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Durham Region Community Publication

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Winter 2017

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From the Publisher

It looks like fall 2017 was the summer 2017 we never had. Better late than never I always say. But the warm, sometimes super hot temperatures (yes, there were heat alerts issued for a few days in September and October!) we experienced this fall certainly came as a surprise to many of us who begrudgingly accepted the fact of the summer that never was. But c'est la vie when you live in Canada, right? The weather is unpredictable and before you know it, Mother Nature can switch things around on us. Let's hope she doesn't dole out too harsh a winter season this year... fingers crossed!

What's new in our winter issue of the mag? Well, I'm sad to report that after the past few years of writing for The Local Biz Magazine, Victoria Cozza will be "graduating" as our tween and teen columnist. Victoria has been a tremendous team member of The Local Biz family and we are sad to see her go, but know she has a bright future ahead as she embarks on her university education. This means, we are currently on the lookout for an ambitious and diligent young teen or tween to take over her column, so if you or anyone you know is interested, please email our editor Wendy.

Our psychic columnist Sue-Ann won't be with us this issue, but she will be joining us again in our Spring issue. In place of her column on page 35, we have a guest column for you on the hottest toys this holiday season.

This issue we also have a feature article written by a local heating and cooling company about different ways to power up your home this winter and how to determine which heating source is right for you. It's an informative read for all homeowners; you can find it on page 13. And, as you know, we love to showcase and support local talent, so check out our interview with Port Perry author Paula Jones about her new book *Transforming Venus* on page 24.

I hope you enjoy the awesome content in the pages to come. Happy Holidays and I'll talk to you in 2018!

Antoine Elhashem
Publisher

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From the Editor

Technology is ever evolving and at a rapid pace too. Some of us are up to date with the latest trends, while others are still old-schoolin' it. (I tend to fall in the latter category.) In this issue, we decided to tackle a very interesting topic about technology and how it has effected TV viewing habits. In particular, we look at what devices people are using to access their favourite content. Cable TV is expensive, and some would argue slowly becoming obsolete. With the Android Box, Chromecast, Xbox and many more options available, do people even watch cable TV anymore? If not, how do they catch up on the latest entertainment, news, sports and favourite TV shows? The results aren't as straightforward as you may think. Check out my article, *Technology & TV: A Redefined Relationship* on page 19 to learn more. Make sure to also visit our website – www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca – and fill out our quick survey about your viewing habits. We want to hear from you!

Of course, while cuddling on the couch and watching our favourite shows tends to be the norm during the long, cold winter months, let's make sure that we also don't forget to move our bodies and break a sweat every so often. With the holidays fast approaching and the stress and overindulgence that goes along with it, we wanted to equip you with the know-how to get through the season and bring in 2018 in great health. Fitness expert Bianca Schaefer discusses the benefits of keeping up an exercise routine during the winter months. Bonus? She also shows you how easy it can be to incorporate exercise during the winter months. Check out her article, *How to Winter-proof Your Waistline Pre- and Post-Holiday Season* on page 8.

I hope you enjoy reading our 2017 winter issue. As always, feel free to send us your feedback on it. If you would like to pitch a story, or write for us, you can reach me at editor@thelocalbizmagazine.ca.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Wendy Chiavalon
Editor-in-Chief

Have Your Say

How do you access your favourite TV shows (sitcoms, sports, dramas, reality shows etc.)?

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- Cable
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HOW TO WINTER-PROOF YOUR WAISTLINE PRE- AND POST- HOLIDAY SEASON

by Bianca Schaefer

As a holistic health coach and personal trainer, one of the struggles I hear most, is how to stay fit during the holidays and winter season. We all know that if you eat anything and everything during the festivities, it comes back to haunt you twice as much come January 1st. And unfortunately, if you hope to undo some of the extra indulgences you took part in, you're setting yourself up for failure. Just look at the statistics. According to an article written in the US news on December 29, 2015, approximately 80% of New Year's Resolutions fail by the second week of February!

But I've got great news. Staying fit doesn't have to be hard; neither does getting fit if you've been out of it. Here are 3 strategies to help you get through the holidays and 5 tips to help you stay active throughout the winter months.

How to Survive the Holidays

Make exercise a priority and keep it scheduled in your calendar.

For many, the holiday season can be stressful. While the social calendar explodes with parties, family reunions and shopping sprees, finding the time to work out often takes a back seat to events you only get to enjoy during gift giving season. That's why it's important to make exercise a priority and keep it scheduled. That means you keep your workouts as standing appointments in your calendar. Block off the time and go out for that dinner or drink after your workout or on your "rest" days. Another option to consider is to switch your workout time to accommodate added social gatherings. Don't be afraid to try an early morning workout. Sure, you'll have to go to bed earlier and plan your next day the night before but you'll start your day feeling energized and accomplished leaving your evenings free. And don't forget the lunchtime alternative. With so many studios offering express workouts at noon hour, there are a variety of options to suit any level of fitness.



Change your mindset, adjust your expectations and never give up.

Often the reason people get off track during the holidays is because they start missing more than one workout. One missed workout becomes two, which soon turns into several. If you can't keep up with your regular workout schedule whether it's the frequency of workouts or duration of time per workout, adjust your mindset and expectations. Don't let a few missed workouts become the reason you quit altogether. No matter how far you get off track, never give up. Just change your expectations. So maybe you can't get to your hour-long workouts. Does that mean you can't be physical at all? No way! Commit to just 15 minutes a day. If you don't have 15 minutes, do 10. If you don't have 10, do 5. If you don't have 5, do just one minute of brisk activity. One minute of high intensity activity several times a day can decrease your body mass index (BMI) as well as your weight according to a study from the University of Utah. And don't believe that 5 minutes or even 1 minute a day is not enough because those little bursts come with many health benefits. Exercise helps to relieve stress, boost your serotonin levels

(your feel-good hormone), strengthen your heart and lose body fat. Even with just one minute of physical activity consistently, you're changing how you think and feel. So if you've ever thought that one minute won't make a difference, consider this. Setting an attainable goal like exercising for one minute will make you feel like you've accomplished something. That accomplishment will help you feel successful because you'll realize that you can do it again. Eventually your one minute of exercise turns into 5, then 10, then 15 and before you know it, you're consistently exercising longer. That's the benefit of just one minute a day. It's a starting point; and starting is always better than giving up.

Have a "smart" nutrition game plan.

Yes, it can be difficult to say no to special treats you only eat during the holidays. Just remember that while it's okay to enjoy a few favourites here and there, having too much can derail all of your good intentions to stay fit during the holidays and possibly even the winter season. Eating fresh, natural, good quality foods increase energy and boost your immune system. Foods laden with sugar, fat and processed foods rob you of productivity, therefore making it even more difficult to stick to an exercise plan. Being smart about what you eat means that you're making conscience decisions when it comes to "treating yourself". Keep track of when you'll be splurging and choose when you don't need to. It also means considering

portion size as well the time of day you'll be eating or drinking. During the holidays or stressful times, continuing to eat clean foods and drinking plenty of purified water is key to not spinning out of control with holiday treats. Pre-plan your meals as much as possible and have healthy snacks with you as you go about your day. Plan to eat smart by being prepared, and if you can't make your own healthy foods or are pressed for time, buy them. Most grocery stores have started offering pre-made healthy meals/snacks to go that make it easier to stay on track. Most importantly, if you're struggling with making smart choices, remember that every day you start with a clean slate. Don't let a few unhealthy meals turn into months of bad nutrition choices. Just as one minute of exercise turns into more, one healthy meal or choice can do the same.

Next Steps after the Holidays

Getting fit or staying active during the winter months can feel like an uphill battle especially if you're like me, where winter is not exactly your favourite season. Often times, winter can be associated with staying in and relaxing but that can lead to skipping workouts and eating more. Thankfully, there is a way to stay fit in spite of the cold temperatures.

How to Incorporate Exercise During Winter

Take up a winter sport, even if you hate the cold!

There are those people who just love the winter...unfortunately, I'm not one of them. Maybe you can relate? But for some reason year after year that saying comes to mind, "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" and I think there's something to be said for embracing the winter season. Just think about the possibilities! From skiing to horseshoeing, ice skating, curling or outdoor running, it's a great way to have fun, meet new people and try something new.

