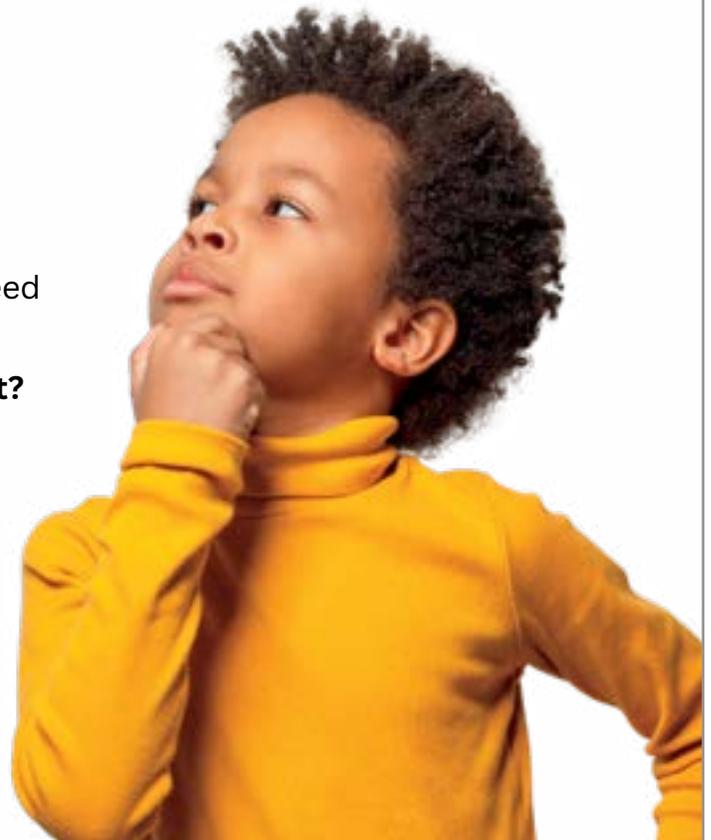
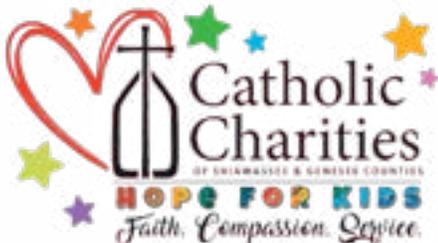


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Breaking Down Barriers in Marriage

How to Foster Adventure & Keep Your Marriage Exciting

Are you a woman who loves adventure and trying new things, but your spouse isn't as enthusiastic? Or is your spouse more adventurous than you? It can be tough to pursue your passion for adventure when your partner isn't on board, but it's not impossible. With a little creativity and communication, you can still have some adventure in your marriage while being true to yourself and creating unforgettable experiences together. Here are some tips that have personally helped my husband and me!

1 First, both of you sit down and write out your own list of things you would like to do or see, and places you would like to go. Then starts the communication and compromise! By working together, you can find common ground and create adventures that you both enjoy and look forward to. If there are some things in common, start there. If not, look at each other's list and pick 1-2 things you would like to try and do it. If they are not comfortable with sports or traveling to remote places, start with smaller adventures closer to home. For example, you could take a weekend hike or try a new restaurant together.

2 If your partner is hesitant to try something new, be supportive. See if there is a root cause of his hesitation. For example, a negative unresolved childhood experience at the beach could be the reason why he doesn't want to go in water now. Help to create a safe environment and encourage him to step out of his comfort zone. Don't pressure him or make him feel bad for not being as adventurous as you. Instead, offer words of encouragement and celebrate his efforts. By being supportive, you can help build his confidence and create a stronger sense of unity in your marriage.

3 Be patient, it may take time for your spouse to get on board with your adventurous spirit. Don't get discouraged if he is not as enthusiastic as you are right away. Be patient and keep working at it. As you continue to plan and experience new adventures together, he may become more comfortable and even start to enjoy them.

4 Set boundaries and respect each other's preferences and limitations when it comes to adventure. If your partner is not interested in a particular activity, it's okay to pursue it on your own or with friends who share your passion. You don't have to give up your love for adventure just because your spouse is not as adventurous. At the same time, it's important to respect your partner's boundaries and not pressure him to do something he is not comfortable with. By being independent and setting boundaries, you can pursue your passion for adventure without compromising your relationship.

5 Incorporate a small little adventure into everyday life! Adventure doesn't always have to involve big trips or extreme sports. Some things I do is write notes in my husband's lunch box, or leave a note in his drawer tucked into a sock or written in soap on the glass shower door. You could also get a puzzle or take a walk in a new city. By taking small risks and trying new things together, you can build a sense of adventure and spontaneity into your daily routine and keep your marriage fresh and exciting.

Breaking down barriers in marriage and fostering a spirit of adventure can be a wonderful way to strengthen your relationship and create unforgettable memories together. By starting small, communicating, compromising, finding common interests, being supportive, and being patient, you can create a stronger bond with your partner and experience the joys of adventure together keeping your marriage fresh and exciting.



*Stacey Kimbrell is a Speaker, and Author of Living Balanced. Stacey's passion for over 15 years is transforming families to a natural way of living through natural remedies, premium essential oils, and living a toxic chemical-free lifestyle. She mixes humor as she exposes the hidden chemicals in products we unknowingly ingest and use in our daily lives. **Live with Hope & Zeal in all things!** 810-423-5721 StaceyKimbrell.com.*



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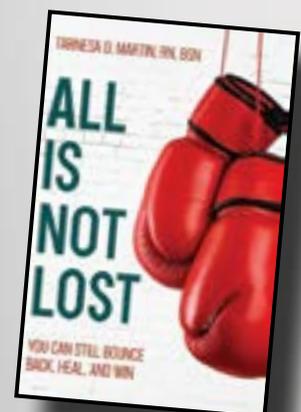
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Tarnesa Martin

All Is
Not
Lost

YOU
CAN STILL
BOUNCE
BACK, HEAL
& WIN



THIS ARTICLE IS PERSONAL

and speaks to the women that have lived through unimaginable pains in their life, thinking that all was lost and that there was no way possible to bounce back from the pains and losses of broken relationships, financial burdens, episodes of depression, unexpected health conditions and the daily disappointments of life that come to rob you of your inner peace.

It's challenging to stay calm and think positively when all hell is breaking through in your life and disrupting the foundation you have built for you, your family, and your future. Nothing hurts more than to see your life become disrupted mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically, and financially.

For me, this moment of despair caused me to question who I was as a person, a woman, a mother, a wife, and a minister of the gospel. Indeed, this moment left me feeling paralyzed, lame and like I was not good enough to maintain a successful marriage, family, ministry, and career.

I was left wondering what in the hell happened. One day I was on top of the mountain planning my retirement and future family vacations with friends and my husband, and the next day I was at the bottom of the bottom trying to gather all the broken pieces of my heart, life, and the finances I thought I'd secured for the future. And then the emotions of uncertainty, fear, and losses consumed me with anxiety and anger because I felt like I was no longer in control of my life. It was like trying to live through a Lifetime movie.

You can't stop the divorce, you can't stop the hurt feelings, you can't stop the chatter in the community, you can't stop the stress at work, and you can't stop the trials, tribulations, and setbacks in life, but you *can* decide how you are going to respond.

But this takes strength, courage, prayer, and some therapy sessions to help you navigate through the pains of your life. Studies say at least 19.6 million Americans experienced an episode of depression in 2019, nobody is exempt from experiencing setbacks, losses, and disappointments. But we don't have to suffer in silence or be ashamed of our pain, which is why I wrote the book *All Is Not Lost, You Can Still Bounce Back, Heal and Win*.

