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Spring 2019

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Editor-in-Chief Wendy Chiavalon
Art Director Mychol Scully

Regular Columnists

Julie Antoinette, Sue-Ann Bavinka, Malachi Brown, Linda Calder, Stephanie Herrera, Wendy Lee, Leshanne Mori, Tara Richardson, Karolina Szymanska, Bianca Schaefer, Sarah Malik

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President Antoine Elhashem

General Manager Kim Dobie

Advertising Consultant Carolyn Burtch, Konstantina Perrea, Tiffany Gordon-Paterson

Production Coordinator Wendy Chiavalon

Legal Jerry Herszkopf Law Firm

Mailing address

205-1691 Pickering Parkway
Pickering, ON L1V 5L9

To contact us

416.926.9588 or 905.231.9722
www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca

For comments, questions and advertising inquiries

inquiries@inspiredcreative.ca

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From the Publisher

Here at The Local Biz, we don't shy away from "embarrassing" topics. If we feel it's important for our readers to know, we'll put it in print. So of course, we were completely onboard when health and fitness columnist Bianca Schaefer pitched her article to us, *The Scoop on Poop*. The title says it all. In her article you will learn about all things poop related (what's normal and what isn't), and you'll learn helpful tips about how to overcome digestive issues such as constipation and diarrhea. You'll also learn how taking care of your bowels can help you overcome health issues such as low energy, bloating and weight gain to name a few. If you want to have the best poops, her article is a must-read. You can find it on page 8.

On a lighter note, you know that we love to highlight local people in Durham Region. People who make a difference in our community. It is even more refreshing when it is a young person who is making a difference. We came across T.S., a former Activity Leader at the Boys & Girls Club. T.S. has a knack for working with children. You can sense his enthusiasm when he talks about children and what they have taught him about life. It's a refreshing read; *Caring for Kids...My Dream Job* on page 19.

In other news, I am sad to report that Leshanne Mori, our parent columnist will no longer be able to write for us. Leshanne has made a tremendous contribution to our magazine over the years writing many feature articles for us. Her column *Family Matters* has been extremely well-received by many of our parent readers. We will definitely miss working with her. You can read her final column on page 32.

This also means that we are on the lookout for another mom or dad to take over her column in our next issue. If you are a parent eager to write about your parenting experiences, please contact our editor Wendy.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we *finally* have a new teen columnist! Sarah Malik is very excited to be taking over *Tweens, Teens & In-between*. Check out her very first column on page 31.

I hope you enjoy reading our Spring 2019 issue. You can connect with us through our website www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca and Facebook page.

Antoine Elhashem
Publisher

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From the Editor

It could be March, April or May of 2019 when you're reading my letter. Regardless, I'm going to ask you two questions: (1) Did you set any goals this year? (2) If so, how are you faring? Are you happily chugging along, or did you give up already?

You know the stats, 80% of people quit their New Year's resolutions by February. The reasons for doing so are expected. Most people set goals that are too broad or aren't clear and it overwhelms them. They don't know where to begin. And more importantly, once they begin, they often lose momentum to keep going when things get tough because they don't know *why* they set the goal to begin with. All this can be a recipe for disaster.

So, I suggest you try something else. How about visualizing your goals? I mean *really* envisioning them? There's a lot of research showing the effectiveness of visualization in goal achievement. In fact, "successful people" do it all the time to achieve their goals. The basic premise behind the power of visualization is this: if you "see" your goal, you are more likely to achieve it.

Let's take it even one step farther. Visualize your goals, but also put those images on a board where you can see them everyday. Create a vision board. This January, my friends and I decided to create our own vision boards. Each of us had things in our life we wanted to achieve – in our career, in our relationships, in our health etc. We did a bit of research, gathered all our supplies, and over a glass of wine and a soul soundtrack, spent an evening putting together our vision boards. If you are interested in creating your vision board, check out our feature article aptly titled, *The Power of A Vision Board* on page 13 of the magazine.

While on the topic of goals, one of my goals this year is to be more mindful of my eating. To watch my portions and eat more vegetables and fish. Thanks to a lovely birthday gift from a dear friend, I had the chance to try an online meal delivery service. I was pleasantly surprised. Not only did it make healthy food super easy to prep and cook, but it also allowed me to try dishes I haven't tasted before. Win-win! Tara Richardson looks into the popularity of these companies and explains why they may be the right choice for you. You can find her article, *Fresh Food Delivered to Your Door Step* on page 24.

As always, I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the magazine. Feel free to send me your feedback on it. If you would like to pitch a story, or write for us, you can reach me at editor@thelocalbizmagazine.ca.

Wendy Chiavalon
Editor-in-Chief

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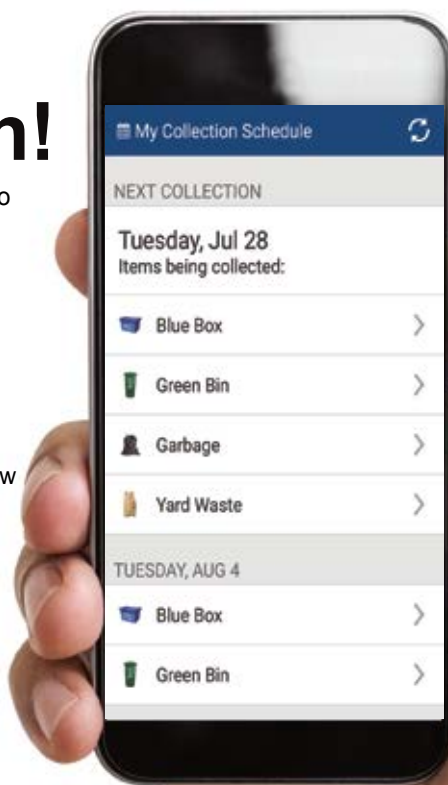


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The Scoop on Poop Your Health Depends on It

by Bianca Schaefer

Back in the 90's, I watched one of the most hilarious bathroom scenes I have ever seen when I watched the movie *Dumb and Dumber* with Jim Carey and Jeff Daniels. Lloyd (Carey) was trying to get revenge on his friend Harry (Daniels) for asking his love interest out on a date, so he put laxatives in Harry's drink. A couple of hours later while out on the date, Harry feels his stomach gurgling with what only can be imagined as some

intense urge to get to the toilet – pronto! He runs to the bathroom, locks the door, and barely gets his pants down before a huge “mass production” explodes into the toilet. The noises that come out of Harry's butt are like trumpets sounding, the stench coming out of his rear make him open the window as wide as possible, and unfortunately, it doesn't look like Harry will be able to get off the toilet any time soon.

This scene is hilarious because let's face it, I think we can all — in some way — relate! As often as we like to joke around about going “number two”, your poop is no laughing matter because in truth — it says a lot about you and your overall state of health.

As a registered holistic nutritionist, talking to my clients about their bowel movements is part of every process when helping them reach their health goals. Most times clients aren't surprised when I ask them about bowel movements. People usually respond with “I'm normal, or regular”. It's not until I ask for more details that the conversation can become uncomfortable. You see, the more details I get about how often, what it looks like, and what colour it is, the more I can understand how to help them. That's why I believe that the key to discovering their state of health is found when they turn around and have a look before they flush!

In this article you will not only gain knowledge about all things poop related, (such as what's normal and what isn't), you'll also learn helpful tips about how to overcome digestive issues such as constipation and diarrhea and what you can start doing right now to have the best poops. You'll learn how taking care of your bowels can help you overcome health issues such as low energy, bloating and weight gain to name a few. Before we dive into all of that, let's go back to the very beginning.