Join a gym or find a place

If you like to go to a "place" to get fit, there has never been a time in history with so many options available. From big box gyms, to smaller, more intimate personal training studios, there are options for pretty much any type of workout and fitness level. And it doesn't just stop there. Specialty studios have also become a big hit. Whether it's spinning, yoga, rock climbing, or cross fit, if you can name it, you can probably find a place to do it.

Join a league, take lessons, hire a trainer

Another way to stay or commit to exercise is to play a sport, take lessons or hire a trainer. Playing recreational basketball, taking indoor tennis lessons or signing up for personal training sessions is an excellent way to keep fit and learn something new. It also helps that people are counting on you to keep your commitment so this can be a great tool to help you stay on track and reach your goal.

Get fit at home

Still, maybe having to go somewhere is just adding to your busy schedule and you prefer to exercise in the comfort of your own home. There has never been a better time to get in shape on your own. Online videos, DVD's and home exercise equipment make it easy and affordable to work out without having to go anywhere. It doesn't just stop there. If you don't have any equipment you can use your stairs for cardio and perform body weight exercises such as



push ups, squats or planks. With a little creativity you'll be sweating in no time, maybe even while watching your favourite show on tv.

Get outside

Find any excuse to move your body outdoors. Whether it's walking your dog, parking in the spot furthest away from your destination or running an errand on foot, it's a great way to incorporate physical activity into your day and the fresh air will do wonders for your mood, energy and circulation.

If you're still not convinced that exercising throughout the winter is something you'd like to do, consider this; exercise can help with the following five winter ailments:

Low energy and frequent common colds.

If you suffer from low energy, the culprit could be that you're spending too much time indoors. During the winter months, the heating is cranked and windows aren't open as often so you're likely breathing in stale air which can cause headaches, low energy, sinus infections and be a breeding ground for the common cold. While opening your windows does have benefits, the best way to ensure you're getting more fresh air would be to exercise outdoors. Exercise helps increase energy and strengthen the immune system, which

could do wonders for battling flu season. Whether it's going for a brisk walk, ice skating or tobogganing with the kids, not only will you increase your energy you'll get a breath of fresh air as well.

Comfort food cravings and feeling cold "all the time."

Have you ever noticed the arrival of the cravings for waist-expanding comfort food? I sure have. As soon as the temperatures start to drop, it's like all of those delicious, savoury and calorie - explosive foods start calling my name. If you find yourself wanting more of these warming foods, it might be wise to think of another way to raise your body temperature other than food. Exercise increases your blood flow and circulation, so in other words, it raises your body temperature which can actually last up to several hours afterwards. Plus, instead of eating those comfort foods and increasing your caloric intake, with exercise you'll be increasing your metabolism, thus burning more calories! It's a win-win situation! And want to know something really cool? Exercising outdoors burns even more calories because your body has to work harder to warm up its' core temperature.

Feeling tight, stiff and out of shape.

Do you ever feel like the older you get, the harder it is to get out of bed in the morning? In your 20's and 30's, this may not effect you as much but come your 40's, things definitely start to change. However, age isn't the only reason you may start feeling a bit less flexible. Sitting all day can have dramatic negative effects on your posture and it isn't just confined to those who work in an office. If you find yourself sitting on the couch in the evenings, driving

all day, or constantly on your phone or tablet, chances are you're paying more attention to something other than your posture. Winter seems to facilitate more sitting or lying down so one way to combat tight muscles or a stiff back would be to stretch on a regular basis. Whether you're using an exercise mat in the comfort of your own home or you've decided to try a yoga class at a studio, the more you move your body, the less tight you'll feel.

Boost your mood

Not only does exercising in the winter have a positive impact on your physical body but it is a great way to beat the winter blues. Studies link increased exercise to better moods making it one of the most common self-help suggestions to those suffering with Season Affective Disorder, (SAD), a form of seasonal depression that is often linked with winter. With cold, dreary, days and dark, longer, nights, your sense of wellbeing can be negatively impacted. Thankfully, exercise endorphins can boost your mood when you are feeling down and if you make it outside during daylight hours, you'll get an extra boost of Vitamin D.

Loneliness

People often don't associate exercising as a way to help those suffering with loneliness but it can do wonders for those who find it difficult to meet new people. If you spend most of your time cocooned indoors during the winter months, exercising with others could be exactly what you need to lift your spirits and meet new friends. Gone are the days of having to "fit in" somewhere. With so many fitness programs, clubs, classes and sports-leagues available, you're sure to find something that suits your needs. The important thing to remember is that you must take the first step. You won't meet new people sitting in the comfort of your home. You must go

somewhere to do that. Second, although it may feel a bit awkward at first, that feeling soon goes away once you start exercising or playing that sport because the focus will be on the thing you're doing and not you. Don't be afraid to go somewhere on your own, who knows, the person you meet could end up being a life-long friend.

Bianca Schaefer is a 360 Holistic Health Coach who inspires a global community to take charge of their lives through nourishing their body, mind and spirit with delicious healthy foods, an active lifestyle and a mindset that believes anything is possible! Her mission is to help others realize their greatest potential and use their unique talents to be an inspiration to others. Find out more about Bianca on her personal website, Bianca Schaefer.



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Heating Your Home This Winter

by Rodman's Heating and Air Conditioning

Cost and environmental impact seem to be the key factors in almost everything we buy these days – from food to clothing to cars – and the method in which you heat your home is no exception.

While natural gas is the most commonly used fuel, because of the many rural areas in Durham Region, there are still plenty of homes using electric, oil and propane heating. There are associations, lobby groups, and of course corporations, that all claim that their particular energy is the cleanest, safest, highest efficiency, and most economical. How do you determine who is right? The right answer is the one that best suits your particular home.

POWER UP

Natural Gas

In much of Durham Region, natural gas is easily accessible. If it's not currently on your street, Enbridge can let you know if the service is available and you can then start the process

to get connected. Natural gas is generally regarded as the cleanest burning fossil fuel (any combustible organic material formed from past plant and animal life). With low emissions of carbon dioxide, natural gas doesn't contribute significantly to smog. The other benefit is efficiency, all gas furnaces sold in Canada are now high efficiency, some as high as 98%.

While the delivery of natural gas is very safe, gas lines do occasionally leak. However, thanks to the rotten egg smelling gas additive Mercaptan, leaks are easy to detect. The acute safety issue with natural gas, and any other burning fuel, is carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is colourless, odorless, and deadly if not discovered in time.

Electric

Ontario gets its electricity from a wide variety of sources – nuclear, natural gas, and renewable resources such as hydroelectric, wind, solar and bioenergy (e.g. kitchen waste, scrap wood, animal manure). While electricity is clean energy, there are other environmental impacts to each source. For example, wind farms compromise animal habitats, are dangerous to birds and bats, and produce noise pollution. Solar power uses photovoltaic (PV) cells to harness the sun's rays. Besides a substantial amount of energy consumption, several toxic chemicals are used in the manufacturing process of these cells.

Electricity is very safe for heating because no fuel is burned,

and therefore no carbon monoxide is created. The efficiency of electric heating is 100% as all energy consumed is converted to heat. However, with forced-air electric furnaces there is some heat loss through the duct system.

Propane

Because natural gas is not available in rural Durham Region, many residents opt for propane heating as it is clean burning and has less effect on the environment than some of the other fuels (e.g. it has a very low sulphur level, a contributor to acid rain). The efficiency level is also high, up to 96%.

Propane tanks are kept outside, meaning severe weather or fire could potentially damage the tank. Like natural gas, propane contains the additive Mercaptan so leaks are easy to detect. If it were to leak, the liquid propane becomes a vapour and so there is no soil or water contamination.

Oil

Today's heating oil burns very clean, near-zero emissions, and has an efficiency level anywhere from 85-97%.

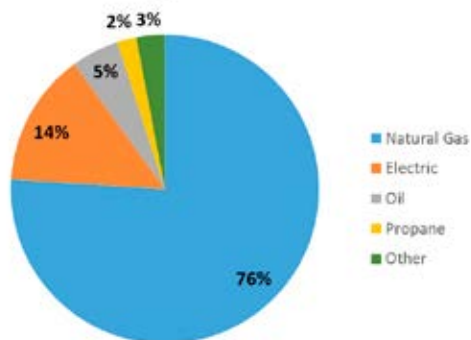
The storage tank for oil can be installed indoors or out. While newer storage tanks are corrosion resistant there is still always the chance of a spill or leak. As with all fuel, there is carbon monoxide created by burning oil, but levels are relatively low compared to other fuels. Unlike natural gas and propane, heating oil is non-flammable.