No matter what we as individuals may face in life, we can recover and regain true happiness. Life is about choices and positioning ourselves to fight for our future while putting in the work to become a better and healthier version of ourselves. Despite all that I have gone through in life—which was more than I thought I could bear—the reason I am writing this article is to tell you that all is *not* lost, you *can* bounce back, heal and win.

I literally thought everything in my life was lost, when the man I loved stopped loving me, and moved on with someone else. I journeyed through the pain, and fought to heal, because I didn't want to forfeit my future. I knew God had bigger plans for me, but I had to go through the process and believe that things were going to get better for me one day, and that God was going to heal my heart and restore my joy, peace, and happiness.

If you are in the midst of a trial, tribulation, set back, or a traumatic experience, I'm encouraging you from my own experience and empowering you to heal and live through the pain. In time it will get better, trust me, all is not lost in your life, you still have the power of *you* inside you.

I know the feeling of despair and doubt. Looking back over my life there was no way that I could have known that my marriage was going to end in divorce, that I was going to have a hysterectomy, or

get a five-day suspension on my job and go through an episode of depression. If I had known, I would have never gotten married, I would have tried to be as healthy as possible, and I would not have taken on the responsibilities of becoming a manager. But I had no idea! Which is why I had to stop blaming myself for what happened. Life happens, and sometimes you can't control what happens.

On a positive note, I had no idea that I would get a promotion on my job and become the community advocate professionally known as Nurse "T". Or that I'd be invited to sit and serve on several community boards, go to the white house, publish a motivational self-help book, become a certified life coach, and start a coaching and consulting company focusing on personal development, health literacy and community development. My losses have been overcome by wins of life.

I am more focused and learning how to trust God with my life. He knows the desires of my heart, and I'm believing one day, he will send my King to find me. Until then, I'm learning how to balance my life as a single woman, with two adult children, and a precious grandbaby.

Our life matters and despite the hardships, we are overcomers, and we don't have to forfeit our future because of disappointments. Queen, your Crown Awaits You!



Tarnesa Martin R.N. is a life and personal development coach who leads sessions in health awareness, education, and self-care that focus

on enhancing one's capabilities for becoming a better version of themselves. She is an author, speaker, educator, and leadership mentor. Her business is Empower To Live Better, LLC, and she may be reached at empowertolivebetter@gmail.com.

Heartstrings of Love

Arlene Crane-Curns



*Middle left: my passport photo, middle right: our family 1955,
top left: 1949, bottom left: 1944 a high school photo taken at
my childhood home, bottom: Randy's plane*



I'm often heard exclaiming, "I'm almost 100!" Born on New Year's day in 1927, I've lived a different life from most. Growing up during the Great Depression affected my life greatly. I have experienced everything from having ice delivered to our home by horse and wagon to seeing driverless cars on the expressway, from keeping in touch with penny postcards to the internet highway, and remembering when gas was ten cents a gallon.

From a family of five children with three older sisters, I was fourth in line for hand-me-down dresses. I remember Daddy picking up coal that fell off boxcars to heat our home and cutting cardboard to fit inside our shoes where the soles had worn completely through.

When Mom cooked a chicken, she cooked every usable part. For seven of us, there were two legs, two wings, two thighs, two breasts, liver, gizzard, heart, neck, back, and the "part that went over the fence last." The breasts were cut in half to deliver more white meat. Dad always ate the tail, the back, the liver, and the gizzard, leaving the meatier pieces for others. All of us kids wanted the heart, so Mom made us take turns. I clearly remember standing by the stove while Mom fried the chicken when it was my turn to make sure I got it.

We didn't have a telephone or a car. No rides in the country for a picnic or an ice cream cone. Our travels consisted of going to the grocery store with my little red Radio Flyer wagon to carry our groceries home.

If it sounds like I'm complaining, I'm not. Our home was filled with love, warmth, joy and kindness. I couldn't have had a lovelier childhood. My siblings and I have often agreed that we were poor growing up but we didn't know it.

When I was twenty, I married a local boy. Jack had served in the Navy during WWII. We raised four wonderful children--two girls and two boys. It seemed as though we just turned around and we were empty nesters.

I had always had a dream of learning to fly a plane. It was a fire in my heart that could not be extinguished. Our children were all productive citizens living on their own. Even though I still wanted to fly a plane, I had never set foot in one.

One of Jack's coworker's owned an airplane and since my heart's desire was to fly, Jack made arrangements for me to meet his friend. Randy's plane was hangared



at Dalton Airport, not far from our home. When I saw the plane, I was shocked. It was a little two-seater made of canvas. I didn't know whether to say I didn't want to go or what to do. It didn't look very safe. Well, I thought, Randy wouldn't go up in it if it wasn't safe, so off we went. I couldn't believe it when I looked down, and there was a hole in the canvas between my feet! But I have to say that was one of the most exciting, enjoyable times I've ever experienced. Randy flew me over our house and pointed out other landmarks that I would recognize. I absolutely loved it and was hooked on flying!

We joined a Travel Club and immediately purchased tickets to France, Monaco, Italy, Hawaii, the Bahamas, Las Vegas and Spain. All of this, across both oceans, before Jack confided in me that he didn't like to fly. In the morning I'm definitely calling our travel agent to inquire about cruises. I am also calling a flying instructor to inquire about lessons to fly an airplane. You're never too old to pursue your dream and I haven't given up on mine.



Women & Money

Conquering Financial Challenges

It is no secret that women traditionally had little to do with family finances or retirement planning. Over time, women have come a *long* way, especially as their presence in the workforce expanded and income increased. But even with some significant advances, women still face unique gender-specific challenges when it comes to finances:

WOMEN MAKE LESS THAN MEN

The well-known “gender pay gap” undoubtedly has decreased over time. Women have made huge strides over recent years in narrowing this gap and it is considered a huge accomplishment for women’s financial freedom. However, the gender pay gap is still incredibly significant. Recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates a 24% pay gap in workers age 35-44, and that increased with age. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2021 data showed women’s annual earnings were 84% of men, and that number only widened with age or for minorities. Education is not making an impact, as many studies show women with postgraduate degrees are *STILL* earning less than white men in the same position that only hold a bachelor’s degree.

WOMEN LIVE LONGER

The average lifespan is about 5 years longer for a woman than a man in the U.S.. In other countries, it is even longer. This poses some unique challenges for women to face. First, retirement will most likely cost more money. On average, there are going to be more years of retirement to fund. This doesn’t just include basic living expenses. If you live longer, you will be paying more over time for healthcare and out of pocket medical expenses, which can add up drastically in elderly years. Also, since many husbands precede their wives in death, women are far more likely to live *alone* later in life, and therefore need assistance. The AARP estimates that women are 50% more likely to enter a nursing home and have a whole host of other increased long term care expenses.

WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BRING IN LESS MONEY AND SPEND MORE ON OTHERS

Women tend to spend less time in the workforce when compared to men. This has to do with the caregiving roles that many women take over time. Whether it is tending to your own children, or taking care of an elderly relative, females are much more likely to take time out of the workforce to handle family responsibilities. This means there is less income coming in and, most noteworthy here, less money to save. This can also be coupled with extra spending, as supporting children and often elderly relatives requires money. Clearly this can be a double-edged sword that can destroy a woman’s financial security if she is not careful.