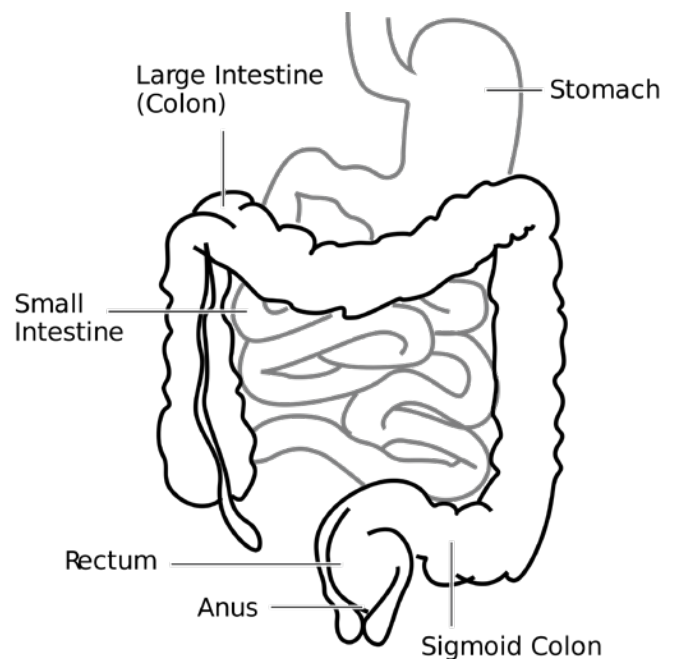
Hippocrates once said, “All disease begins in the gut”. The gut here, refers to our digestive tract (from mouth to anus), gut-associated lymphatic tissue, intestinal flora and the gut's nervous system. So, when you think about it, we want to have the best functioning digestive system possible in order to avoid disease. Our digestive system should be running smoothly because it has two very important functions. It breaks down food into nutrients that are absorbed into our body for energy, growth and cell repair and it then eliminates waste, toxins and whatever else the body doesn't need. The problem is, when our digestive system isn't functioning as it should, it can rob the body of the very thing it absolutely needs to survive – health and vitality.

But what many people fail to realize, is that your digestive process doesn't start in the colon, it actually starts in the mouth! Chewing food properly (until liquefied) is a key step in helping the stomach, pancreas, liver, gallbladder, small and large intestines work effectively. As you can see, it's a team effort and it begins with you! Chewing food too quickly and swallowing prematurely can leave food particles too large for stomach acids to break down and make it difficult for the small intestine to absorb food molecules and extract nutrients. Unfortunately, there are many other factors that can lead to poor digestion and toxic bowels such as ingesting too many processed foods and juices, having a diet low in fiber and high in dehydrogenated fats, having excess caffeine, sugar, alcohol and drugs to name a few. Now I'm not saying you've got to stop eating and drinking everything you love. But here's the thing; your body can only take so much abuse. What you may think is “normal”, such as any of the below common symptoms of digestive dysfunction, is actually your body's way of telling you that something has got to change.

Common symptoms of Poor Digestion and a Toxic Bowel

- Gas, Burping, Bloating
- Headaches / Neck Pain
- Low Energy / Fatigue
- Muscle and Joint Pain / Arthritis / Inflammation
- Weight Gain
- Acne and/or other Skin Problems
- Allergies, Food Sensitivities
- Bowel Irregularity / Gastrointestinal Upset

Do you experience any of these symptoms? If yes, don't worry. The good news is, by learning about your poop, you can begin to take control of your health, improve your digestion and maybe even eliminate embarrassing moments in the bathroom!



So, in terms of poop, how do you know what is normal? Let's focus on frequency, form and colour.

Frequency

In terms of frequency, you should have at least 1 complete bowel movement per day. You want to feel like your bowels have emptied, not just partially eliminated. Some people have 2-3 and that's okay too. They may have a faster metabolism, they may consume more plant fiber or they may have a better, healthy bacteria count in their gut. If you're going beyond 3 bowel movements per day, you may be experiencing diarrhea, which I'll address later.

BRISTOL STOOL CHART



Type 1 Separate hard lumps

Very constipated



Type 2 Lumpy and sausage like

Slightly constipated



Type 3 A sausage shape with cracks in the surface

Normal



Type 4 Like a smooth, soft sausage or snake

Normal



Type 5 Soft blobs with clear-cut edges

Lacking fibre



Type 6 Mushy consistency with ragged edges

Inflammation



Type 7 Liquid consistency with no solid pieces

Inflammation

Form

We want to be sure that our stool is well formed because the shape can tell you a lot about whether or not you are digesting and assimilating nutrients well and whether or not you are eliminating wastes and toxins properly. The Bristol Stool Chart can be a great reference when assessing the shape of your stool.

We want to have long, tubular shapes like bananas that don't break apart when you flush. If you find that your stools are too loose or mushy, you definitely want to talk to your doctor and have a comprehensive stool analysis. If you're experiencing diarrhea, it's likely that your body is eliminating vital trace minerals that your body needs to function optimally. Assess your diet and eliminate things like gluten, certain grains, too many nuts and seeds and always evaluate if you may be suffering from certain food sensitivities. Often, we can look at culprits like caffeine, sugar and alcohol as irritants to the lining of the gut; which can lead to suffering from alternating bouts of both diarrhea and constipation. **Tip: Incorporating bananas, rice, apple sauce and toast can help ease symptoms of diarrhea and be sure to drink plenty of water.**

Are your stools too hard or infrequent? Constipation can lead to bloating and a whole slew of digestive issues. Think of it this way. What happens to food that you leave out on a hot, humid summer day? It begins to rot. Much the same is true when you're constipated. Your food just sits in a warm environment and begins to become toxic. Bloating, flatulence and foul-smelling stool is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to chronic constipation, not too mention it can be uncomfortable and even embarrassing. Again, you want to talk to your doctor about having a comprehensive stool analysis. **Tip: Pears, prunes, nuts and**

soaked chia seeds can help move things along. Incorporating more plant fiber or even a fiber supplement such as my personal favourite called Nutracleanse.

Color

In terms of color, it should be a medium to dark brown. If your stool is black, it could indicate bleeding in the upper gastrointestinal tract or perhaps too much iron from an iron supplement. If your stool is yellow or green or tan, it could be an issue with fat malabsorption and digestion and could indicate strain on our liver, pancreas or gall bladder. Keep in mind though, that beets, leafy greens and digestive enzymes can colour your stool but that's perfectly normal.

Now that you know what your poop should look like, here are 5 things you can do to have a great poop!

1. Healthy Diet

Eat a healthy diet – including plenty of plant fiber: 7-9 servings (combined) of leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables and fresh fruit. If grains do not irritate you, enjoy them properly prepared, sometimes they need to be soaked. Nuts and seeds are great but if you have bowel pain, or are prone to diarrhea, it's best to avoid those. Be sure to include healthy fats to keep you well lubricated like avocado, olives and coconut oil. And don't forget to incorporate protein to keep the bowels strong like fresh fish



and seafood, pastured and organic meats, beans, legumes, eggs and organic dairy, if tolerated. **Tip: Keep your digestive tract healthy by incorporating cabbage, bone broth, probiotics and fermented foods like sauerkraut or kimchi.**

2. Position

The way you sit on a toilet is important. Toilets are a relatively modern invention and when you sit on a toilet the rectum is forced into a kinked position making it hard to have a proper bowel movement. It can cause us to strain in order to eliminate, which can also cause hemorrhoids and other bowel problems. Anatomically, humans should squat for best bowel movements. This can be done by elevating the legs using a foot stool to re-create a squatting position.

3. Timing

Make time to poop everyday without distractions! Sure, you may joke about the guy who always has to read the paper or these days, read his phone, but this is no laughing matter. Typically, a well-formed bowel movement shouldn't take a long time to pass – in fact, less than a minute. Anything longer could indicate that you're suffering from some type of chronic constipation. Reading or watching your device interferes with the process of letting your nervous system and bowels relax, in order to have a complete bowel movement. Give yourself the time and luxury to poop without distractions!

4. Exercise

Moving the body stimulates bowels especially when you exercise regularly. It helps relieve constipation and it stimulates the muscles and nerves in the gut to work better.

5. Hydration

Drink plenty of water. Water is super important when it comes to having proper bowel movements because it helps move everything along. In fact, our large intestine needs water to properly form our stool. If you're consistently dehydrated, your bowels will pull water from where it can, meaning it takes it from other organs in the body thus making it more difficult for them to function optimally. I recommend at least 2 litres (2000ml) or more of water daily.

Finally, in order to have healthy digestion and amazing bowel movements, consider other lifestyle factors that can impact your overall state of health. Stress, lack of good quality sleep, toxin exposure (environmental/topical), and mental and emotional strain can all zap vital nutrients and energy from the body. Take stock of your lifestyle choices and choose to eliminate (no pun intended) what doesn't contribute to the kind of life and health you desire.