Hydronic (Radiant)

While hot water radiators are not commonly used anymore, hydronic heating is becoming popular again with radiant heating. Heat is created by pumping water through a system of tubes and radiating panels either in your flooring or ceiling. This system allows you to save energy by only heating the rooms you are actually using and since there are no fans or ductwork, it is much quieter. The efficiency depends on the system used to heat the water (e.g. oil or gas boiler, electric or gas tankless water heater).

While there are negligible safety concerns with this type of heating, keep in mind that if there is a power failure, your system will not work.

Type of main heating fuel used in Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, Environment Accounts and Statistics Division, Catalogue no. 11-626-X

The last report on home heating published by Statistics Canada was 2011, but the split of home heating fuel has not changed significantly since.

NUTS & BOLTS

Once you've determined your heating fuel, you need to examine which equipment and distribution system works best for that fuel and your home.

In Canada, the natural gas forced-air furnace is the most popular heating system. The furnace works by blowing heated (or cooled) air through a duct system and out registers in the rooms of the house. With a well-designed duct system, the house will be heated/cooled very quickly and humidity can also be controlled through this system. With a simple adapter kit, the same furnaces that are used with natural gas can be used for propane. Forced air is also an option with electric and oil furnaces.

If you are looking for supplemental heat or need rooms that are independently controlled, electric baseboard heaters can be purchased and installed fairly inexpensively. Hydronic baseboard heaters are also available, used in conjunction with a boiler and often radiant heating.

A heat pump takes heat from one place and transfers it to another. The system is reversible, meaning that the process can be reversed in the summer to remove humidity from the house. Central pumps and wall-mounted pumps (ductless) are both available for homes without natural gas.

POCKETBOOK PAIN

60% of our annual energy costs is heating and the bills are consuming more of our income every year. When we see charts such as the one on the next page, the decision to switch from one fuel to another may seem like a no-brainer but there are many more factors to consider than just the actual unit price of the fuel.

If you are looking to convert to a different heating method, it's important to do your research, ask lots of questions and get quotes from a few different companies.

Operating Costs

In addition to the unit price (m3, L, kWh) there may be extra billable items such as delivery, distribution, storage, and debt reduction. It is important to factor these into the overall monthly cost. Don't forget that if you choose natural gas, propane or oil, there will still be associated electricity costs for running things like the furnace blower and the air conditioner.

Other operating costs may include annual maintenance, filters, and repairs. Be sure to find out the terms of the warranty that is provided with your installation. You may need to factor in purchasing an extended warranty up front or adding an annual protection plan once the manufacturer's warranty has expired.

Conversion Considerations

Converting your system may seem overwhelming at first, but reading just a little bit of information may help you weed out an option or two fairly easily. I would recommend starting by calling the fuel/electricity suppliers that are viable options for you and find out what the first step is to have the infrastructure (e.g. gas line or storage tank) put in place and what the cost and timelines are for that process. You will then have a starting point and can proceed with looking into equipment and installation companies.

On average, natural gas is significantly less expensive than electricity, propane and oil. (You can check out the conversion calculator on Enbridge's website to see the difference for your home.)

For example, the estimated annual costs for an average 4 bedroom, 1970's home:

	Natural Gas	Electricity	Propane	Oil
Home Heating	\$630	\$1,380	\$1,090	\$1,449
HST	\$82	\$179	\$142	\$188
Total Annual Cost	\$712	\$1,560	\$1,232	\$1,638
% more expensive than gas		119%	73%	130%

The annual energy cost, savings and comparison are based on EB-2017-0181 natural gas rate 1, effective July 1, 2017.

Some things to consider:

1. Do I need a fuel storage tank (oil, propane) or does a tank need to be removed?
2. How much will the new heating/cooling equipment cost?
3. Do I have other appliances that will be affected by converting (e.g. water heater, stove, fireplace, etc.)?
4. How will the equipment be distributed and vented (e.g. does a duct system need to be run)?
5. Will I need a new thermostat, humidifier or filtration system?
6. Does a gas line or power line need to be run to the house?
7. Is my electrical panel up to code and have sufficient amperage for the new equipment?
8. Will there be trenching or drilling needed (e.g. ground source heat pumps)?
9. Will my home insurance premium be affected?
10. Are there rebates available for converting?

You Get What You Pay For

There are many brands of equipment, each with its own pros and cons. There are less expensive (builder) models, very high end ultra-efficient models, and everything in-between. More important than the brand is the company you choose to install it. Make sure they are well established and will still be in business when you need service done down the road. There are numerous companies that will happily install a new furnace for a bargain-basement price but next year when it breaks down, they are nowhere to be found. These companies are also notorious for not registering equipment. This means that you receive only the standard manufacturer's warranty, usually five years on parts, whereas when equipment is registered by the installing company, many manufacturers offer an extra five years of parts warranty. Any

reputable installer will also offer at least one year of labour warranty.

Rodman's Heating and Air Conditioning has been serving Durham Region residents for 68 years and has won numerous awards for "Best Heating & Air Conditioning Business."





Winter Events Calendar

Friday, December 1, 2017

Christmas Moonlight Magic

Bring the entire family downtown for a carol sing and countdown to the lighting of Bowmanville's huge Christmas Tree in the town square. You can also have your picture taken with Santa and his live reindeer. Enjoy free horse-drawn wagon rides along the main street - perfect for helping you carry all of your parcels as you shop the many unique stores and restaurants that stay open late for some evening holiday shopping. FREE admission and FREE parking. Bowmanville
www.bowmanville.com/events

Friday, December 1, 2017

Whitby's Annual Christmas Tree Lighting

One day before the Santa Claus Parade, watch as Celebration Square comes alight when we kick off the season with the Annual Christmas Tree lighting. Whitby
www.whitby.ca/events

Friday, December 1, 2017

Tree Lighting & Fireworks Event

Live performances, games, rides and food for sale. Drop non-perishable food items inside City Hall and support St. Paul's on the Hill Food Bank. End the night with our special guests from the North Pole, the lighting of the park and our Spectacular Fireworks! Pickering
www.pickering.ca/greatevents

Sunday, December 3, 2017

Courtice Santa Claus Parade

Townline to George Reynolds. Courtice
www.facebook.com/CourticeSantaClausParade/

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

T.H.E.E Farmers Parade of Lights

THEE (Tyron, Haydon, Enniskillen, Enfield) Farmer Parade of Lights is an annual celebration of Christmas in the country with decorated farm equipment. Clarington
www.facebook.com/TheeFarmersParadeofLights

Sunday, December 10, 2017

Community Church Service

Our annual service will be held at the Historic Leaskdale Church at 1:00 pm. and everyone is welcome to attend. Leaskdale
www.lucymaudmontgomery.ca

Sunday, December 10, 2017

OPG Second Sundays: Flipbook Fantasy

We are making flipbooks with a transparent twist this month! Creativity, tracing paper, tape and drawing materials along with some unique inspiration from our walls is all we need to make these books! Oshawa
www.rmg.on.ca

December 16 - December 17, 2017

Santa Trains

We have received news from the North Pole that Santa will be joining our train rides with on-board entertainment. Santa will visit each child at their seat. This is a great photo opportunity! Each child will also receive a gift bag upon departing the train. Each one-hour round trip train ride departs from Uxbridge at 11 am, 1 pm and 3 pm. Uxbridge
www.ydhr.ca

December 16 - December 17, 2017

The Nutcracker Ballet

Prima Ballet School is happy to bring their annual family tradition of The Nutcracker to the residents of Durham Region. Three performances from December 16 to 17, 2017. Oshawa
www.primaballetschool.ca

December 27 - December 31, 2017

Wizard of Oz

A fun, classic adventure for the entire family. Wizard of Oz is full of singing, dancing, laugh-out-loud comedy and audience participation. A must see and wonderful holiday treat! Whitby
www.diversifiedtheatre.com