SPECIAL COVID CHALLENGES

COVID definitely changed the world in an unprecedented number of ways for all. But, women undeniably have taken significant financial blows during this time. The number of women who either left the workforce or took drastic pay cuts as a result of school closings, quarantines, and lack of childcare options is undeniably catastrophic. Many women are left with no other choice besides extending retirement dates or shifting their picture drastically to match their financial situation.

What can we do to overcome these hurdles, ladies? Although not all of these things are in our control, there are a few key takeaways. Confidence and involvement are key, and it all begins with financial literacy. Educate yourself on financial topics, to the point at which you are confident in taking an active seat in your family’s budgeting and retirement planning. There is an infinite amount of information out there to assist you. Read through female finance blogs such as *Clever Girl Finance* (www.clevergirlfinance.com/blog) and *The Women’s Institute for Financial Education* (www.WIFE.org). There are numerous podcasts available as well if you are more of a listener. *Financial Feminist* and *So Money* are a couple of great podcasts to start with.

It is also key for you to start saving and investing early to accumulate more funds for retirement. Attempt to save more during the years you are more actively working, and keep in mind, things come up. It is *completely* possible that at some point during your career you will be out of the workforce, even if you think otherwise. Life is unpredictable and preparing for the unknown is important.

Best in planning!
Kristin



Kristin Prieur is Chief Compliance Officer and Financial Advisor at Financial Strategies Group. She has a passion for providing financial education for women. In her spare time, she is also a Yoga Instructor and Reiki Practitioner.



My name is Addisyn Goss

and I am now 16 years old. I started Snuggle Sacks when I was 8 years old after meeting my grandpa for the first time and learning he had been homeless for many years while being estranged from our family. The stories he was telling my siblings and me really touched all of us, but my brother and sister were in travel sports at the time. We all came up with the idea of putting together survival kits for the homeless in our area, but with them being so busy I started it out with the help of my parents. We grew quickly, and before we knew it, it was all hands on deck!

My big WHY is seeing so many smiles and HOPE when handing out our sacks...the homeless just want to know someone cares, and treats them like a normal person. It's my favorite! Also, I have been able to show so many kids, youth groups, spirit teams, scout troops, etc. that homelessness is real and right in our own backyard.

Snuggle Sacks provides survival kits to those in need - each kit comes in a drawstring backpack and has about 40 items ranging from food/snacks, hygiene products, blanket, socks, water, and seasonal items. We also have tiny pantries in many local cities and keep them stocked with nonperishables, as well as working with local agencies to provide job placement, temporary housing and more! We partner with

dozens of shelters, soup kitchens, and government agencies statewide, and make sure they always have at least 30 survival kits on hand, and deliver more to them when they get low.

My sister, Sheridan, is in college at Saginaw Valley, so she manages all of our email, social media, website, etc. My brother, Jaxson, does the logistics, takes orders from the shelters and determines how many sacks we need each month. Then he gets those numbers to me and I determine how many volunteers we will need to get it done, and am there when they come in. We average about 1,100 sacks per month, and to date have done about 97,000 throughout Michigan, Indiana, North Carolina, and New Mexico. Before COVID, we were on the Today Show and that led to chapters in all these states. Since COVID, our donors are down quite a bit, and we have scaled back to just Michigan again.

There are so many stories I could share, but what it comes down to is when you see a grown man cry getting a pair of socks, or when you get the call from someone that you helped get connected to resources and are now starting a job and moving into an apartment, it has really affected me.

We've had people start with a weekend in a hotel, and due to lack of availability to their vital records (birth certificate, social security card, etc.) were unable to get a job. Now, they have those things and are moving toward a better life. There are also many testimonials on our website.

We recently moved our operation into the Linden Presbyterian Church,



and because of that are open by appointment only. We welcome volunteers in a few times a week to help us assemble the backpacks. If you would like to help, that is done through signups on our social media or email.

We hold an annual Bowlathon at Holly Lanes, as well as a golf outing at Fenton Farms Golf Club, and that helps us get through the majority of the year. Information is on our website.

You can find us at www.SnuggleSacks.org, www.facebook.com/snugglesacksmi and www.instagram.com/snuggle.sacks. You can also email us at team@snugglesacks.org, or call us at (810) 919-9937.

W2W: please go to their website and see how far Snuggle Sacks has come, and the huge impact they are having on homelessness in our area! You will be amazed. While you are there, donate or send items from their Amazon Wishlist. It is a way WE can help them help the homeless.



Cultivate an Adventurous Spirit

LIFE IS FAIRLY PREDICTABLE IN THE COMFORT ZONE. There are no big surprises. Things are orderly and expected. We feel in control. All that we say, do, think and feel is familiar and, shall I say, comfortable.

But there's a downside to living in the comfort zone. After a while, life gets rather boring. New and interesting opportunities and people seldom come our way. Our senses become dull; our energy decreases. And, one thing is certain, we seldom experience much in the way of personal growth.

So, as comfortable and predictable as it may be, living inside our comfort zone is not ideal.

In order to live fully, achieve our dreams and share the unique gifts we have come here to share, we must be willing to experience some degree of discomfort outside our comfort zone. That's how we grow. There isn't a shortcut.

Throughout life, every time we attend a new school, learn a new skill, start a new job, begin a new

relationship, and move to a new home, we take a step out of the familiar and into the unknown. As we all know, that can be uncomfortable. We may feel fearful and anxious; we may struggle with feelings of self-consciousness and self-doubt. Worse, we may decide that all that discomfort is not worth it and chose to stay safely in our little zone of comfort ignoring all that we ever dreamed of doing and becoming.

"In the heating and cooling trade, the point on the thermostat in which neither heating nor cooling must operate - around 72 degrees - is called, "The Comfort Zone." It is also known as "The Dead Zone."

-Peter McWilliams

But here's the great news. When we are able to muster even a little bit of courage to try something new, our comfort zone expands around

us. Things that once felt unfamiliar, can suddenly feel familiar. Our fears and anxieties about the situation lessen or diminish altogether. We feel courageous; our confidence soars. We grow.

I know this phenomena well. As a young teen, I operated within a very small comfort zone. Stepping out of it triggered all sorts of anxious and fearful thoughts, so I avoided doing so, which only made my comfort zone shrink further.

It was a quote from Helen Keller that made me question my tendency to play it small and safe inside my comfort zone.

"Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all."

I remember thinking to myself, if Helen Keller - who cannot see, hear or speak - truly believes that life is an adventure, then why do I, with all my senses fully intact, feel afraid of everything? (I had not yet learned the importance of asking powerful questions at that age. Tony Robbins

and his wisdom would enter my life several years later.)

I soon became acutely aware of all that I was missing and made a conscious decision to start pushing against the walls of my comfort zone by intentionally pursuing a variety of activities that both interested and frightened me.

One of those activities was Outward Bound, a wilderness-based personal development program. Although their brochure didn't say so, my comfort zone would never be the same again.

The 3-week course in which I participated took place in the Boundary Waters Region of Northern Minnesota in what later proved to be one of the coldest, snowiest winters on record. Temperatures hovered between 40 and 60 degrees *below* zero; the snow was much deeper than I was tall. Each day our little band of 8 participants and two instructors, traveled through the frozen wilderness on cross-country skis or snowshoes. Each night, after setting up camp, cutting down trees for firewood, making a fire, cutting a hole in the ice for water, feeding the dogs, cooking from our meager stash, and eating around the campfire, we fell into our beds exhausted. And by beds I mean, two sleeping bags inside one another on a piece of plastic with another piece of plastic hanging in the trees above us to catch the falling snow.