Bianca Schaefer is a 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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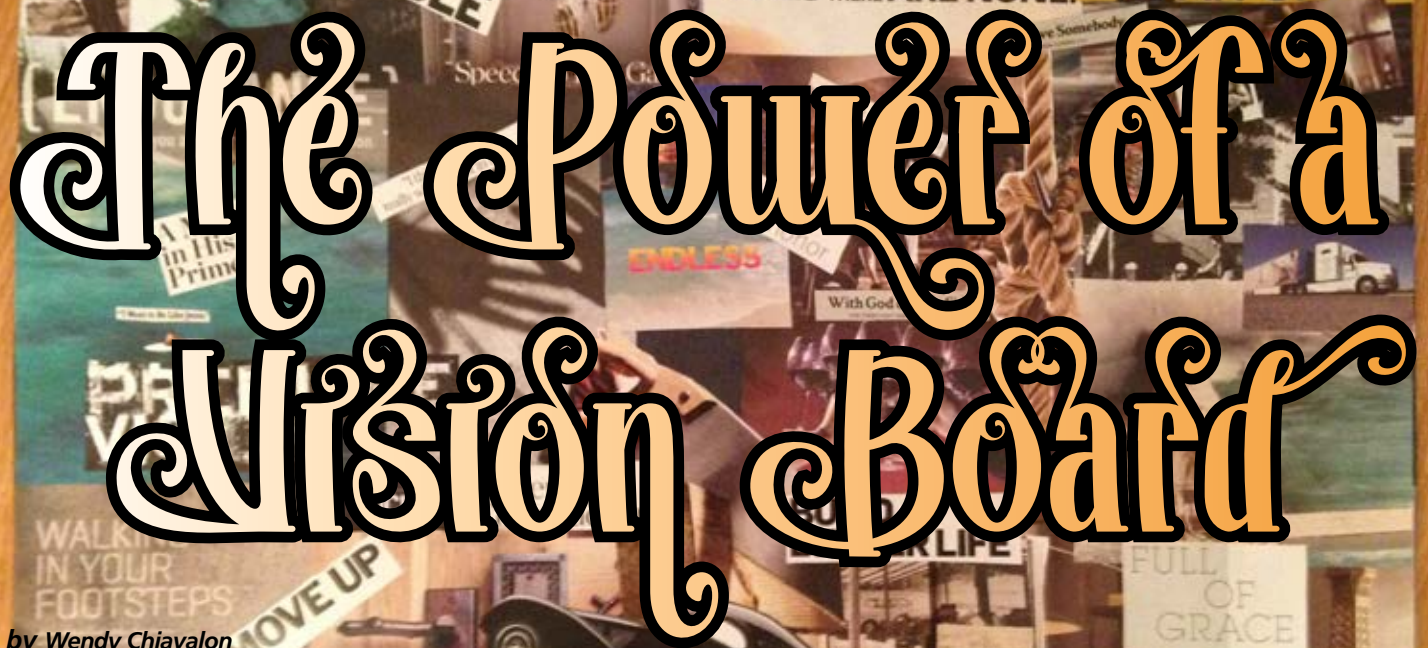


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The Power of a Vision Board

by Wendy Chiavalon

Do you believe that anything in life is possible?

Do you believe that you can achieve anything in life if you really wanted to?

The answers you give to these two questions will determine whether you take this article seriously, or dismiss it as “fluff”. If your answer is ‘no’, you fall in the latter category and you may as well flip over to the next page in the magazine. If your answer is ‘yes’, or even ‘maybe’ then read on.

Thoughts = Reality

The mind is an incredible tool. What you think of, manifests in your life. The thoughts you have create your reality. Whether you believe this or not, this is how things work. In fact, this is something that is already happening in your life right now.

Remez Sasson from Success Consciousness explains how this works, “...Thoughts are endowed with a creative power that molds your life, and attracts to you what you think about. Most people think and repeat certain thoughts quite often. They focus their thoughts on their current environment and situation, and therefore, create and recreate the same sort of events and circumstances.” Ever heard someone say, “I don’t know why I keep attracting the same kind of men in my life?” Perhaps it’s because they keep thinking about the kind of men they don’t want, instead of the kind of men they do want.

If you want to change your reality, you need to first change your thoughts.

The Power of Visualization

If thoughts create your reality, then that means your thoughts can come true. Not every random thought in your mind; but a

focused, repeated thought, full of emotion.

So, how does this relate to your goals?

If you want to achieve something in your life, you have to be able to think it—clearly and repeatedly. You have to feel it! According to Sasson, “...The subconscious mind accepts the thoughts that you often repeat and changes your mindset accordingly, as well as your habits and actions. Your new habits and action, often, bring you into contact with new people, situations and circumstances that tend to help you achieve the goals you have been thinking about.”

When you have an image of what you want in your mind, it helps you focus. This laser like focus on what you want makes you more attuned to the things, people, places or opportunities that will bring you closer to your goal. Of course, in order for this to work, your goal has to be something you truly want; you have to feel it! You have to get really excited at the thought of achieving it.

Top athletes often use visualization as part of their training. They do this by mentally going over in their head a difficult move or a sequence of actions before they actually do it. Olympic swimming champion Michael Phelps for instance, was instructed by his coach to, “...watch a ‘mental videotape’ of his races every day before he went to sleep and when he woke up in the morning. Phelps would visualize every aspect of swimming a successful race starting from the blocks and culminating in a celebration after the race was won.” According to his coach, “...we figured it was best to concentrate on these tiny moments of success and build them into mental triggers... It’s more like his habits had taken over. The actual race was just another step in a pattern that started earlier that day and was nothing but victories. Winning became a natural extension.” (Peaksports.com)

Let’s be clear about one thing though – and this is often the

mistake naysayers of visualization make. Just because you think something, does not mean that it will automatically happen in your life. It's not magic or miracles. For example, just because I can imagine myself wearing a pair of size 8 jeans, doesn't guarantee I will automatically fit into a pair of size 8 jeans. Sasson stresses 4 things that work in tandem with visualization:

- A strong desire, motivation, and commitment to do whatever it takes to achieve your goal.
- Persistence, concentration, consistency, and self-discipline.
- A willingness and readiness to use opportunities that come your way.
- A willingness to act and do things to get you closer to your goal

Why Vision Boards Work

A vision board is a tool that aids in visualization. It takes the process of visualization one step farther by creating a visual representation of your desires. A vision board is a board (poster, cork, Bristol etc.) that contains a collage of images and words that represent your goals. The purpose of a vision board is to help identify, define and clarify what you really want in your life. When you look at the images on your vision board you are reminded of your goals and dreams, and hopefully you get excited when thinking of your goals and dreams. This helps create a repeated, focused, emotional thought of what you want.

One of the best cases that really exemplify the powerfulness of vision boards is actor Jim Carrey. When Jim Carrey was a struggling comedian trying to making it big in Hollywood, he wrote a cheque to himself for \$10 million. He dated it for 1994 and carried it in his wallet. He would look at this cheque daily for inspiration. In 1994, Carrey earned \$10 million for his role in the movie *Dumb and Dumber*.

Another popular example is *Chicken Soup for the Soul* author Jack Canfield. Jack Canfield taped a \$100,000 bill he made himself to the ceiling above his bed. He would see it everyday when he woke up. He set a goal that he wanted to make \$100,000 in one year. (He was making \$8,000 / year at the time.) Every morning when we woke up, he would visualize what it would be like to have a \$100,000 lifestyle. Where he would live; the car he'd own; the house he'd live in etc. In about a month's time, he started having ideas he'd never thought of before for the first time in his life—ideas that helped him earn more money. Within a year he had earned \$92,000.

Again, it's important to note, Carrey's and Canfield's success was not overnight and due to good fortune. They did not get what they wanted just by staring at a cheque or fake bill everyday. By regularly looking at these images, they harnessed the power of visualization and developed a laser like focus that helped them attract and become more attuned to the people and opportunities in their life that would bring them closer to their goals. Additionally, they were extremely motivated, determined, persistent, self-disciplined and did whatever it took to achieve their goals.

How to Create a Vision Board

Creating a vision board is simple and fun. All you need are a few supplies which can be purchased from the craft and stationary sections of your dollar store or local store.

- Poster board, Bristol board, construction paper, or corkboard*
- Magazines, newspapers, or other printed sources of images and words
- Personal photos
- Glue or thumb tacks
- Markers, pens, crayons
- Blank pieces of paper
- Scissors
- Any other decorative supplies you need to personalize your vision board

**I personally prefer to use cork board and tacking images down (as it makes it easier to switch images later on), but if you're just starting out, gluing images on Bristol board or construction paper works just fine.*

Now that you've gathered all your supplies, you're ready to begin. Sort through your personal photos. Keep aside the photos you would like to place on your vision board. Go through your pile of magazines, newspapers and printed sources. Cut out anything you see that resonates with you. Don't worry about organizing and sorting at this stage, just cut!