Sunday, December 31, 2017

New Years Eve Gala at Deer Creek

The most anticipated event of the year is quickly approaching. Come ring in the new year with an unforgettable New Year's Eve Celebration at Deer Creek Golf & Banquet Facility on, Saturday, December 31, 2017 beginning at 7PM. For further information or to reserve your table please call our events team! (905)427-7737 x 300 Ajax
www.eventsdeer creek.com

Sunday, December 31, 2017

New Year's Eve Free Family Fun

Join us at Iroquois Park Sports Centre for free family fun on New Year's Eve! Enjoy free Public Skating, face painting, a performance by the Whitby Figure Skating Club, juggling show, balloon artists, magic and more! Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Whitby
www.events@whitby.ca

Sunday, December 31, 2017

Town of Ajax New Year's Eve Party

The Ajax Family New Year's Eve Party delivers a fantastic event for the whole family. This event features children's activities, games, live entertainment, interactive experiences, face painting, ice skating with DJ and more. Party favours are included as participants gather on the ice rink for a special countdown and balloon drop. It's a great way to ring in the New Year! Tickets are available in December at the Ajax Community Centre, McLean Community Centre, and Audley Recreation Centre. Ajax
stacy.chong@ajax.ca

Wednesday, January 3, 2018

Ajax English Conversation Circle

Newcomers practise English in a welcoming environment, expand social networks and learn more about the community. Ajax
www.communityconnect@cdcd.org

Wednesday, January 3, 2018

Alzheimer's Support Men's Group

Family/care partners meet and exchange ideas in a supportive environment. Support groups are facilitated by family support staff and trained volunteers. Call Alzheimer Durham at 905-576-2567 if this is your first time attending a care partner support group. Drop-ins welcome. This care partner support group for male caregivers occurs on the first Wednesday of the month. Whitby
www.mpepin@alzheimerdurham.com

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Alzheimer Society Partner Care Support Group

Family/care partners meet and exchange ideas in a supportive environment. Support groups are facilitated by family support staff and trained volunteers. Call Alzheimer Durham at 905-576-2567 if this is your first time attending a care partner support group. Drop-ins welcome. This care partner support group occurs the second Wednesday of the month. Scugog
mpepin@alzheimerdurham.com

Saturday, January 31, 2018

Bowmanville Blood Donor Clinic

Help save a life by donating blood at the Garnet Rickard Complex. Please visit blood.ca to make an appointment today! Bowmanville
laura.ashton@blood.ca

Saturday, February 3, 2018

Ajax French Conversation Circle

Newcomers fluent in French meet others in a welcoming environment, expand social networks and learn more about the community. Ajax
www.communityconnect@cdcd.org

For events that may have been added after the publication date and other ideas to plan your perfect day in Durham Region, visit www.durhamtourism.ca.

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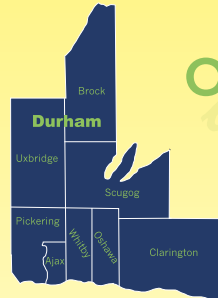
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Technology & TV: A Redefined Relationship

by Wendy Chiavalon

After a hard day at work, how do you like to unwind? Do you watch the evening news? Tune in to the latest seasonal lineups? Catch up on past episodes of your favourite shows you may have missed? Watch reruns of old classics no longer on air?

Whatever the answer may be, there is no shortage of options available to us today to access our favourite content. Whatever our needs, preferences and budget are, they can be catered to.

Traditionally, cable was the main gateway for how we accessed our favourite content. You subscribed to a particular cable package from the cable companies which allowed you access to certain channels and programs. Then cable companies introduced PVR and time-shifting which allowed you to watch your favourite programs at a time that was more convenient for you. You could even pause a show in live time, or record it for later viewing. No longer were you a slave to the time a show aired.

However, technology has advanced much more rapidly since those days giving us many more options than before. Let's take a look at the front runners:

Chromecast

Chromecast is a media streaming device that plugs into the HDMI port on your TV. You use your mobile device and the TV you already own to stream your favorite TV shows, movies, music, sports, games and more. Chromecast works with iPhone, iPad, Android phone and tablet, Mac and Windows laptop, and Chromebook.

Android Box

An Android Box is a TV box running the Android operating system (the same operating system as the one running on your smartphone or tablet). It has the ability to transform any TV into a smart TV allowing you access to TV shows, sports and movies as well as lots of apps and games. It can also play music and offers a browser for access to the internet. To use the Android box, you must have an open internet connection; most Android TV boxes connect to the internet using a wi-fi connection or ethernet cable.

Xbox

The Xbox option isn't the cheapest option to stream TV, but if you already own one, being able to access your favourite channels (HBO GO, Netflix, Comedy Central, in addition to free TV channels like CBC, CTV, TVO) is a nice perk.

Of course, there are still those doing it the old-school way...

Antenna

A TV antenna is designed for the reception of over-the-air broadcast TV signals which are transmitted at various frequencies. There are indoor antennas located near the TV or as far as in the attic, and outdoor antennas which are mounted on the roof, or to an antenna tower secured to the ground beside your house. The clearer the path between the broadcasting tower and the antenna, the better for picking up reception. For example, an antenna mounted high enough to clear buildings or obstacles in the way of the CN Towers broadcasting antenna. Of course, reception may not be the greatest on a cloudy, rainy, or snowy day with certain channels, but this is the exception not the rule. In fact, the biggest misconception about antenna is that clarity and reception will be compromised. For the most part, you will get reliable reception of basic Canadian TV channels (CBC, TVO, CTV, Global TV), as well as a few Buffalo channels (Bounce, PBS, CBS), depending on which direction your antenna is pointing. Antennas tend to be used by people living in remote areas that do not have cable access, but you can also spot them in



subdivisions now. They are a free alternative to paying for basic TV channels.

How People are Watching TV

Many studies have been carried out to determine how people are watching TV. Are they subscribed to a particular cable package? Are they using Chromecast? Android Box? Xbox? Antenna? A combination of these devices? Such information is very valuable for cable companies, tech and media companies alike because it reveals consumers preferences for watching TV.

Here at The Local Biz Magazine, we decided to carry out an informal survey of our own to find out essentially the same thing. We wanted to see how technology effects how people watch TV. What's the most popular or preferred method for watching TV among those in the Durham community? Do people still subscribe to cable? We also wanted to take it one step further. We wanted to know if these new technologies have affected the movie theatre experience. Do people still go to the movies when they can stream whatever they want from the comfort of their own home?

We asked each person who agreed to participate in our survey 4 questions:

1. How do you access your favourite TV shows (sitcoms, sports, dramas, reality shows)?
2. Do you have cable? If no, what do you have (Android Box, Chromecast, Xbox)?
3. How do you access the latest (Hollywood) movies?
4. Do you still go to the movie theatres? Were you ever an avid movie theatre goer?

Here's what we found:

Usage of the Android Box and Chromecast was equally divided among our respondents. And of course, those who had either Android Box or Chromecast didn't have cable. No one in our survey had Xbox.

What was interesting was that a lot of people in our survey still subscribed to cable (Rogers or Bell). This latter group which primarily tended to be baby boomers, also included children who lived with their baby boomer parents, and young married adults living on their own. Cable users often stated they used a PVR to tape their favourite shows and watched it later at a time convenient to them. They really liked that they could fast-forward through the commercials.

Antenna was used among a small minority including yours truly. The main selling point being that after the upfront cost of the antenna and installation, you get to watch your favourite content for free.

Other noteworthy mentions among respondents were...

Crave TV

Crave TV was frequently mentioned as a way to access content. Crave TV is an on-demand streaming device that allows you access to your favourite TV shows. It can be accessed through the Crave TV website, through Bell if Bell customers, or through Android Box, Xbox One, just to name a few. There is a subscription fee.

Netflix

Netflix is definitely popular and is used amongst almost all our respondents. Netflix is a streaming device where people can access TV shows, movies and other content without any commercials. Netflix can be accessed through any internet connected devices that has the Netflix app (smart TV's, game consoles, smartphones, tablets etc.) There is a subscription fee.



TV Websites

A few people in our survey mentioned that they went on a network's website (for e.g. CTV or CBC's website) to access their favourite shows. The drawback is that you will have to wait the day after a show aired to access it online. Shows will be available on the website for free for a limited time. After that, they may be "locked" (requiring a cable code to gain access), or removed from the website completely. Unfortunately, if you are trying to access a show that aired on a U.S. network (for e.g. NBC or CBS) you're out of luck, as U.S. networks often restrict online access of their shows to Canadian viewers with a Canadian IP address.