Each and every day presented us with opportunities to step way outside our comfort zone into the unfamiliar. Some opportunities were exciting like the night we skied out to the middle of a frozen lake and watched the Northern Lights shimmer and dance against the dark winter sky. Other opportunities were frightening like the night we jumped, one at a time, through a manhole-sized opening in the ice to "bathe", fully-submerged, in a frigid, raging river with water black as ink. Time spent in a Finish Sauna prior to our

plunge lessened our discomfort, but freezing water is still freezing water. Through it all, I noticed that I had begun to feel comfortable doing things that only the day before had felt strange and frightening. By the third night, sleeping on the ground was familiar and routine; the second jump into the freezing river was exhilarating, not intimidating. By the end of week 2, my comfort zone had expanded around me and our daily routine felt normal. I no longer feared falling through the ice or freezing to death. Rather, I felt strong and confident with my new skills and my ability to handle whatever would happen in the final week which culminated in "The Solo", a three-day period of solitude in the woods away from the group.

When I returned to civilization, I was changed. I felt confident and courageous with an elevated trust in my ability to handle whatever would come my way from that day forward. My adventurous spirit had been awakened. Possibilities seemed endless. My comfort zone felt expansive. I was eager and ready to take on bigger challenges.

"When we avoid fear, we avoid many. Avoiding becomes our habit.

"When we conquer fear, we conquer many, conquering becomes our habit."

-Unknown

As I have discovered since then, nurturing an adventurous spirit helps us confidently embrace the inevitable changes in every chapter of life. If you, like me, did not come into this world with an adventurous spirit, you can cultivate one. Here's how:

Adopt a Growth Mindset

When growth is your desire, you become more receptive to trying new things. And when you do - no matter how small or seemingly insignificant - your brain creates new neural connections. The unfamiliar becomes familiar. You grow. Your life expands. Everything new counts so listen to music you've never heard before, learn a new language, develop a new skill, take a class that piques your interest, practice creating anything, explore new places, drive a different route.

Start Small

If the thought of taking a big step out of your comfort zone is intimidating, try taking baby steps in the direction of your desires. Having a friend or accountability partner for mutual support and encouragement is a big help. As Ernest Hemingway said, "As long as you can start, you are all right. The juice will come." Practice saying "Yes"

If your default response to most new opportunities and invitations is "no", you're probably missing out on some amazing experiences and the joy and personal growth that would result. Instead, practice being courageous. The next time you have an opportunity to do something unfamiliar, try this little pep talk with yourself, "Hey your name, life is giving you this amazing opportunity to grow and expand. Why don't you give it a go?" Just noticing where and when you shrink from opportunity can initiate a shift in a new direction.

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone." Neale Donald Walsch



Colleen Kilpatrick is a Speaker, Creative Collaborator and the Author of "Eliminate What You Tolerate: A simple, proven way to regain focus, increase

productivity and liberate your energy for the more important things in life." She inspires people to bring their best gifts to the world.



Quick Summer Sweet Treat

A lazy Sunday afternoon cuddled up with family, playing in the rain with your kids and tasting a perfect, sweet treat on a summer day can be some of the simplest yet best parts of life.

Recipes that can be made with clean, fresh ingredients in a matter of minutes make some of the best-tasting dishes, snacks and treats. Sometimes keeping it simple is the best route to take as opposed to confusing prep that takes too much time.

This Strawberry Mousse, which is made with families in mind, is a perfect recipe to make with your little ones or for a date night dessert. It's great to take for an outing at the park, a neighborhood party or just to snack on throughout the week.

It's sweet, fluffy and smooth all at the same time. Made to serve a handful of people, it only takes a few moments to complete. Moms love it and kids enjoy the taste and texture.

Strawberry Mousse

Servings: 6-8

- 1 cup strawberries, halved
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- assorted fruit, for serving

To start, puree 1 cup of strawberries in blender until smooth.

In a mixing bowl, combine whipping cream and powdered sugar until smooth.

In a different bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth then add the pureed strawberries.

Finally, add the whipped cream mixture to the cream cheese and strawberries.

Stir all the components together until they reach the desired consistency before serving with fresh fruit.

It's easy, fresh and delicious. Your kids can help you combine all the ingredients and excitedly try the sweet result.

Find more sweet recipes at Culinary.net. If you made this recipe at home, use #MyCulinaryConnection on your favorite social network to share your work.

(familyfeatures.com)
(culinary.net)

100 Women Igniting Change

100 Women Igniting Change is a group of professional women, entrepreneurs, stay at home moms, etc., who want to meet great ladies in the community to give back in an exciting way!

Now in its 12th year, the group has contributed over \$95,000 to local charities.

Meeting twice each year, all in attendance can enter for a chance to present their favorite charity to be considered for funds. Three presenters have five minutes to talk about their choice and how the money would benefit. The group then votes on the one that tugs at their heartstrings and the chosen charity receives a check for up to \$10,000, provided by each member's \$100 check.

Interested in making new friends and becoming a philanthropist? 100 Women Igniting Change is looking for new members with a heart for giving to worthy causes.

The next event will be held on October 18, 2023. Please email Karen Church at karenchurch@me.com or text 810-577-3152 to join.

May 17, 2023 Summary

Aimee Baker presented and won for Clarkston SCAMP; a 5 week summer day camp for disabled people ages 3-50. Campers experience fun activities and field trips each day. They may go to a lake, Air Tyme Trampoline, 4-H, Sea World, or Lego Land, to name a few.

SCAMP typically host 200 campers each summer, providing meals, music and art therapy. Many of the camper's families can't afford the cost of approximately \$1,850, so their tuition is covered or reduced. About half the campers pay \$500 for the 5 week program. There is a minimum 1 to 1 camper/counselor ratio and payroll is their largest expense. This is the only disabilities camp that doesn't age out the children and helps pay for them to attend. There are four major fundraisers a year and a few grants to offset costs.



she means business





Sharp Farm Chic

Photos on the Farm

This is a beautiful story about adventure, creating a business, hard work and perseverance, and faith.

Valerie Sharp is an amazing lady, and we encourage you to get to know her and her businesses.

Valerie and her husband bought an 1865 farmhouse seven years ago. She was a stay-at-home mom (of five children) and began antiquing to find vintage items to decorate her Victorian house. She fell in love with authentic vintage antiques, and began selling what she didn't keep for her house.

Two years after moving she went through divorce, and ended up with the house in the settlement. This meant she also ended up with all the bills and upkeep. Now, what was once a hobby became a necessary business—and her passion! She opened *Sharp Farm Chic Antique Store* five years ago.

Valerie went to tons of barn/estate sales, filled her own barn, and had “Barn Sales”, which she continues to this day. Making a profit has taken a lot of hard work, and she was astounded that she could afford to pay her bills while being a stay-at-home mom. After COVID, people were so happy to get out and about that she had the best sales ever. Many customers come back to every barn sale she has (four a year).

Three years ago Valerie added a couple of vintage trucks to her property to decorate and thought photographers might like to take photos with them. Voila! *Photos on the Farm* was born. She thought right.

Photographers have booked sessions with the trucks, the goats, the kittens, bunnies, and chickens, the barn and its antique furnishings, and now an old hippie van too. And the new greenhouse. Oh, the greenhouse! But more on that later.

This is a story of family and a legacy of loving the land and hard work. In 1955 Valerie's grandparents opened Smith Berry and Tree Farm (she has their old signs displayed), and her parents also had a berry farm and have raised cattle since she was a child. So Valerie has farming in her blood and understands what hard work and commitment is.

This is a story of faith, and love between a woman and a man, brought together through God's timing. Valerie and her fiancé, Greg, just met a year ago. Welllll, not exactly.