Next, brainstorm your goals. Get a blank piece of paper and jot down your goals. You can jot down short-term goals as well as long-term goals. If you wish, you can create 2 vision boards, one for short-term goals and the other for long-term goals. If it's easier, think about your goals in different areas of your life such as relationships, career, finances, fitness and health, travel and so forth. Then, think about what you want in each of these areas of your life. Use as little or as many categories as needed and personalize them so they are relevant for you. I had a category for 'marriage' and for 'children' instead of relationships. My friend had a category for 'love' and 'family' (and also 'hair and skin') on her board. Remember, it's your life and it's what you want; your vision board should reflect that.

After you are satisfied with your list of goals, it's time to start placing your images on your board. Sort through your cut out items and photos and pick those which best reflect your goals. If an item doesn't seem to fit under your goals, but still resonates with you, use it.

Place all the images you would like on your board first, before gluing or tacking them down. How you decide to place the images on your board is up to you. You can divide your board into categories discussed earlier (i.e. relationships, family, career etc.) and place corresponding images in a certain category. Or, you can place images anywhere on the board. You can also paste images neatly so they don't overlap, or you can do so in a random fashion. Once you are satisfied with how things look, start gluing or tacking down the images. After you have finished gluing everything, you can continue to decorate your board and personalize it however



you wish. Remember, a vision board is not set in stone. You can add or remove images as you see fit to reflect changes in your life or goals.

If you prefer, you can also create a virtual (private) vision board on Pinterest or other sites. A Google search will show you lots of online options.

How to Use Your Vision Board

A vision board is only effective if you actually use it. If you tuck it away in a corner and never look at it again it won't work. Place your vision board in your bedroom, office, hallway, or if done virtually – smartphone or computer. Anywhere you look daily would be a good spot to put it.

Look at your vision board and focus on the words and images displayed. Spend a minute or two imagining / reflecting / meditating on these images. Really feel them. The emotions you feel are important and will help you take action throughout the day in ways that aligns with your goals. (If the goals are what you want, getting excited about them shouldn't be hard; it should feel natural.)

Next Steps?

A vision board is a great first step towards achieving your goals. For some people this may be enough, but many others may need to go one step further and describe the specific steps needed in order to achieve a particular goal. Let's go back to my earlier example of wanting to fit into a pair of size 8 jeans. On my vision board, I have several images of women working out, as well as an image of a woman wearing what appear to be size 8 jeans. The next thing then is to determine

what specific steps I need to take in order to fit into a pair of size 8 jeans. I decided I will work out 5 days / week doing HIIT training, watch my portions, and eat more vegetables and fish. I also decided that I will aim towards the smaller goal of fitting into a pair of size 10 jeans first, and then work my way towards my eventual goal of fitting in a pair of size 8 jeans. (Interestingly around the time I created my vision board, I found my favourite fitness trainer's DVD on sale for a great price and bought it so I could work out to it. Coincidence? Or the power of visualization at work?)

Knowing how to set SMART goals may be helpful here. SMART stands for: S-Specific, M-Measurable, A-Actionable, R-Realistic, T-Timely. If you have a large goal on your vision board, break it down into smaller, more manageable goals, and determine the steps needed to achieve these smaller goals so it's not so overwhelming.

Oprah said it best, "Create the highest, grandest vision possible for your life, because you become what you believe." So, have big goals, visualize your goals, put them on a vision board, reflect on them often, and put in the hard work, commitment, consistency, and discipline it takes to achieve them. Your future self will thank you.

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

Spring Events Calendar

March 1, 2019

Clue with You

Clarington Museums is having mystery fun this winter with a live version of the board game CLUE acted out in the rooms of Waverly Place. Was it Colonel Mustard in the conservatory with a candlestick? Come find out. All Ages - \$30 per person, groups of four to six participants. (Recurring)
Clarington
info@claringtonmuseums.com
(905) 623-2734

March 1, 2019

Walk the Dome

Monday and Friday mornings are Walk the Dome at the Pickering Soccer Centre. The Centre is fully accessible, with a soft turf indoor surface and ample parking. Enjoy some light music, use the Nordic Walking Poles. Strollers welcome! All Ages - \$3.00 Drop In Fee/ \$25.00 for 10 Pass (Recurring)
Pickering
www.pickeringsoccer.ca
(905) 831-9803

March 9, 2019

Brooklin Woodcarvers 29th Annual Show and Competition

Free Admission, Free Parking, Refreshments, Door Prizes and Raffles, Vendors and Carving Supplies. Taking place at the Brooklin Community Centre and Library.
Brooklin
brooklinwoodcarvers.com
(905) 683-2634

March 10, 2019

2019 Bowmanville Tackle Swap & Fishing Show

\$5 Admission. Over 150 Vendors at the show including: Fishing companies, Retailers Clubs, Tournament Series, Organizations, Fishing Apparel, Guide Services, Local car & boat Dealerships TONS OF FREE PRIZES! For the kids: Free plastic baits Free cotton candy. Brooklin

March 17, 2019

Tamil Reading Circle

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM
Practice your Tamil speaking and writing skills as we explore crafts and fun cultural activities. Drop-in family program for all ages. Presented in partnership with Academic and Fine Arts of Durham.
Ajax Public Library - Main Branch, 55 Harwood Ave S, Ajax ON, L1S 2H8
(905) 683-4000

March 21, 2019

Scugog Mobile Donor Blood Clinic

Port Perry blood donors are needed at the Scugog Community Centre mobile donor event. Help save lives and join Canada's lifeline. New donors are welcome! Visit www.blood.ca to book your appointment and to view eligibility information.
Port Perry
www.blood.ca
1-888-236-6283

March 22, 2019

2nd Annual DRPS Polar Plunge

The Polar Plunge, presented by the Ontario Law Enforcement Torch Run is a fun opportunity to support Special Olympics Ontario athletes by taking a flying leap—a leap into very cold water! Registration is \$50 or fundraise \$100 to waive the registration fee. Check-in starts at 10:00 AM and plunging starts at 11:00 AM. All registrants must check in before plunging. Every Plunger will receive a FREE Icy Mug to keep your beverages warm!
Pickering
(905) 579-1520 ext. 1941

March 25, 2019

Holy Spirits--Faith Conversations Over a Pint

Holy Spirits . . . Faith Conversations Over a Pint! Everyone likes different brews ... and everyone has different views. What's your perspective? Let's 'kick it around'. Sponsored by St Paul's Anglican Church.
Uxbridge
www.stpauls-uxbridge.ca
(905) 852-7016

April 1, 2019

Art from Highschools

The Visual Arts Centre of Clarington is proud to host an exhibition of inspiring and thought-provoking work by local high schools. Art from the high schools runs until April 21.
Clarington
www.vac.ca

April 1, 2019

Oshawa English Conversation Circle

2:45 PM - 4:00 PM
Newcomers socialize and learn about the community while practicing English in a welcoming environment.
Oshawa Public Library, McLaughlin Branch, 65 Bagot St.
mabogado@cdcd.org
905-686-2661

April 1 to April 12, 2019

Oshawa - Whitby Kiwanis Music Festival

A yearly music festival open to all ages. Professional adjudications from highly regarded adjudicators. Choirs, Bands, Choral Speaking, Piano, Strings, Woodwinds, Voice and Show Music. Donation and a \$5.00 admission to Playoff Events.
Oshawa-Whitby
www.oshawawhitbykifest.ca
(905) 430-1455

April 18 to May 5, 2019

Juried Art Exhibition

Juried Art Show at Robert McLaughlin Gallery opening night. Show runs to May 5.
Whitby
whitbyribfest.com/art

April 19, 2019

The Bowmanville Antique and Folk Art Show

The Bowmanville Antiques and Folk Art Show is Canada's premiere show of country furniture, listed pre-war Canadian art, folk art and decorative accessories. Discerning collectors and decorators flock to Bowmanville each spring for an opportunity to buy from the top dealers in the country, many of whom save their best offerings specifically for Bowmanville! The show holds a high standard as all offerings exhibited are vetted by a group of experts to ensure each item meets the standards of the show. In this 46th year, there will be a special exhibit "From sea to shining sea - Nautical Antiquities of Canada" \$20.00 for Friday with re-entry Saturday \$10.00 for Saturday.
Bowmanville
www.bowmanvilleantiqueshow.ca

April 26 to April 29, 2016

OAA Spring Art Festival

Art Show and sale with 70 artists in all media inside council building at Camp Samac. Hourly draws. Lunch counter.
Oshawa
www.oshawaartassociation.com

May 10, 2019

Open Mic Night

Time: 8:00 PM - 11:59 PM
Showcase your talent at our monthly Open Mic Night, Acoustic instruments only please, other performers and talents are welcome, comedians, magicians, speakers, etc. Age of Majority required.
portperry419@hotmail.ca
(905) 985-8502

May 11, 2019

PineRidge Arts Council presents the 6th Juried Art Show and Sale!