Going to the Movies

When it comes to visiting the movie theatre, it really depends on personal preference. Those in our survey who enjoy the movie theatre experience continue to go regardless of whether or not they can see the movie on their TV. They like the big screen effect.



For a few people, whether or not they go to the movies depends on the type of movie they want to see. Action or thriller movies as one respondent stated is enhanced when you watch it on a big screen inside the theatre. Romance and drama are okay to watch on your regular screen TV at home.

What sometimes is a factor in whether people who are avid movie goers stay that way, is kids. For example, one respondent stated that although they were an avid movie theatre goer in the past, once kids entered the picture they rarely have the time go anymore. (This is where babysitters and date nights are great!) Most often, they wait until the movie airs on Netflix or will just download it.

On the flip side, people who did not often go to the movies prior to these new technologies emerging tend to get their movie fix from Netflix, Rogers on Demand, DVD and Android Box. The perk with the Android Box is that you can watch movies on your TV that are still playing at the theatre.

Technology is ever-changing, and as it changes, consumers viewing habits tend to change along with it. It will be interesting to see what the future holds for TV viewers and how it shapes TV viewing for generations to come.

Wendy Chiavalon is the Editor-in-Chief of The Local Biz Magazine. In her spare time, she doubles as a cookie, cupcake and cake decorator. You can check out some of her custom creations at Wendy's Cake Shoppe.



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Transforming Venus



by Wendy Chiavalon

In the middle of her life, a woman starts to see the world in a different light. For decades, she's tried her best to play by "the rules" – going to school, raising a family, getting a job, and making sure the bills are paid. Then one day she wakes up and realizes she wants more from her life.

Her kids have left home, her relationship has shifted, and her personal and professional interests are not what they were 20 years ago. She sees the years passing, and feels like it's now or never. She knows she needs to change things soon, but she can't quite put her finger on what she needs to do, or how to get started. In short, she becomes a "Stuck Goddess"...

Does this scenario resonate with you? If so, you need to pick up a copy of Port Perry based author, Paula Weisflock's book *Transforming Venus*. *Transforming Venus* is an enlightening and educational adventure designed to help you make the life changes you most deeply desire – and deserve. It is a book designed for women in mid-life who are ready to shake off their life-numbing inertia and reignite their hearts, heads, and souls with the passion and joy they have been missing for so long. Bursting with inspiration, practical tools and real-life Goddess stories, *Transforming Venus* will help even the most stuck Goddesses break free of their old habits, so they can finally let their inner Goddess out to play.

I recently had the pleasure of having a Q & A session with Paula to chat more about her new book and her passion for writing it.

1. What motivated you to write this book?

As a life long learner and an educator, I spent years educating myself in ways that supported my career. Ironically, that very focus was one of the biggest distractions from my own necessary personal growth. I do not feel I am an anomaly; I learned so much on my own journey of transformation and felt the need to share my story to assist other Stuck Goddesses. My personal mission statement is, "To have a loving relationship with myself, my family, friends, colleagues, and extended community, and to support and inspire everyone my life touches to be all that they can be." I have learned that self-care is not a luxury—but a necessity and I want to share that message and the tools to teach women to accomplish this.

2. Why the title *Transforming Venus*?

Venus is the Goddess of love and also a sister planet to Earth, shining brightly in the Universe. *Transforming Venus* is an educational adventure designed to support midlife women in their transformation through Awakening and Healing the Goddess Within, to Loving and Nurturing the Goddess Within, to the ultimate—Adventuring with the Goddess Within. The

chapters within each of these three sections, support attaining these milestones.

3. The story you describe of a “Stuck Goddess” seems to be something a lot of baby boomer women can relate to. Why do you think this is?

Baby Boomer women were born in the post WWII era when things really began to change for women. We started to work outside of the home. We built careers in what was previously a man's world, we worked at relationships and nurturing our families and most of us did not take any time to nourish and build ourselves. Time was a challenge but even more importantly, we did not realize that we needed and deserved this. Receiving is difficult for women. It's hard for them to ask for support, let alone to truly allow it. *Transforming Venus* is a toolkit to support them in fast tracking through some of the issues that may be keeping them stuck and provides a nurturing learning environment for them to grow.

4. Have you encountered a lot of “stuck goddesses” in your own life?

Yes, I have. With the advent of an increase in divorces and the host of other challenges life brings our way, many women are having trouble coping with their new situations. Add to that, the fact that many of us did not nurture ourselves throughout our lives, there is an epidemic of Stuck Goddesses out there. This is a prime reason I decided to write this book—to help other women awaken, nurture and love the beautiful beings they are.

5. Were you yourself a stuck goddess at one point in time?

Yes, there was certainly a point in my life about 6 or so years ago when I realized I was living a disconnect between what my life looked like and what I wanted it to look like and I was suffering from some deep seated emotional pain due to the deaths of both my father when I was 20 and my brother in his early 40's. I was a Stuck Goddess! I overcame this by going on a personal journey of self discovery. I visited energy healers, attended workshops, purchased tapes and read masses of self help books. I started meditating and writing about what I learned and started healing myself. I created *Transforming Venus* as a tool for women to fast track through their own transformation rather than taking the meandering path that was my journey.

6. You seem to exude positivity and those who know you call you “Positive Paula”. Why is being positive a crucial component of becoming an “unstuck goddess”?

I jokingly state in the book that there will be no more pokes at Negative Nelly as she has been beat up on enough, but I truly believe that making an attempt to stay positive puts women in a much better frame of mind and allows them to consider all of the opportunities that life can avail to them. This includes things like shutting down our inner critics—I call them the Itty Bitty Shitty Committee or IBSC in our heads, for short in my book. I think it is of paramount importance that we don't let negativity in—we can't afford to let it take our precious energy. In the Awakening and Healing the Goddess Within section, there is a chapter on, The Power of Positivity and Inspirational Thoughts and one on Choosing the Right Mindset to support women who have some work to do in these areas.



7. You mention you've studied Positive Psychology. What have you learned from this discipline? Do you have a favourite positive psychologist?

I believe I was first drawn to Positive Psychology when I started to work with my first entrepreneurial business coach who gave me two pieces of homework on my very first session with him. One was to learn more about the Law of Attraction and the second was to learn about the field of Positive Psychology. It did not take much time for me to find and feel a compelling interest in learning more about the work of Dr. Martin E.P. Seligman, renowned worldwide as the “father of Positive Psychology.” Dr. Seligman has focused his career on the field of Positive Psychology and offers a host of free resources on the University of Pennsylvania website that support his work. I have completed many of his questionnaires, some more than once, years apart. In my studies, I have learned that a positive person is more apt to take every step with purpose and will see every moment as an opportunity—a personal growth opportunity, an opportunity to smile or laugh, an opportunity to see another's point of view, an opportunity to share or an opportunity to experience something new. They even see failure as an opportunity—an opportunity to learn.

Transforming Venus is available at Books Galore, Rosario Greco Styles Salon and on Amazon. For more information about the book and Paula's other initiatives visit www.transformingvenus.com.

Wendy Chiavalon is the Editor-in-Chief of The Local Biz Magazine. In her spare time, she doubles as a cookie, cupcake and cake decorator. You can check out some of her custom creations at Wendy's Cake Shoppe.

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AT THE BOX OFFICE

Here comes holidays, colder weather, and great movies!

Kids

Ferdinand, based on the classic 1936 children's book by Munro Leaf, comes to life on December 15. Voiced by talents such as Gina Rodriguez and Gabriel Iglesias with the title character of Ferdinand voiced by wrestler John Cena. Ferdinand is a gentle, yet giant bull, who is mistakenly thought to be dangerous and is taken from his loving family to be trained to fight in the bull ring against the cruellest of matadors. Ferdinand is determined to get home to his family and together with a misfit group of animal friends shows the town that you "can't judge a bull by his cover."

Action

Black Panther will be hitting the theatres February 16 and plans to deliver in this next instalment of the Marvel Universe. The Black Panther, created by Stan Lee and a character who fought alongside the Avengers and the Fantastic Four is the focus of this movie. Chadwick Boseman is back as T'Challa (The Black Panther), the prince of the African nation of Wakanda, who must take his father's throne after his murder. In Marvel fashion, this movie promises to have amazing visuals and action scenes, all while pulling on the heart strings.