In their teens (fourteen and seventeen), Valerie and Greg were online friends who met in a chat room. (Remember when AOL came out?) She even had him come to her parents' home to meet her. (Like she says, “I was fourteen, I didn't know anything!”) Of course her dad was not happy and sent him packing!

Twenty-six years pass with marriages, kids, and moving to different states and areas of Michigan. Here's God's hand in their story: they ended up living five miles apart in the same township! Valerie sometimes posted on the Gaines Township Facebook page, and one day Greg saw her post,

thought she was cute, requested friendship, and to shorten the story, they ended up on a date. It wasn't until after the date later that night that Valerie started thinking and wondering. The next day, they were going to an estate sale and she asked him, "Did you have AOL as a teenager?" And he said, "I thought it was you!" They were speechless. Twenty-six years later and these two ended up together in what Valerie said was absolutely God's timing and purpose. And they have pretty much been inseparable since.

At fourteen and seventeen there is no way they could have had a

relationship. But now they are perfectly matched in many ways. They both love old things, (Greg had been picking and selling on Ebay before Valerie came into the picture), have creative visions, and whatever Valerie needs help with, Greg knows how to do all of it. Greg is a boat mechanic, but master of all trades to Valerie. He designed and built, with Valerie helping a bit, the Victorian greenhouse using antique leaded glass panels and reclaimed wood. (You really have to see it to experience the creative genius in his design.) After its completion, Greg proposed, and they are getting married in the greenhouse in

October. In her own words, Valerie says this is the best love story ever. We agree.

PERSEVERANCE

Valerie was single for several years. There were days she was overwhelmed, lonely, discouraged, and exhausted. It was tough running the place alone, but at least her bills were paid, incredibly. Her parents and grandparents taught her to always be generous and give back, so she gives ten percent of the proceeds from her barn sales to a charity or a family in need. It's her way of "being a light in the darkness". They also instilled in her

All photos on this page, credit to: nixandnova.com





the practice of giving a tithe to further God’s kingdom. She believes living generously has brought about God’s blessings on her finances.

Running the businesses, keeping up the house, out buildings, and property, while single parenting, was at times quite daunting. There was a lot to be done around the property. One of the big problems as a single woman was hiring help without being taken advantage of. But she kept on “picking” from estate sales, selling furniture pieces in between the barn sales, and working very hard at her business. She taught herself to do many things around her farm. She bought an old 1970 truck and learned to fix it herself.

Valerie’s schooling for business administration has come in handy, even though at the time she thought she’d never really use it. She recalls things she learned then and is able to apply that knowledge now in marketing her business and is quite successful in drawing people to her Facebook page and businesses.

Her passion? She just wants to reuse things. “Vintage items have so much better quality, and these items have character, and a story,” she says. “Once you get into that mindset,

it’s quite difficult to go into stores like Ikea and Target, and I personally shop small businesses whenever possible.”

What would you like to tell women?

“I really believe that you need to have a hobby, a passion, because if you don’t you might have a lack of joy, or even too much stress. You need to be willing to take some risks. But just start small doing something you love. Whether it’s antiques, gardening, traveling, creating whatever, you need to have something to look forward to, to keep you going and your mind active. I can’t wait to get up and get going in the morning. My life holds so much adventure and I get to do things I love.”

Valerie has chosen this phrase to live by:

“Find something to be grateful for every day.”

This link will take you to all of Valerie’s business pages: dot.cards/sharpfarm

Make sure to look her up and enjoy her gorgeous photos. See you at the barn sale!

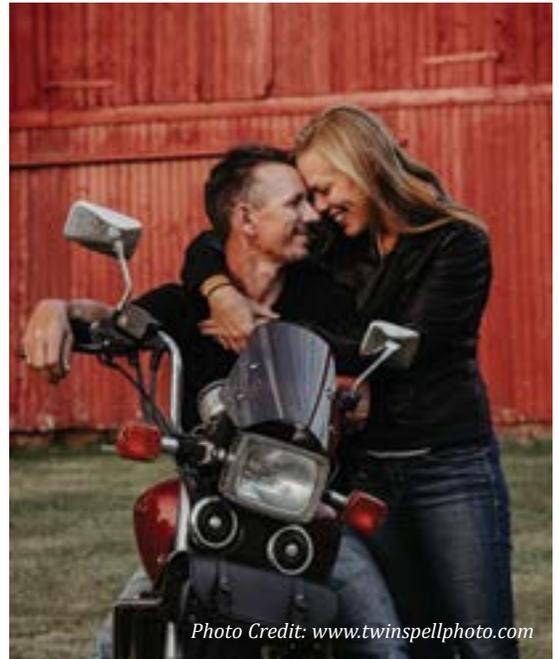


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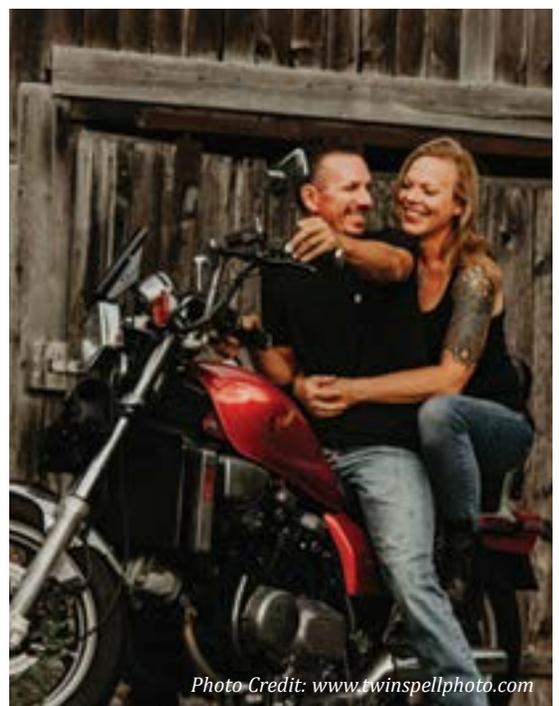


Photo Credit: www.twinspellphoto.com

Dance

A tool for accelerated growth and healing?

In 2017, I stumbled upon my first *ecstatic dance* experience while living in Ubud, Bali. I remember this first experience well. It was held at the famous Yoga Barn, a new age Mecca, where there was a beautiful open air platform surrounded by beautiful rain forests. The space was packed with an eclectic group of individuals from all over the world coming together for the sake of movement and music. Rain forests, incense and hippies are not a requirement for this amazing experience and I have found it throughout my travels in many contexts. There are a few commonalities in every location I have been to and they are also what makes ecstatic dance unique. Ecstatic dance is free from substances, phones, talking, and judgment. The intention is to create a therapeutic space for un-choreographed, free-form exploration through movement. With a wide range of expressive music and few rules, this is an opportunity to experience uninhibited body freedom while in the presence of others in a judgment-free zone.

I love this experience so much, that I had to create my own event when there were none in my area so that I could get my weekly dose of therapy.

This practice has changed my life. I have been on a long journey of developing an understanding of my physical, emotional and mental health as these aspects of my life have given me many challenges. Over the years I have come across and implemented many tools, techniques, information and ideologies that have assisted me, however I don't think there is any tool that has assisted me quite as much as this practice. These past few years I have been on an accelerated path of

healing and personal growth. I can attribute this pace to the fact that on a weekly basis I am shaking off whatever is slowing me down through dance. I love to call this experience "rocket fuel" for my life.