PineRidge Arts Council present its 6th Juried Photography Exhibition in partnership with The Town of Ajax and part of the 2019 Scotiabank CONTACT Photo.
McLean Community Centre
95 Magill Drive, Ajax ON, L1T 3K7
Contact Elsie Hetherman
(905) 424-9507

May 25, 2019

Esplanade Park, Pickering Civic Complex

11 am - 5 pm
Every summer, Esplanade Park comes alive with music, dance, crafts and singing, along with children's art areas and artists demonstrations. This free arts event will include over 100 artists from across the province who show and sell a fantastic variety of original art which include Paintings (Oil, Acrylic, Watercolour), Photography, Pottery, Wood Carvings, Jewellery, Hand Made Rugs, Stationary and Candles and more!
pickering.ca/artfest

June 1, 2019

49th Annual Tour of Homes

Trinity United Church women present their 49th Annual Tour of Homes. June 1, 2019, 12 noon to 5 pm. Come enjoy beautiful homes and a gorgeous day enjoying the Uxbridge countryside. Visit www.trinityuxbridge.com for more information, or contact Maureen Coxworth at moecoxworth@hotmail.com.
Uxbridge
www.trinityuxbridge.com

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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Caring for Kids ...My Dream Job

by T.S.

**We are children of the world, watching every day go by
Changes my life, changes your life, keeps us all anticipating
We are searchers of the truth, every man's a boy deep down
Gotta say it how you mean it, there ain't no easy way**
(Bee Gees – "Children of The World")

When I was a kid, I never said the words, "I can't wait until I grow up". While a lot of my friends were looking forward to getting older and having more freedom, I never did. I never cared about being old enough to drive or live on my own. That's not to say I didn't understand why some children long to grow up. Some children associate being older with gaining more freedom, the freedom to do whatever they want. But I knew growing up wasn't all it was cracked up to be...

Perhaps I felt this way because when I was a child, I realized something one afternoon while playing chess with my father. I observed the sparkle in my father's eyes dim when it was time for him to leave our game of chess and to go to work. My father was a taxi driver. Driving a taxi is hardly what he longed for; he wished he could stay longer and play with me. I realized at that moment that freedom can slip through our fingers like sand through the hourglass. I realized my father, even though he was a grownup, wasn't truly free.

Running through the tall grass and the flora in a field in my hometown when I was eight years old is probably the freest I've ever felt or will ever feel again. Very young kids are free of the expectations of society. As we grow older, society programs us to think a certain way and to behave a certain way. And if we fall out of the norm of what is deemed "acceptable" by society, we are quickly reminded of that.

However, there are ways to "avoid" truly growing up; there is a way to elude these societal expectations. Jobs do exist where you can essentially play all day long and act as silly as you want. I've worked other jobs before that I found pretty soul-destroying. I've worked at a factory, at fast food joints and at a bar. I used to go home every day after work, often feeling drained of my joy for life. I'm lucky enough now to have found myself working in the field of play and learning from the pure of heart. Working with children, I may go into work sometimes feeling crummy, but by the time I leave, I feel wonderful.



I first started working with kids when I was really still a child myself. In high school, I got a job face painting at Knox Farms in Courtice. The next few summers after that I worked in various positions with kids. My first permanent position in the childcare industry came right after college with the Boys and Girls Club. The positive atmosphere and fun nature of my job at the Boys and Girls Club became apparent as soon as I sat down for the interview. It was no typical interview, then again, a job at the Boys and Girls Club is not a typical job. My former boss "Nemo" asked me, "What would you like your nickname to be?" After some contemplation, I chose the nickname "Neon". The questions I was then asked were atypical and fun. Nemo wondered what activities and games I would lead if I was in a gymnasium with no equipment. Then a real noggin scratcher of a question came my way: what games would I lead if I had some hula hoops? She picked my brains to see if I was creative or musical. Sometimes, you are even asked to make yourself a hat out of paper or something silly like that. (That's exactly what my partner experienced during her interview. She got the job; I figure she must have crafted quite the stylish paper chapeau.) While Nemo and I were sitting there making each other laugh during my light-hearted interview, I thought to myself, "This is it!! I've finally found a career that not only inspires me but also pushes me constantly to become the best version of myself!"

The final question Nemo asked me during the interview has always stuck with me. She asked, "Why do you want to work with children?" I took a moment of reflection. I then looked into her eyes and responded sincerely, "I think the meaning of my life is to have as many great thoughts as possible. I want to dream big dreams and puzzle over funny ideas. I want my imagination to stay alive and be able to make up monsters and heroes like I did when I was

a child. Kids have a fresh take on the world and they are so funny and creative. I want to work with children because I want to hear all about the way they view the world." Children see the world in a way that is pure, innocent, positive, quizzical, whimsical and imaginative. I wanted to see the world again through a child's eyes.

~~~

Working with kids is my calling; it didn't take long for me to realize that. It's a dream career that is not only fulfilling for me, but also fun. I get to be a kid all over again and do really cool stuff with other kids. Bug catching / bug drawing, mini field trips, impromptu picnics, dance parties, puppet shows, storytelling, painting, drawing and so much more. At the club, I was free to create my own program plans in which I looked at what the kids were interested in and planned the day accordingly. It's called emergent learning. As a teacher, you are encouraged to discover what the children you are working with find interesting and plan activities and lessons around those things. For instance, when fidget spinners were all the craze, we made our own fidget spinners with a mold and glue

My favourite thing to do is draw and paint with kids. Kids have magical imaginations and are a source of constant inspiration. Most children love art; they are never at a loss for ideas of things to draw. It was awesome to have them make up their own monsters. Sometimes I would ask them to draw what they thought the future would look like in fifty years, or I'd ask them to sketch an invention that they thought the world needed. It's wonderful to be able to guide children but also help them develop into free-thinking and creative adults.



And just like adults, not all kids share the same interests. Some children would rather play hockey than draw. Some kids love telling stories or talking about videos games. No matter what it may be, the constant thirst for knowledge that children have will give you a platform to speak about it.

Ever spent time with 4 and 5-year-olds? They have an insatiable thirst for knowledge and can be so interested in something that they ask A LOT of questions. Like a million questions! You'll be researching dinosaurs again before you know it, or wondering what a wooly bear caterpillar eats so you can build it a habitat. The amazing world we live in hasn't become normal to them yet. Nothing is boring, and they don't take anything for granted. Their point of view is very refreshing and something we have to be reminded of as we grow older.

Kids can teach you a lot of things too. When it was crafts time, the kids taught me plenty of skills. They taught me how to make friendship bracelets, origami, and how to sew cloth together to make stuffies. They taught me how to make about three hundred different versions of "slime". They let me know what makes a comic funny and even how to build scribble bots (robots that can scribble). I learned so much from them! Oh, and if you ever want a truly interesting answer to the question, "What do you think this blob looks like?", ask a kid.

How about trying something new and different? Most grownups are too cautious to try something new, especially if they may fail at it. Young kids on the other hand aren't afraid to do something even if they are bad at it. It's really about the process for them and having fun while doing it.

What about the importance of being honest? Honesty is one of the most important lesson the kids I work with teach me. Kids tell you exactly what is on their mind and what they think. There is often no sugar-coating. This is something we should strive to do as adults, but I believe that the fear of being judged for what we believe causes us to clam up.

A beautiful lesson I witness daily from working with children is that they 'let things go'. A child can be super upset and throw a tantrum one minute, but then running around laughing and playing the next. Children also forgive each other very quickly. Once an argument between two children is over, they are back to being friends again, often right away. I've never known a child to hold a grudge.

After the Boys and Girls Club, I worked at Camp Kodiak. Camp Kodiak is a camp that is specifically suited to be accessible for campers with ADHD, Autism and ODD. My time at Camp Kodiak changed my life. Living with a group of children for two months bonded us like a family. In my cabin, I worked with a child who overcame his phobia for water. At the beginning of the summer, he wouldn't even dip his feet in the lake. By the end of the summer he had learned how to do stand-up paddle boarding. Being able to help someone overcome a fear that was inhibiting their life was tremendously rewarding.

But there are difficult moments too. I was taking care of two children who were brother and sister. Sadly, the brother who was the youngest of the two was diagnosed with Leukemia. His older sister was understandably upset and experiencing all different emotions while he was in the hospital. While she was in my care, I initiated a "get well soon" card writing days. I also had big conversations with the rest of the group. I explained what

## Clubs for Kids in Durham

Boys and Girls Club of Durham  
[www.bgcdurham.com](http://www.bgcdurham.com)

Frontenac Youth Services  
[www.frontenacyouthservices.org](http://www.frontenacyouthservices.org)

360ydc  
[www.360ydc.com](http://www.360ydc.com)

Sunrise Youth Group  
[www.sunriseyouthgroup.ca](http://www.sunriseyouthgroup.ca)

Big Brothers Big Sisters  
[www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca](http://www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca)

being sick with Leukemia meant in a way that the children could understand without scaring them. I told them what they could do to help both the boy and his sister whom they were all friends with. The sister had designed a sweatshirt she could sell to raise money for there family. I bought one and proudly sported it everyday except when it was in the wash. Being able to facilitate a healing space by having an open forum where it was safe to talk about feelings made a huge difference for the kids, and it was immensely gratifying for me.