For the Grownups

The Disaster Artist, based on the book, detailing the making of one of the highest rated "worst movies of all time": **The Room**, hits theatres December 8. We get to see some big stars taking on this behind-the-scenes look including Seth Rogen, Zac Efron, and the Franco brothers, Dave and James. James is the director and plays the lead, Tommy Wiseau, a man who decides to write, direct and star in a movie because everyone said he shouldn't... and he really shouldn't have. This recounting of the chaos promises to be cringingly hilarious.

Downsizing, a dramedy that will deliver heartwarming laughter and thoughtful moments with a star-studded cast including Matt Damon, Kristen Wiig, Jason Sudeikis, Neil Patrick Harris, and Alec Baldwin. An average man, Paul Safranek (Damon) and his wife Audrey (Wiig) decide to abandon their stressful lives by signing up for a new population control solution. Norwegian scientists have discovered how to shrink humans and have built a new miniaturized world, called "Leisure-land", where the little money a person has is transferred into millions as their needs have shrunk as well. The decision promises a better life and our hero finds that life, from his new vantage point, is a small world with huge things to see and try. The adventure begins on December 22.

The Greatest Showman is an original musical on the inspirational vision of P.T. Barnum and his quest to create the greatest show on Earth. Starring Hugh Jackman in the title role with Michelle Williams as his wife, we are given a spectacular and visually stunning look back to 1881 when Barnum rose from obscurity to worldwide sensation while giving birth to the "business of show". Get ready to dream big on December 25.

Stephanie Herrera is the Artistic Director of the Not-for-profit: Durham Improv Collective Inc., the Director of Industry Operations for the Future of Film Showcase in Toronto, and the Durham Region International Film Festival. She is an actor, voice over artist, writer for stage, TV, and film, director, producer, and acting and improv teacher. Check out her book: "The Ten Commandments...of Improvising!" on her personal website.



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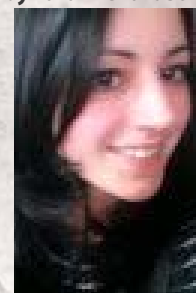
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by Tara Richardson

Soul Searching



What's free, easy, and quick? Being kind. It takes nothing more than facial muscles to smile yet we either choose to be grumps or we're self-involved, and that includes looking down at our electronic devices.

Valuing kindness does not mean that we are perfect human beings; we have permission to sometimes play candy crush instead of looking up to make eye contact on the train... And it might not matter anyway because out of experience, most of the others on the train are also self-absorbed.

I think it's important to analyze why we choose to hide from society. Is it because we have so much work to do? So many friends to talk to instead? Because we'll probably never see these strangers again in our life? Or is it something more than that? Do we fear if we look up from our cell phone that we might inadvertently lock eyes with a stranger that they will burn a laser beam of judgment through our soul?

Seriously though, it's important to be as kind as possible, even to strangers. Do you know that one day you may be one of those strangers and so incredibly grateful to the person who stopped to say, "hello, isn't it a lovely day?"

We're all fighting out battles. Some outwardly, most secretly. We have no idea what battle people are facing. Infidelity, infertility, sickness, trauma, mental illness, a bad freaking day even. You may never know the battle and you don't need to. You just need to be your kindest self. (Again, I give you full permission to be human and miss out on a few opportunities to show kindness.) Even if the person you are talking to appears to have no heart or strongly opposes your political views, you treat them nicely anyway. I mean, tell them your opinion but be nice. Why? Because you can relish in the fact that you're a good person if nothing else.

So the question becomes then, 'how do I incorporate kindness into my life?' and the answer is very broad. There are random acts of kindness, planned acts of kindness, donating your time, and donating your money. And in my opinion, you do whichever one makes sense to you, is most meaningful, and that you can afford.

Some ideas I've heard of are to: give someone a heartfelt compliment, express gratitude, give someone your full attention, leave positive sticky notes in library books, or bake a banana bread for your new neighbour.

And you can donate your talent too! Don't say it- we all have talents, whether it be DJ'ing a fundraiser or helping with the accounting for the fundraiser- there is always something we can do.

The holidays are built on the concept of kindness yet so many of us find ourselves prone to snapping at loved ones and generally feeling stressed. My advice to you (myself included) is to remind yourself why this holiday matters to you and be a broken record of kind words.

Tara is a wellness blogger for The Local Biz Magazine who hopes to publish her memoir on finding hope and meaning while living with a mental illness. When Tara is not at work she can be found reading incessantly.

by Jennifer Liwanag

You, Me & A Digital Life

New Year, Better You



Is a New Year, a new you? It's hard to say you will be a completely different person from 11:59pm on December 31st to 12:00am on January 1st; but a New Year is the perfect time to start changing bad habits, picking up new hobbies, and trying to become the person you regret you weren't in 2017 and would like to see yourself as at the end of 2018. Here are two apps which will keep you on track through 2018:

Habitica

Website: www.habitica.com

Platforms: Android/iOS

Price: FREE

Habitica is a fun and simple way of turning habit changing into a game and less of a chore. After signing up on their website or through the mobile app, you are given a character or avatar which you can customize. You are able to add habits, daily tasks and to-do lists; successfully completing habits and tasks will give your character experience to make your character stronger and coins; while failing to fulfill habits or tasks will cause your character to lose health. You can use coins to buy rewards. You can make your own rewards, such as a 15 minute break, that small slice of cake you've been craving for, or treating yourself to a movie. You can also use coins for pre-made rewards such as armor and weapons for your character before battling monsters. You can even invite friends to start a party to keep one another motivated in completing habit changes. This game literally turns habit changing into a role-playing game; which is nice considering you are spending less time thinking about the habit being changed and more time trying to become successful within the game. I think this app is amazing for anyone who wants to make a change in themselves and also loves games and challenges.

Habitbull

Website: www.habitbull.com

Platforms: Android/iOS

Price: FREE

Habitbull is a productivity tool used for habit tracking. You can list all of your habits which you are trying to improve and keep track of your success in completing them daily through a success chain. Whether you are trying to break bad habits, like eating unhealthy, or start new habits like meditating; Habitbull is great for you. It tracks your success streak in bar graphs and tables while also motivating you by sharing motivational quotes. There is also a discussion forum to help you get in touch with others who are succeeding or struggling right beside you to motivate you to continue. You can also add reminders and notes. This app is amazing for anyone who loves lists and checking boxes off to feel successful.

I challenge you all to try one these apps for 2018 and see how far you have come at the end of the year. Change is hard, but better habits lead for a better lifestyle. I hope you visit their websites and give them a try! Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Jennifer Liwanag is the founder of StickToPlan on Etsy and the website owner of Jennibearrx. She also blogs for The Local Biz Magazine as the Technology Blogger. She enjoys discovering new technology, collecting and designing stationery, and going on travel adventures with her high school sweetheart.



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Family Matters

by Leshanne Mori



How to give your kids a humble holiday

Maybe you've seen the articles circulating on Facebook - Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher choose to forgo gift giving this year so that they, "don't raise a-holes". What fascinates me is reading the reactions to their decision. For many commenters, the thought of a Christmas without presents is, less like Christmas.

Yet, here's the thing I hear every year from parents and in media alike: Christmas is a time of excess for families. Too much food, too much overspending, too much over-scheduling and too much stuff. Gift-giving feels automatic and obligatory, something we can't help but associate with this joyous time of year. I know I'm not the only one to rush out in the final days before December 25th to buy something - anything - to show that I didn't just forget about that person I left off my list. Where's the Christmas spirit in that? You know it is a dodgy gift, and they know it too. We've all been part of this dodgy gift giving in some way or another. So why do we continue?

Well, there's that thing called tradition. It's easy, it's familiar, and it makes the point you want to make without making you look ungrateful. If you're feeling brave and willing to try something new this year, I am certain you will find this holiday season more restful than you've enjoyed before. The secret is at the heart of Mila Kunis and Ashton Kutcher's choice - avoid buying more stuff.