It is a tool for many contexts

What I have found is that it doesn't matter what state I am in mentally, emotionally, physically...I show up and I get exactly what I need. Whenever I come into this event feeling stuck, slow, confused, or yucky, somehow that all gets magically reorganized, and I leave with brilliance, clarity and power. I don't know how exactly this works, but somehow everything that I no longer need shakes out of my body and falls right through the floor.

Facilitating ecstatic dance has led me to show up for this practice on a weekly basis for a year and a half now. It means I go when I am feeling great and I also go when I am feeling not so great. I go when my body feels limber and strong and I also go when I am fatigued or riddled with pain. No matter what state I am in when I go, I come out with significant benefit.

It's an "anti-tool"

Often times when we are on a path of growth or healing we get our heads too involved in the process. We create a story of our past and our pain and we try to figure out what is wrong with us and what we need to improve. We get obsessed with methods and tools and "doing it right." We often measure how closely we follow a prescribed path to determine how successful we are. The power of this experience is that we get to turn our brain off, forget about methods and measurements, and let our body do what it needs to do.

Our body has its own intelligence, of a unique geometry and physics, that it desires in order to process, heal, and advance. In this experience, our bodies get to flow through space and shapes just as it needs to, naturally and unconsciously.

This is a tool that allows us to let go of the self-help frameworks of needing something outside of ourselves to be better. Through the simplicity of free body movement, we realize that we don't need anything else.

While I find there is greater power in having the container of doing this in a group, this is also something that can be explored at home alone. Start with the question, "What would it be like if I let my body move however it wants to?" Then put some music on and see what happens. For some this experience feels foreign and awkward. For others this immediately connects them with younger years and comes naturally as it fills unmet urges. Like many things, this is a practice that evolves with time. Take baby steps, be curious, give yourself grace and see where it leads you.



Joy facilitates *Ignite Body Freedom* every Sunday and Tuesday morning in Brighton, MI. You can find more information at ignitelife.net/freedom and send inquiries to joy@ignitelife.net.

If you are unable to attend an event with Joy in Brighton, you can find a directory of similar events worldwide listed on ecstaticdance.org.



Adventure Is In The Eye Of The Beholder

What if, instead of looking at getting older as if it were a death sentence, we saw it as an opportunity for adventure?

How would that change your focus? Instead of seeing your body as something that has betrayed you, what if you saw it as the vehicle that would carry you in the direction of pursuing items on your bucket list, or even some new adventure you didn't know you wanted?

My inspiration for this article came as I was reading one of my favorite authors, Max Lucado, a man who truly knows how to craft words. He wrote:

*"There is a rawness and a wonder to life. Pursue it. Hunt for it. Sell out to get it. Don't listen to the whines of those who have settled for a second-rate life and want you to do the same so they won't feel guilty. Your goal is not to live long; it's to **live**."*

As someone who has spent many decades full of wonder and appreciation for life, I encourage you to see adventure ahead of you no matter your age! My greatest—and longest-lasting—adventure began when I adopted two toddlers at age fifty! (Not for the faint-hearted, I'm telling you!) Perhaps it wasn't the adventure I would have picked, definitely not one I could have foreseen! But one I never knew I wanted, for sure.

I am now blessed with teaching my cognitively impaired son the wonders of God's creation and the joy to be found in simple things. I am able to give my neuro-divergent daughter tools to navigate her difficult road dealing with expectations of neuro-typical employers and co-workers and people in general. And I know without a doubt that I have made a life-giving difference in the lives of two would-be "throw away" children.

Am I finished with adventure? No way!! It's been seventeen years since I dropped from the arch at Six Flags Over Texas in a bungee jump and I'm itching to do

another one! And a hot air balloon ride. And go to Greece. And camping this weekend—I haul and set up by myself. And write a book (it's in process. I'm going to be a Cover Girl yet!)

General Douglas MacArthur, at seventy-eight, said: *"Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old by deserting their ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to **give up** wrinkles the soul."*

Grab hold of your curiosity and see where it leads you! There is so much to explore. Maybe you are not working right now. You have time to spend. Build up your brain and take a class. There's never a better time to learn! You have love to give. Imagine what a visit would mean to someone who can't leave their home? Painting or sewing have always intrigued you—so go for it! The library (thegdl.org) offers many classes. Our cultural center is one of the best and also offers classes. At least go for a visit. I've always wanted to rock babies in the NICU at Hurley. Perhaps your neighborhood school would welcome someone to come and read to children or listen to *them* read. My friend just completed classes with her black lab (a rescue) to become a therapy dog who visits hospitals.

These suggestions are only a drop in the bucket list of adventure! There are many ways to welcome adventure into your life. It does not look the same to everyone and I encourage you, no, I *challenge* you, to find a new way to bring interest and joy into your life.



Mimi Matthews is in the "encouragement business" as the owner of Empowerment Cards by Mimi, which features greeting cards that inspire and encourage. She is also a speaker, workshop leader, writer, and our editor. Visit her shop at www.etsy.com/shop/EmPOWordmentCards, her blog at www.particularpassions.me.

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5 KEY STEPS for Your

Caregiving Journey



Caring for a family member or close friend is one of the most important roles you'll play. It may start with driving your loved one to get groceries or to the doctor. Later, you may find yourself taking more time off from work, preparing meals or handling bills.

No matter where you are in the journey of family caregiving— just beginning to anticipate a need, helping coordinate a big move or taking care of a family member full time—having a good framework to help guide both you and your loved one will make the process easier.

This guide is a practical tool to help you care for your family member or close friend. You'll find information, resources and checklists to help you get organized and find the support that you might need.

The guide follows five important steps that will help see you through your caregiving journey.

START THE CONVERSATION. Many people wait until a crisis occurs before they talk about their values and preferences, wishes for health care or details of their finances. If you wait until a fall, accident or serious diagnosis, big decisions may be driven by assumptions.

FORM YOUR TEAM. No one should try to approach the responsibilities of caregiving alone. While other family members are likely

sources of support, don't overlook friends, colleagues, clubs, or religious and other organizational affiliations as resources too.

MAKE A PLAN. Putting together a family caregiving plan now will help you respond more quickly and effectively should the need arise. It can also provide some peace of mind. A plan helps everyone get on the same page and keeps the focus on what's best for your loved one.

FIND SUPPORT. Many issues may arise during your caregiving experience that require additional information and resources. Don't hesitate to reach out to organizations and professionals with experience in helping family caregivers.

CARE FOR YOURSELF. As a family caregiver, it's easy to forget about your own needs. Keeping up your energy and maintaining your health are critical in order to care for others. It's just as important to make a plan to take care of yourself as it is to create a caregiving plan for others.

Taken from the *Family Caregiving Guide* from AARP.org. The Guide is full of valuable information. Use this link to download your own.

www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/caregiving/pdf/family-caregiving-guide/english.pdf

The Adventure of the Hawk & the Finch

One morning as I was appreciating all the colorful flowers and pretty birds in my backyard, a synchronicity happened just as I began thinking about Mother Nature and how she can bring us peace and beauty and at the same time put us through a lot of fear and chaos during events like tornados and earthquakes. None of us wants to go through bad experiences, so why do they happen?

Within seconds, a hawk flew down towards the birdfeeder in the center of my backyard and tried to snatch a bright yellow finch into its claws. They each flew towards me and were briefly caught off guard as they banged into the sliding screen door behind me where I was sitting. Even though they were both stunned, the finch quickly escaped and flew away and the hawk flew up to a tree. The hawk's eyes scanned the yard looking for more prey. When he saw that there were no other birds around, he flew off in search of his dinner elsewhere.