~~~

There's a common theme amongst my co-workers and I, that when it comes to working with children, we all want to be the kind of person we wished we had in our lives when we were younger. Being able to be that person for a child feels wonderful. I feel genuinely useful and not just in a capitalistic way. It feels like I am making a difference, especially when I am told I am a positive role model for these kids. It feels like I'm casting a stone into a great pond of good intentions and that the ripples in the pond will echo through time.

T.S. is a 24-year-old visual artist living in Durham Region. He is currently working at a daycare in Bowmanville and is constantly learning more about caring for children. He is a member of the Oshawa Art Association. He is also a published author whose works can be found in the Clarington Public Library in Bowmanville.

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Fresh Food Delivered to Your Door Step

by Tara Richardson

Picture this: You had a hectic morning getting the kids ready for school; there was an accident on your commute to work; you had a long day of tedious meetings when you finally got to work; you realized on the way home that you don't have anything for dinner, nor do you feel like cooking.

You have four options: you can stop by the drive-thru and pick up something for dinner (expensive and calorie laden!), you can pick up a fresh ready-to-go meal that most grocery stores now offer (pricey and most likely calorie laden), you can pick up a frozen entrée from the grocery store (cheaper but depending on the brand can be high in processed ingredients and calorie laden), or, you can resign yourself to shopping for ingredients to make a meal at home.

But obviously you don't have a shopping list because it's so last minute; you're also tired and hungry (a state not recommended to be in if you're watching your waistline), and then it appears that half the town had the same problem as you because the line-ups for the checkouts are atrocious...but you have no other option because you have to put a meal on the table. After the horrendous time at the grocery store you continue on your commute home, arrive home 20 minutes later, then have to chop

the vegetables, prepare the rest of the meal, and then wait for it to cook.... Whew, I'm exhausted just imagining this scenario!

But you don't have to be exhausted. Thanks to the development of meal kit or online food delivery companies, you can avoid slogging through the grocery store at peak times and get fresh, healthy food delivered right to your doorstep. Many people struggle to find a balanced lifestyle and these companies offer a solution to make life a little easier (and healthier). There are two types of companies: one delivers fully prepared meals for you to simply heat up and eat. The other type delivers the exact amount of ingredients needed for a recipe that you can cook in under 30 minutes. Both of these services are not only convenient, but the meals delivered are made up of fresh, local food and catered to your dietary preferences. Customers rave about the chance to try food they never would have tried before and are learning new cooking techniques in the process.

Convenience

Meal planning can be a time sucker and is (usually) a bore, but it is so important to your well-being and your wallet. Meal planning can save you money instead of impromptu spending at convenience stores, fast-food joints or restaurants. It can also keep you on track with your diet. Knowing what to buy and making a list before grocery shopping means that you will have all the food available needed to make healthy choices. Some online food delivery companies will even take over meal planning based on your food preferences. You can plan meals up

to 4 months in advance. Or, if you don't want to give up choosing meals entirely, then you can decide what meals to order weekly. These meal companies are especially convenient for busy individuals and families. Just heat and eat, or cook in under 30 minutes. What is especially helpful is that you choose when the meals are delivered so that it's a convenient time for you. Maybe you have a vacation booked and when you get home you have to prepare to return to work the next day, get the kids ready for school, do the laundry, etc. so the last thing you feel like doing is making dinner! Ordering meals in advance means that you can have a nice, healthy meal at home after a week of not being in your usual routine.

How do online food delivery companies compare to dining out? They are a little pricier than most take-out or restaurant meals, but often times take-out and restaurant meals are heavier and more calorie dense. If time is a factor, then online delivery services win. They're delivered well in advance and take the guesswork out of figuring what you're eating next.

Health-focused

Are you on a diet? Trying to eat healthier? One appealing feature of the online delivery companies is that meals are portion controlled. There's no more going up for sneaky seconds. Meals consist of a healthy balance of protein, vegetables, and carbs with the option of ordering extra protein if desired. Companies provide nutritional information for each serving, so counting calories has never been easier. Some places will even provide you with healthy snacks. Have a food allergy or dietary preference? No problem: order low-calorie, heart-healthy, gluten-free, dairy-free, or vegetarian meals. Plus, these companies provide fresh, local food that is currently in season.

Learning

If you don't want to give up cooking entirely, not to worry- you don't have to. As mentioned, some companies deliver the exact ingredients you need to prepare a recipe, so you don't have to spend an hour scouring through cookbooks (or getting sucked into the vortex of Pinterest!). Take a quick peek at the company's site and choose your meal to create. This can also be a great date night activity with your partner; creating a meal together can be so rewarding and is quality time spent well.

Another great feature is the diversity of the menu options. I personally love trying new cuisines. Thai, Ethiopian, Indian- it's all delightful. But the idea of making it seems like a giant hassle. I'd have to go to a particular grocery store, try and figure out all of the ingredients, and buy a lot of spices that I otherwise do not need. Sure, it's an adventure, but sometimes we just don't have time for such adventures. These meal-kit companies offer a solution: order a specific recipe and get the exact amount of ingredients you need. No more curry powder leftover from your one homemade Indian meal this year, and you get to prepare yummy food from around the world such as: Thai Massaman Veggie Skewers, Chicken Shawarma, and Kung Pao Mushrooms.

Reduces Food Waste

Did you know that 40% of food produced yearly in Canada is wasted? This is due to people failing to meal plan and/or holding on to food too long so that it spoils before it can be used. Food waste results in increased methane, a greenhouse



gas that contributes to global warming. Meal kit services claim to help eliminate food waste by providing people with the exact ingredients and portions they need to make a meal.

The downside to these meal kits is the packaging used to keep the ingredients fresh, which may not be recyclable. Meal kit companies are aware of this issue and are testing new ways to package kits that will also be kinder to the environment. Although this is an important concern, it should also be noted that despite the current unsustainable packaging, the use of meal kits still continues to reduce food waste overall leading to a lower carbon footprint.

The Caveat: Cost

Although this article has mainly discussed the benefits of online food delivery services, the most obvious caveat is the cost. Meals range from \$8.99-\$17 per individual and \$50-\$60 per four-person family. This depends on how frequently you use the service and what type of food you order. Some companies also charge an additional delivery fee. If money is an issue, it may be helpful to work out what you typically spend on groceries and dining out in a month to see if this is an affordable alternative.

Tara Richardson is a wellness blogger who focuses on improving mental health and well-being to promote living a flourishing life. She hopes to publish her memoir on living with mental illness in the future.

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by Stephanie Herrera

AT THE BOX OFFICE



PG-13

Five Feet Apart is a unique take on teenage love and self-discovery that opens on March 22nd.

The story centers on Stella, a 17-year old that has a YouTube channel, great friends, but lives in a world with no physical contact because she has cystic fibrosis. When a charming fellow patient comes into her life, she learns that when you have to stay apart, you'll "fight for every inch".

Missing Link is an animated comedy making its debut on April 19th. Zach Galifianakis voices Mr. Link who is the last of his kind, in search of a rumoured land where more missing link creatures are thought to reside. Link enlists the help of Sir Lionel Frost (Hugh Jackman), an expert on mythical monsters and they set out on a journey that is peppered with adventure, acceptance, hope, and friendship.

Action Adventure

On April 5th, comes a comedy action movie that is sure to charm adults and kids alike. *Shazam!* is the story of Billy, a teen who has bounced around between foster homes for years, and who finds himself in yet another home. After a spontaneous act of courage, Billy is chosen to be the new Captain Marvel which turns him into a full adult superhero whenever he utters the magic word: "Shazam!" We are taken on a funny and reckless journey as Billy learns what powers he has as he blunders around in an adult body until he is face to face with his first villain, Dr. Thaddeus Sivana. Billy learns there is a lot more to growing up than just shouting "Shazam!"