This idea of having less stuff is at the heart of minimalism (aka mindful consumerism), a trend that's gaining traction as a lifestyle choice for anyone looking for more meaning in their life. It's about intentional living, being less wasteful and focusing only on what's important to your family. Christmas is the ideal time to start. Minimalism will help you reduce stress, spend less, and teach your kids an important lesson about the value of time over money. Here's where to start:

Tell people what you really want

Push through any guilt you might feel, and start talking about what you want. One of my friends loves sleep-ins, so she asks for the gift of sleep. He took the kids outside to play for the morning and she gets the one thing she craves.

Skip individual gifts

If the thought of another Secret Santa at work bothers you, suggest pooling money together as a group to make a donation to charity. This time of the year is difficult for many local families that could use your donation to buy food and supplies they truly need.

Give the gift that your loved ones want: your time

Ask any parent and they will agree, there is never enough time in the day. Ask any kid, and all they want is your undivided attention.

No matter what your budget this Christmas, the best gifts are those that are priceless. Be generous with your time, energy and talents and you can teach your kids a valuable lesson these holidays.

Leshanne Mori writes for The Motherhood Scene a blog about the best events, businesses, and child care centres in Durham, Ontario. Follow her blog to get the inside scoop on navigating life as a new mom in our community.

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by Wendy Lee

A Forkful of Healthy



Asian Chicken Lettuce Wraps & Hoisin Sauce

Rather than go with a traditional holiday dish, I'm excited to share a recipe that is packed full of flavor, super light and healthy, and of course a welcome break from turkey and other holiday "heavy" food choices.

While often I prepare these Asian Lettuce Wraps with ground turkey or chicken, I've opted for thinly sliced chicken breast that is lightly sautéed and tossed in this delicious homemade Hoisin Sauce. They soak up all the sticky flavour and are easily stuffed into the bibb lettuce leaves. Fill them, wrap them, eat them, and repeat! Enjoy!



- 4 oz. Boneless Chicken Breasts
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1/8 cup low sodium soy sauce
- 1/2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp fresh lime juice
- 2 tsp minced fresh garlic, or to taste
- 4 tablespoons of Hoisin Sauce

Hoisin Sauce

- 1/4 cup cane sugar
- 1 tablespoon water
- 3 tablespoons Chinese Black Bean Sauce
- 1 tsp soy sauce
- 1/2 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 2 prunes
- 1/4 tsp sesame oil
- 1/4 tsp Chinese 5 powder

In a large bowl whisk together soy sauce, ginger, lime juice, garlic and hoisin sauce. Stir in chicken strips. Cover with plastic wrap, refrigerate and marinate for 2 hours.

When ready to serve, heat a large non-stick pan with 1 teaspoon sesame oil on medium to low heat. Add chicken without marinade and cook, stirring until chicken is cooked throughout.

Place chicken inside bibb lettuce leaves and add fillings (chilled cucumber sliced thinly, chopped green onion, shredded cabbage, julienned carrots) Garnish with fresh sesame seeds.

Hoisin Sauce can be used for dipping as well.

FOR ASIAN CHICKEN LETTUCE WRAPS		HOISIN SAUCE	
Protein:	23g	Protein:	3g
Carbs:	8.5g	Carbs:	32g
Fat:	3.4g	Fat:	4.9g

Wendy is a food blogger, food photographer, writer, lifestyle strategist, self-taught chef and lover of animals. While living in Paris, she mastered the art of a perfect crepe and French cuisine, and also discovered the world of fabulous wines and champagne! Her passion to find healthy alternatives to popular dishes stems from her desire to live a fit and healthy lifestyle while still enjoying food!

by V. Solo

MONEY HACKS

The Illusion of Financial Security



People LOVE their pensions and benefits. We love feeling that we'll be able to retire with money in our pockets. We love the security of knowing that we won't need to pay (at least entirely) out of pocket if we get that otherwise earth (and wallet) shattering news: YOUR KID NEEDS BRACES. Or if we're told that we or a family member needs to start taking a prescription drug for a prolonged period of time.

When a potential employer mentions "benefits" and/or "pension" we tend to get a sense that the "financial planning" part of being an adult has been taken care of for us. With so much to worry about in our lives, it's nice to think that these necessities have been taken care of for us.

But have they? Is your pension going to provide enough money for you to enjoy retirement when you want to retire? Will your benefits provide enough income for your family if you suffer a major illness or pass away before your time?

Numerous GoFundMe pages and fundraising events for injured or sick friends, or a family who lost a parent say maybe not. Benefits and pensions are great, but when you have a family and retirement goals to consider, work benefits often leave a gap, and pensions won't necessarily provide for what you want in retirement. Everybody has different goals and concerns, so why would one cookie-cutter plan work for everyone?

Do you have security or a false sense of it? Let's assess:

Pension: What do you want to do in retirement? When do you want to retire? How much can you expect to receive from CPP and OAS in retirement? Will you have enough?

Disability and Health: How much of your income is covered if you have to go on disability? How long does the benefit last? What will you do if the benefit expires even if you can't go back to work? If you were to suffer a major illness causing your expenses to increase, how will you cover the increase in expenses considering that you're living on a reduced income? Are your health benefits sufficient to cover the medication you may need?

Life: How much coverage do you have? Is it enough to cover what you would want covered if you died tomorrow? Examples: support for your children for X amount of years. Eliminate or reduce mortgage payments for your spouse. Pay off other outstanding debts.

Solution Find a good financial advisor to help you assess how your pension and/or benefits fit with what YOU want. A good advisor helps you build and execute a financial plan that addresses your goals and concerns. They're less concerned with "making their numbers" and more about building a relationship and being referable. They build their business on quality, not quantity. Furthermore, a good financial advisor is well versed in strategies and techniques which can help you maximize the tax-efficiency of your income before and in retirement – leaving more money in your pocket.

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Take some time to plan with a professional. Take control of your financial future.

V. Solo is a Financial Advisor who is passionate about helping families and business owners build and maintain a plan that makes it possible for them to achieve their financial goals.



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Hottest Toys for 2017!



Every holiday season, there are a new batch of toys that are deemed "hot" and "must-haves". Here are a few of this season's toys that kept popping up on several lists we looked at.

1. **L.O.L Surprise! Big Surprise** – It's the ultimate unboxing experience. It's a limited edition, and there are 50 surprises inside of them!
2. **WowWee Fingerlings Interactive Baby Monkey** – This baby interactive monkey loves to hang onto your finger, blink its eyes, turn its head, blow kisses, swing by its tail and talk in monkey babble! It has 40 different reactions and sound effects and comes in an assortment of colours.
3. **FurReal Friends Roarin' Tyler (or Ivory) the Playful Tiger** – This interactive tiger responds to sound and touch, and has over 100 different sounds and motion combinations. Make noise or roar and Tiger roars back! Tiger also has a little play toy it reacts to.
4. **Imaginext DC Super Friends Batman Batbot Xtreme** – This Batman is over 2 feet tall and has extendable wings, multiple projectile launchers, a hidden Batcycle, real punching fists and a voice changer where kids can add their own unique voice to it!
5. **Hatchimals Surprise** – For the first time ever, you can hatch two Hatchimals! These loveable twins are hidden inside a magical speckled egg. Use your love and care to help them hatch! Raise them from baby to toddler to kid and they'll learn new things at each stage!
6. **Paw Patrol Sea Patroller Transforming Vehicle** – This dual boat/land vehicle can easily tackle the rough seas as well as the rocky roads. It is equipped with flashing lights, sounds and a detachable anchor. There's room for all Paw Patrol figures aboard (figures sold separately). It can also hold up to 2 vehicles and comes with Ryder's Rescue ATV.
7. **Power Wheels Boomerang 12-Volt Ride-On** – This Power Wheels ride-on powers over different terrains and races at a maximum speed of 5 miles per hour in the forward direction, maximum 2.5 miles per hour in reverse. For added security, it features an adjustable seat, seatbelt, high sides, and Power-Lock brakes.

Wendy Chiavalon is the Editor-in-Chief of The Local Biz Magazine. In her spare time, she doubles as a cookie, cupcake and cake decorator. You can check out some of her custom creations at Wendy's Cake Shoppe.



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The COACH Corner

by Malachi Brown



Keep It Simple

Isn't it interesting how simple and carefree we started out in life? It took very little to keep us occupied and joyful. Somewhere along the way all that changed, complicated and busy became our mantra. As children, along with our friends, we did life. We became creative and adventurous. We took risks and loved it. As we got older, the more we complicated life, the smarter we thought we appeared.