I suddenly realized the adventure these two birds just had was a synchronicity that answered my question. The hawk and the finch were a perfect example of how everything in nature participates in the dance of life. In nature, it's a dance where everything goes with the flow and doesn't get stuck in a rut of disappointment, just like the birds did when they continued on with their journeys. For people, it's an energetic dance where we're constantly pushing and pulling. Sometimes we'll lead in the dance of life and sometimes we'll follow. Depending on what we're thinking, sometimes our energy is up and sometimes it's down.

Watching the hawk and the finch dance together reminded me that all experiences, both good and bad, are simply a natural part of

life here on earth. They happen for a reason that at first sight often seems invisible. There is an opportunity to learn something from every experience. We can stop and reassess our lives. We can make course corrections and fly in a new direction. We can find our balance and discern what we do and do not want in life. Finally, we can choose, just like the finch and the hawk did, to never give up, go with the flow, and continue moving forward towards the things we want in life.

The next time you find yourself feeling like a victim remind yourself about this basic law of attraction principle: Perspective is everything. It's normal to feel bad after something goes wrong. But once you recognize how you're feeling, it now becomes a choice. You can feel bad for as long as you want, but sooner or later, when you're ready to move on you can acknowledge the emotion you're stuck in, feel it, and let it go. You can choose to fly forward like the finch did when she was scared for her life and then you can shake yourself off like the hawk did and ask yourself "what is there for me to learn about this experience, so I never repeat it again?"

When you choose this kind of reaction to a painful experience, you've learned how to set yourself free to fly onward and upward, just like the finch and the hawk did when they each gave themselves another chance at life.

Suzanne Young is an intuitive life coach who specializes in the Law of Attraction. 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.



Girlfriend Gatherings

Speaker Series



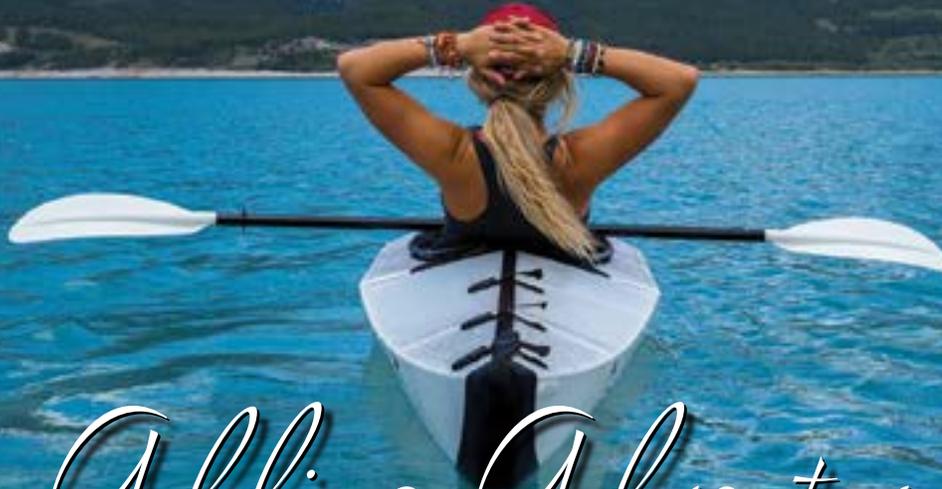
Our Girlfriend Gatherings Speaker Series event with Colleen Kilpatrick in May was quite successful. There was a lot of networking, new friends made, and re-connecting with those we haven't seen in a while. Oh, and good food. Colleen was wonderful in how she shared from her own experience why we need to eliminate the nagging tolerations that take our energy and lead to being overwhelmed.

Make sure to note the next ones on your calendar: June 8, September 14, October 12, and November 9. Follow W2W on Facebook to stay current of our happenings.



Thanks to our sponsors:





Adding Adventure TO YOUR SUMMER

Summer is just around the corner, yeah! Do an outside happy dance! It's a perfect time to explore and try new things. Here are three easy ways to add some adventure to your summer:

1 Go on a hiking adventure: Hiking is a great way to explore the outdoors and challenge yourself physically. Find a local hiking trail or plan a day trip to a nearby state park. Make sure you have the proper gear, including comfortable shoes, sunscreen, and plenty of water. Take a pet, a bike, a friend or partner...add some adventure to their life/lives too! Hiking alone is an optimal time for reflection and/or meditation. Nature has a soothingly healing effect plus you will be getting stronger and building endurance. Enjoy!!

2 Try a new water activity: Whether it's kayaking, paddle boarding, or swimming in a nearby lake, water activities can be a fun way to beat the heat and try something new. We are so fortunate, here in Michigan, to have so many bodies of water in close proximity!

Take advantage of them. You don't need to own a bunch of gear, instead look for rental companies or local clubs that offer lessons or guided tours. Remember to use your sunscreen, wear a hat and don your sunglasses!

3 My favorite and my most highly recommended activity... take a two-day road trip: Pack up the car and hit the road for an exciting adventure. Plan a route that takes you to new destinations or landmarks that you've always wanted to see. Make it a point to stop several different times. Stretch your legs, slow down your pace, let it be more about the experience than the destination. Make sure to bring snacks, drinks, lots of water, maybe some themed music, and a sense of adventure. If you draw or write, take some time to sketch or journal. Treat yourself to a nice healthy dinner. Take your time.

Remember, adventure can be found anywhere, even in your own backyard. Don't be afraid to try new things and

make the most of your summer...or any season! Be physical! What's good for the body nourishes the soul.

"Slow down you move too fast, ya gotta make the morning last... lookin' for fun and feeling groovy."

~Simon & Garfunkel

Have fun!
Much Love,

Coach Deb



Deborah St.Hilaire is a unifier, enlightener and catalyst for change in the way women are treated and treat each other. Author, speaker, transformational

coach and teacher, Deb, the founder of MyBodyMindSpirit.com, is dedicated to enriching lives through selfcare, meditation, movement, thought and journaling. She can be reached at 989.450.4200 or deb@mybodymindspirit.com.

W2W

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Girlfriend Gatherings

Speaker Series

September 14th

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November 9th

5:30 - 8:00pm at Gateway Hotel

Tickets at W2WMichigan.com

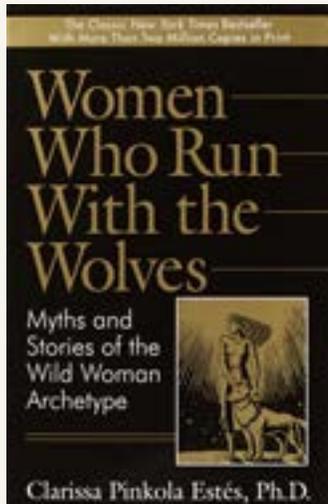
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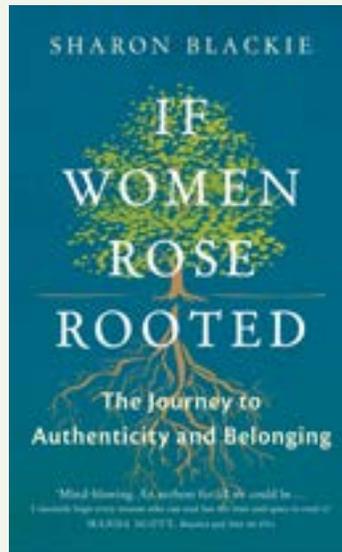
Women Who Run With the Wolves

by Clarissa Pinkola Estés

Within every woman there lives a powerful force, filled with good instincts, passionate creativity, and ageless knowing. She is the Wild Woman, who represents the instinctual nature of women. But she is an endangered species. For though the gifts of wildish nature belong to us at birth, society's attempt to "civilize" us into rigid roles has muffled the deep, life-giving messages of our own souls.