On May 31st, *Godzilla: King of the Monsters*, will be exploding onto movie screens. Some of the most famous mythical beasts rise up threatening the very existence of humanity. A crypto-zoological agency called Monarch attempts to introduce an unexpected ally: Godzilla. Fantastic CGI and the track record of Director/Writer Michael Dougherty attracted an incredible cast including Millie Bobby Brown, Vera Farmiga, Sally Hawkins, and Ken Watanabe.

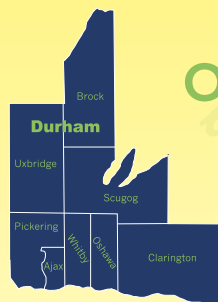
Comedy

Anne Hathaway and Rebel Wilson are taking on a re-make of the classic "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" with a gender twist in *The Hustle*. The girls are from two very different backgrounds but who come together to swindle a tech billionaire for all he's worth. The "scam" unfolds on May 10th.

May 19th ushers in a Terry Gilliam comedy adventure with *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote*. An advertising executive, played by Adam Driver, is pulled into a world of time jumping fantasy where he is thought to be the famous sidekick "Sancho" and the man he hired to play Don Quixote (Jonathan Pryce) believes himself to be the Man of La Mancha. Stunning cinematography, humour, and fantasy that Gilliam is known for, this comedy has already received numerous nominations and awards and was a selected feature at last year's Cannes Film Festival.

Stephanie Herrera is a Canadian Comedy Award nominee and the founder of the Not-for-profit: Durham Improv Collective Inc. She specializes in hosting, corporate training, and has a keynote speaker series. She is an actor, director, producer, voice over artist, writer for stage, TV, and film, and teaches acting and improv across North America. Check out her book: "The Ten Commandments...of Improvising!" on her website.

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Soul Searching



When we were kids, we created without a second thought, without fear of failure or judgment. We sang our own versions of songs, we made up elaborate stories, coloured (even though we were rarely inside the lines), built towers out of blocks and then screeched in glee when they toppled over.

As adults it's easy to squelch our creative self. We have various excuses: I don't have time, I'm not a creative person, not going to make a living out of it so why bother? This list is endless. But there are so many benefits to engaging in creative activities. To name a few: self-expression, self-awareness, relieves stress, a sense of pride when creating for others.

This spring, I encourage you to get your creative juices going. Allow yourself to play without judgment. Embark on a creative journey- whatever that looks like for you. It could mean: using social media to share pictures you take throughout the week, joining an interest course (like pottery or dancing), finding a friend who also wants to be more creative and commit to doing an activity together, reading books that foster creativity (a few of my favourites are: *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert, *Let the Elephants Run* by David Usher, and *Wreck this Journal* by Keri Smith). If you're really stuck, use prompts from the internet. Just google whatever creative task you want to try, and a million ideas are presented to you. Don't get too stuck in picking the "perfect" idea; read a few and then pick one.

Whatever activity you choose, make it something you look forward to. When creativity becomes a chore then it's a sign that it's not the right avenue, or, that you need to take a break and try something new for a while. Another tip for fostering creativity is doing your creative tasks in a supportive environment. For example, if you're a writer this could mean going to the library or your office. It could mean putting on the same music every time you sit down to write. This can help get your mind into whatever creative endeavour you're doing. If you're sitting at the kitchen table where you also eat meals, pay bills, organize papers, then your mind is going to be distracted and want to pull you back into everyday life mode.

Often times, we get lost in the idea that the outcome is all that matters, when in reality it's the process of creating that truly helps us. The outcome is a bonus, but if you focus solely on the outcome then it puts a lot of pressure on you to create perfection. Pay more attention to how you feel while creating and try to be more mindful; observe judgments and then bring yourself back to the process. Even if the outcome resembles artwork you did in kindergarten, it won't matter because you learned more about yourself in the process.

Embracing your creative self is a journey, so be patient and keep creating: future you will thank you for persevering.

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.

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by Bianca Schaefer

Get Fit: Inside & Out



Spring – The Perfect Time to Get Ready for Swimsuit Season!

Spring, let the ice-melting begin! Drip, drip, drip as the warmer temperatures melt away the grey snow, we often see this time of year. How does that old saying go, “April showers bring May flowers” and we eagerly await to spend more time outdoors. But before summer hits and beach bodies appear, use this season as a time to focus on how you can be your best self just in time for swimsuit season. Read on to discover how to increase your energy, foods to enjoy this spring and my number one exercise suggestion to help you feel stronger, leaner and more confident strutting your stuff with bared skin.

Here's how:

Increase your energy.

Often when we feel energy depleted, we reach for a coffee or sugary snack but research shows that getting outside to connect with nature is a healthier, more efficient way to get energized. Exposing your lungs to fresh air, plants and flowers can relieve stress, anxiety and boost your mood. Whether you go for a walk in a park or combine exercise with getting outside, the benefits of fresh oxygen make it too important to pass this one up!

Eat Fresh Produce.

Spring offers us the perfect time to change up our diets. With more fresh produce becoming available, it can help us make healthier choices because we can start to find more vegetables and fruits that are in season. Think asparagus, arugula, radishes and apricots; but there's a lot more. When you eat what's in season as opposed to the same thing every day, you expose your body to different nutrients thus giving it more of a well-rounded diet. A trip to a local farmer's market can be a great way to make more health-conscious choices and you'll also feel good supporting our local farmers.

Take the Plunge!

This year, my number one suggestion for spring is to try swimming or aqua-fit classes. I know you might not want to put on that dreaded swimsuit yet, but maybe I can change your mind. Swimming burns a lot of calories because you're using your whole body against the resistance of the water but with the added benefit that it's a low impact exercise. In other words, it can be an ideal way to recover from an injury or ease joint pain but it also gets your heart-rate up so there's the added benefit of a cardio workout. Thankfully, there are a ton of options available in the Durham area. Community centres and fitness gyms (with a pool) offer a wide selection of aquatic programs such as adult swimming lessons, lane swimming, aqua-fit classes, triathlon swim training and leisure/family swims.

Wouldn't it be great to feel like every stroke is helping you melt away the winter season by becoming stronger, leaner and more confident to bare some skin? And best of all - no need to feel embarrassed going shopping for a new swimsuit this year.

Bianca Schaefer is a 360 Holistic Health Coach who inspires a global community to take charge of their health through nourishing their body, mind and soul with delicious foods, an active lifestyle and a mindset that believes anything is possible. Find out more about Bianca Schaefer on her personal website, Bianca Schaefer.

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Tweens, Teens & In-Between



"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."

Warren Buffett

Hello! My name is Sarah Malik. As your new writer for *Tweens*, *Teens*, *Tweens and In-Between*, I wanted to start by saying what an honor it is to get the chance to write for all of you! I cannot wait to see where this journey takes us! I hope you will enjoy reading these columns as much as I will enjoy writing them!

For my very first column, I would like to talk about a quote I came across that reflects what has been on my mind lately. With all that is going on in the world around us, as well as the tragedies taking place, you begin to wonder if there is a purpose to the things you do in life. The little things we do begin to seem useless, almost pointless. But it's the small actions we take today, that shape the people we become tomorrow.

It can take up to 30 years for a tree to grow to its full size; that means, someone planted a tree and waited 30 years for results. That doesn't mean the tree was completely useless for thirty years. It still released oxygen and played an important role in the environment. It just took thirty years for people to fully appreciate it.

The same goes for the small things we do in life. A smile, a hug, or even lending someone a pencil can go a long way, both for yourself and the other person. When you do something nice for a stranger or a friend, most times you don't see a benefit right away, but like the hidden roots of a tree, you plant a seed of compassion that continues to grow even after you've parted ways.

This is also seen in high school. Though we think we know so much about a person from the things they say- or don't say - we really only see the tip of the iceberg. We go through the entirety of our academic lives without truly knowing the person sitting next to us. The least we could do is show some kindness. Before we are so quick to judge, hate or mock, we should stop and think about the bigger picture. We can never truly see the full impact our words and actions have on other people. The quote I began with really focuses on how we don't see the impacts of the small things we do having a greater impact in the future. I think what we can all take away from this is that if we do things with good intentions, whether they be big or small they will play an important role in the growth of a better tomorrow.