Conventional wisdom always said, "keep life simple".

We didn't want that; busy and discontentment became the norm. To be someone, you had to be busy, strive for more, be more relevant to family, friends and neighbors. Is this way of life *really* working? How much do we really control; how much can we truly accumulate? This is not a negative, sad story article. We need to achieve. We need possessions and achievements, nothing ultimately wrong with that.

The question becomes how *much* joy or contentment do we sacrifice in the pursuit?

I have the extreme privilege of being around people who are extremely wealthy, and the privilege of being with people who have very little. I have the opportunity to travel to other parts of the world and experience different cultures. What I have come to observe is that people all want basically the same things. We want to find joy, meaning and people to love us. We want to be accepted for who we are and not be judged too harshly. We want to learn and grow, to be corrected in a way that is gentle and loving. We want to be around people who love and care about us.

Too often, striving and the accumulation of things is to cover up for what we perceive to be our shortcomings. We all had the temporary satisfaction that this brings and then it's off to the next level of striving and accumulating. The culture drives this discontentment. Are you still using last month's iPhone? Are you still driving that old SUV? Come on, be relevant and be part of the crowd; get the latest, bigger, and faster model. You don't want to get left behind, do you?

Come on, get with the program! The question becomes who benefits from this? Who pays for this? We know intuitively this is crazy and makes no sense, however we keep doing it.

What if you decide right now, I want to do life differently. Yes, I want to enjoy life and the people around me, but *not* the way the culture defines it.

Let's go back to a simpler way of life, let's do the things that truly have meaning. Let's go back to being, creative, fun, risk takers, loving and caring for people. Let's spend less than we make, now no stress and pressure of living only to pay off debts. How stress free and amazing would your life be if you were debt free? Wouldn't that afford you the time and life you really want?

Remember, the difference between life and death is the absence of a single breath. Choose a better way of living your life. Make each moment count in a meaningful way.

Malachi Brown, life coach, applies his passion in helping others unlock their full potential, enabling them to live the abundant lives they were created to have.



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The Golden Years



I was very surprised to learn that there is a problem with seniors and homelessness. When we think of the "homeless," we tend to think of younger to middle aged people living and / or sleeping on the street. I never thought seniors could be homeless too...

According to a recent study of Canadian homeless shelters, over 8.3% of those using homeless shelters are fifty-five and over and they tend to stay in shelters longer than younger people. The reasons seniors experience homelessness varies. Some don't have enough money to pay for housing; they don't have a pension, or they have a low pension, low government assistance or low wages and savings. The death of a spouse can also often leave the living senior spouse with a significantly lower income than before. Other reasons include, the lack of affordable housing, deteriorating physical and mental health and violence / abuse (The Homeless Hub).

Some seniors are lucky enough to have a support system in place and loved ones who can help them. But there are others who are socially isolated. Fortunately, there are community resources in place to help those who need assistance. The dilemma here is that often times seniors who need these services the most are unaware of them and how to access them (The Homeless Hub).

Research studies have been conducted looking at ways to improve services and best address the complexity of issues involved in senior homelessness. Recommendations have been made based on these findings. One suggestion was to have one service provider coordinate all of a senior's needs (The Homeless Hub).

The Region of Durham established *The Affordable and Seniors' Housing Task Force* committee in 2016 to identify strategies that support the creation and maintenance of affordable seniors' housing. The goal is to consult with the public and explore options to improve housing choices for seniors. A report is expected to be released just after this issue of the Local Biz, so I will have to get back to you on what it says.

It's good that Durham Region is looking out for seniors. I have some concerns though. How long would the wait be for affordable housing? There is already a shortage of affordable housing and a long wait list for it. Would homeless shelters adequately be able to deal with the health issues seniors' face? More importantly, would a vulnerable senior know what help is available to them and how to access it?

The last question poses the biggest challenge by far I think. No one is going to be going around knocking on doors to find vulnerable seniors. It is up to us to be aware of the seniors around us and talk to them if we have concerns about their health and safety. It may be better that they think we are nosy and get them the help they need than for them to suffer in silence.

To learn more about senior homelessness visit www.thehomelesshub.ca. For more information on the Region of Durham's initiatives visit www.durham.ca (Department of Social Services – Housing and Homelessness).

Linda Calder is a retired teacher. She likes to write and enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys going on cruises, taking pictures and scrapbooking.

Help is just a phone call away.

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Winter Horoscope

December 2017 to February 2018

by Julie Antoinette



Aries (March 21 – April 20)

You're very generous. You know it and others know it. The thing is, you've not been responsible with your liberal approach to giving. It's time to take inventory of your outgoing energy and resources. Consider the ways you've been throwing your pearls before swine.

Taurus (April 21 – May 21)

As the cooler weather rolls in, you find yourself searching for a few more creature comforts to add to your arsenal of decadence. You're known for your enjoyment of the finer things and this season's theme is "Comfy-Cozy". Think woolly afghans, plush cowls, mitts and scarves, artisan hot cocoa (with cinnamon) and chalet-getaways.

Gemini (May 22 – June 21)

Someone is watching closely to verify whether you will keep your word on a promise made. The problem is, you say so many things that it's difficult to remember all you've said. Not to mention all of the directions your attention takes you. Perhaps keeping a voice recorder handy will keep you reminded – and accountable. A motto to live by: Under-promise and over-deliver.

Cancer (June 22 – July 22)

Taking care of everyone else has finally caught up with you, Cancer. Many have benefitted from your support, service and welcoming presence. This season urges you to receive care and support from others that you may replenish your soul. Observe the give and take rhythm of the tides of your breath. Nature knows that energy must flow both ways. Give yourself permission to receive.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Brand new projects are underfoot! Plans are laid and drawn. Supplies are ordered and workers are at the ready. You find yourself in a "nesting phase" where you are undergoing preparations for a welcoming of some sort. Your life is about to change in a way that will be unrecognizable a few months from now. You will be most pleased.

Virgo (August 23 – September 23)

No one can argue that you take utmost care of your health, Virgo. You voraciously research information from top sources so that you are armed with knowledge, which you apply diligently. Your health is trying to convey a message to you about the condition of your inner world. What you must learn to read is the language of your body. It speaks in metaphor. The work of Louise Hay may help guide you.

Libra (September 24 – October 23)

Ever graceful and charming, you've laboriously built the perfect image of likeability. Your ruler Venus requires it. But everyone has a shadow side Libra, and as the bearer of Scales, you must acknowledge yours. Do you dare uncover your ugly side? If you are brave enough, let the book, "The Shadow Effect" by Deepak Chopra, Debbie Ford and Marianne Williamson be your manual.

Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

The winds of change are here for you this season, Scorpio. They will bring something new, and carry away something old. You'll know it by the time the winds are calm (i.e. the storm settles). Could it be a job? A relationship? A health issue? Whatever the case, the sure thing is that it will bring a brand new circumstance and a brand new you.

Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21)

We know how gregarious you are Sagittarius. You love people and have more friends than any other sign of the Zodiac. You love people and people love you. But there seems to be a change lately in your social circle. You've noticed friends falling away. Some are just out of contact and others are displaying behavior you frankly don't wish to be in the presence of. Perhaps you are the one that's changing.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

You observe everything but keep most of it to yourself. Maybe you don't want to be confrontational or maybe some things are better left unvoiced. You must be careful what you do with these unspoken words and feelings. Locked in the heart for too long, they begin to form an internal prison over time, which could affect your wellbeing. Journaling is best. Pour the contents of your heart there. The pen is mightier than the sword.

Aquarius (January 20 – February 19)

Someone you wronged in the past is haunting your thoughts. You're a different person now and would never behave the way you did then. But when you think of the ones you love, the anxiety sets in about the encounters they may have with people such as you were. A ritual of forgiveness may help release you. Perhaps a letter of apology that remains unsent.

Pisces (February 20 – March 20)

Decision time approaches for you Pisces. It's time to turn over a new leaf. Before you do, many internal closets require a thorough cleaning and dusting. You don't want to enter a new cycle with skeletons in tow. In her book, *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, Marie Kondo suggests keeping those items which "spark joy". Say "thank you and goodbye" to the rest.

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In this horoscope, she relays intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes. As above, so below.



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