In *Women Who Run with the Wolves*, Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés unfolds rich intercultural myths, fairy tales, folk tales, and stories, many from her own traditions, in order to help women reconnect with the fierce, healthy, visionary attributes of this instinctual nature. Through the stories and commentaries in this remarkable book, we retrieve, examine, love, and understand the Wild Woman, and hold her against our deep psyches as one who is both magic and medicine.

Dr. Estés has created a new lexicon for describing the female psyche. Fertile and life-giving, it is a psychology of women in the truest sense, a knowing of the soul. py



If Women Rose Rooted

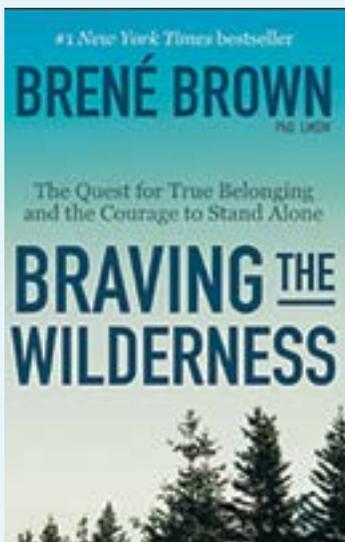
by Sharon Blackie

In this life-changing book that blends myth, memoir and modern day mentors, renowned psychologist Dr Sharon Blackie journeys from the wasteland of modern society to a place of nourishment and connection.

'And if we rise up rooted, like trees . . . well then, women might indeed save not only ourselves, but the world.'

Like *Women who Run with the Wolves*, this is powerful rallying cry to women to embrace a different kind of femininity. Described as both transformative and essential, Sharon Blackie leads the reader on a quest to find their place in the world, drawing inspiration from the wise and powerful females in native mythology, and guidance from contemporary women who have re-rooted themselves in land and community and taken responsibility for shaping the future.

Beautifully written, honest and moving, *If Women Rose Rooted* is a passionate song to a different kind of femininity, a rallying, feminist cry for the rewilding of womanhood; reclaiming our role as guardians of the land.



Braving the Wilderness

The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone

by Brené Brown

"True belonging doesn't require us to change who we are. It requires us to be who we are." Social scientist Brené Brown, PhD, LMSW, has sparked a global conversation about the experiences that bring meaning to our lives - experiences of courage, vulnerability, love, belonging, shame, and empathy. In *Braving the Wilderness*, Brown redefines what it means to truly belong in an age of increased polarization. With her trademark mix of research, storytelling, and honesty, Brown will again change the cultural conversation while mapping a clear path to true belonging.

Brown argues that we're experiencing a spiritual crisis of disconnection, and introduces four practices of true belonging that challenge everything we believe about ourselves and each other. She writes, "True belonging requires us to believe in and belong to ourselves so fully that we can find sacredness both in being a part of something and in standing alone when necessary.

But in a culture that's rife with perfectionism and pleasing, and with the erosion of civility, it's easy to stay quiet, hide in our ideological bunkers, or fit in rather than show up as our true selves and brave the wilderness of uncertainty and criticism. But true belonging is not something we negotiate or accomplish with others; it's a daily practice that demands integrity and authenticity. It's a personal commitment that we carry in our hearts."

Brown offers us the clarity and courage we need to find our way back to ourselves and to each other. And that path cuts right through the wilderness. Brown writes, "The wilderness is an untamed, unpredictable place of solitude and searching. It is a place as dangerous as it is breathtaking, a place as sought after as it is feared. But it turns out to be the place of true belonging, and it's the bravest and most sacred place you will ever stand."

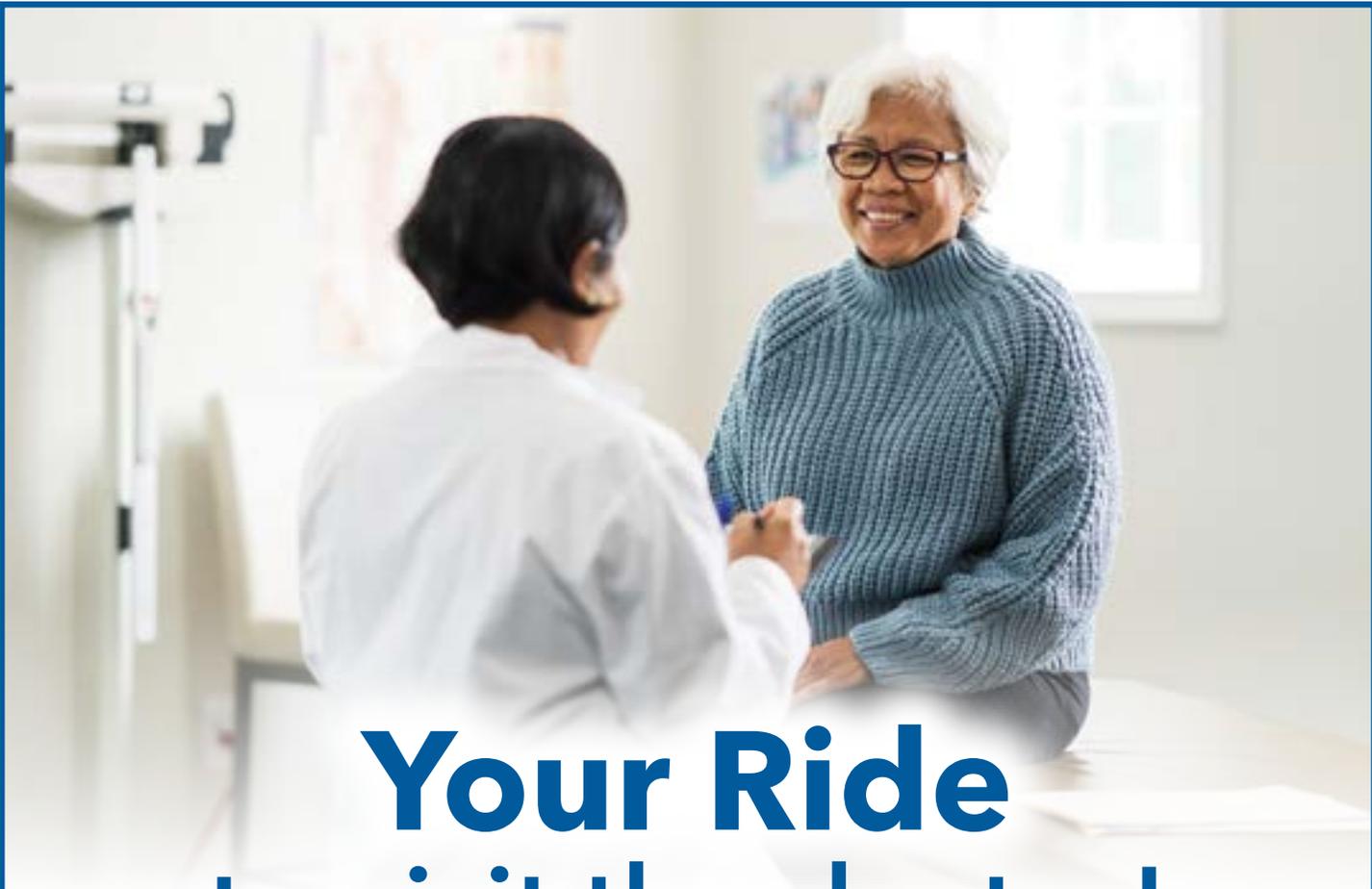


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