Remember, what we do as teenagers can have an impact on both our lives, and the lives of other people. We are the seeds that will flourish to be tomorrow's trees. I hope you all get a chance to plant your seeds this season! Wishing everyone a happy and momentous spring!

Sarah Malik is a Grade 11 student. She loves to read, write, and go on walks with her family and friends. Her dream is to one day travel the world.

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Family Matters

by Leshanne Mori



What I discovered when I chose to parent like my mom.

The past few months, I've been thinking about what parenting was like for my parents. That idyllic time before smartphones helped parents get through the difficult moments. Not to say I'm anti-smartphone or anything similarly outrageous. I'm completely aware that the Netflix app has saved me many times over, particularly in those last minute, walk-in clinic moments.

Now that I'm juggling two children like my mother did, I often think about how she handled similar situations without technology to help her. All my memories of waiting for doctors, hairdressers or driving around town with my family are happy ones, enjoying time with my family. I'm sure I was bored and reminded my mom too often than she would have liked. Yet she managed, I managed, and I had a great childhood.

Now that I'm on the other side as the parent, I've spent a lot of time examining my habits as I become busier with two kids. Parenting can feel like work when you're grinding through, so this year, I wanted to rediscover the fun and adventure.

Which leads me to my parenting experiment. What would it be like if I put myself in situations that were like what my mom experienced when I was a kid? Thinking back on the long car rides together for our family, I remembered how my mom tried to make the journey feel like an adventure. She would pack a special bag full of snacks for the ride then present us with a new toy halfway there if we behaved well for the ride. We would make stops along the way to play or to learn something new about the landmarks in our area.

So that's what I did. I applied the same approach my mom would take to more moments in my day. In moments where an episode of *The Wiggles* would have eased a tantrum, I avoided reaching for my smartphone to see what would happen. For the last eight weeks of my eldest son's soccer training, I brought a variety of toys for my two-year-old to keep himself entertained. I encouraged him to explore what he could and interact more with the people around us. He surprised me by repeating words he hears the coach say to the kids, imitating the stretches he sees his brother do during warm-up and by his willingness to talk to other kids also waiting too. We play more together, laugh more together and I feel more connected to him than ever before.

My experiment taught me a few things I didn't expect. What surprised me most is how easily my smartphone can disconnect our family from opportunities to connect with each other in the most ordinary of places. It's easy to rely on a smartphone because of the convenience, and before this experiment I wouldn't have given the alternative much thought unless my smartphone battery were low. With some effort, planning and an open mind, I had the opportunity to reconnect with memories of what made my childhood so great.

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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A Forkful of Healthy

General Tso's Chicken

A plate of General Tso's chicken is usually made with deep fried chicken thighs and loads of sugar. It can be well over 1000 calories! Swapping dark meat for light meat, lightly sautéing instead of deep frying, and cutting out the extra sugar in the sauce makes this recipe half the calories of the typical restaurant version.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. boneless chicken breast cut into bite size pieces
- 4 tbsp reduced sodium soy sauce, divided
- 4 tbsp cornstarch, divided
- 1 large egg white
- 1 one-inch piece of fresh peeled ginger
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 2 medium scallions, whites and greens separated
- 1 tbsp + 1 tsp of toasted sesame oil
- 1 cup reduced sodium chicken broth



- 1 tsp sriracha sauce, plus more for serving
- 3 tbsp hoisin sauce
- Sesame seeds for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, combine the chicken, 2 tablespoons soy sauce, 3 tablespoons cornstarch and egg white. Toss to combine and set aside.
2. Mince the ginger and garlic and chop the scallions. Separate the scallion whites from the greens and set aside greens for garnish.
3. Heat a small sauce pot over medium heat. Add 1 teaspoon sesame oil, ginger, garlic and scallion whites. Sauté for 1 minute. Add the chicken broth, remaining 2 tablespoons soy sauce, sriracha, and hoisin and whisk to combine. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon cornstarch and whisk sauce until it starts to thicken, about 2 minutes. Once thickened, turn heat to low and keep warm while you make the chicken.
4. Heat a large wok or non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. In two batches to prevent sticking, add 1/2 tablespoon sesame oil then half of the chicken pieces. Cook chicken for 3-4 minutes, or until browned on the edges. Flip chicken and cook an additional 2-3 minutes, or until cooked through. Set aside on a plate and add the remaining oil and chicken and repeat process.
5. Return all the chicken back to the skillet, add the sauce and toss to coat.
6. Sprinkle with scallion greens and sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

Protein:	5.8 g
Carbs:	75 g
Fat:	3 g

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!

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MONEY MATTERS



Spring Cleaning your Money Closet

Spring is the perfect time to tackle your home cleaning and purging. However, money is not often added to the spring cleaning to-do list. Here are a few tips on making sure your financial situation and money habits can also feel fresh and renewed this spring.

First, getting your taxes organised before tax deadlines can potentially help you see better returns during tax season. Most families tend to rush through this process and don't give it the time it deserves. So start with sorting your receipts now, and become more knowledgeable with opportunities you may have for writing off expenses that you may not be aware of yet. And remember, not all tax services are the same. Although visiting the corner tax service or doing taxes yourself may seem like the easiest option for most, I often recommend finding an accountant who has a passion for helping individuals with their taxes. Remember, knowledge is power, and although you may pay a little bit more out of pocket for the service, you will learn a lot on how to potentially claim your taxes more effectively in the future and your return may also be more positive moving forward.

Assess your debts. Many of the families I visit are overwhelmed by debt. But things are often not as bad as they seem. After assessing a situation, I help find solutions that can drastically alleviate the amount the family has to pay month to month. Find a professional who can help you assess your debt situation, find a way to save money and create a plan to repay debt more efficiently. This will help take a load off your shoulders.

Organize your bill payments. Money disorganization causes stress, just like a messy closet. As a result, you can miss paying bills on time, or even go into overdraft and pay extra bank and NSF fees. This affects credit, and may prevent you from being able to qualify for better mortgage rates, loans, or even from being able to purchase your first home. Start by setting reminders for bills payments on your phone calendar. And if you're anything like me, a busy parent and always on the go, set multiple reminders. If you prefer, you can also set up automatic bill payments. This will help you from missing payments and will help you feel lighter for the rest of the year.

Lastly, review your credit card and bank statements each month. Look for charges that are not supposed to be there. Also, check to see how much you get charged in monthly bank fees. This can prompt you to change your banking habits and save you money moving forward; money which can then be put towards your goals. And if you haven't yet set goals for this year, remember, it's never too soon and never too late.

I hope these tips will add positivity to your financial situation this year and wish you a clean, fresh, and beautiful spring!

Karolina Szymanska is a financial literacy advocate and advisor who organizes financial literacy workshops in the GTA and beyond. Her passion is helping others realize positive possibilities in their own financial situations. Along with her team, Karolina helps educate families about the basic fundamentals of money and provides useful resources to help families achieve their goals.

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**Ask
Sue-Ann**



Dear Sue-Ann:

I struggle with making goals. I have no idea what I want moving forward with my life. What career should I choose – marriage or not, kids or not... it's so hard to decide. Can you help?

Signed: Confused

A. There is not a person alive that has not felt what you are feeling at this moment. I believe right now is the time to work on the foundation of you. To do that, go through each area of your life and review your choices. What you are asking yourself is if you have made your choices for yourself, or if you are living someone else's choices for you.

For example, your education. Did you study what you wanted, or did you study what someone recommended for you to study? Religion - have you deeply thought about what your choices and decisions are, or are you choosing to believe what you were told to believe by a parent or mentor. How do you feel about money? If you grew up in an environment that feared it, then that creates a roadblock for you to acquire it, but again not your roadblock.

Taking the time to think about how you realistically want to live will create the platform to set goals. Remember, everything is a goal and that includes chaos, confusion and depression. When you choose to feel chaos, then you will spend your day looking for the things that will support it. If you choose intellectual stimulation, then you will spend your days looking for the things to support that also. The idea is to define what it is that you desire and don't wait for it to magically appear. Put the people, places and things in your life to support your desires.

Affirmation:

With each breath that I take, I am able to see what I need and move towards it with ease. I am able to make appropriate decisions for me and my life. I embrace and love my life.

Sue-Ann is a mother of 3 and resides in the Oshawa area. She chooses to utilize her undeniable psychic ability to assist you in resolving all of life's issues. Host and Community Producer of Divine Lane on Rogers Cable 10, Tuesdays at 9 pm. You can find out more and forward your submissions to Sue-Ann at www.divinelane.com

The COACH Corner

by Malachi Brown



How is your Gut Health?

Over the years, an ongoing health challenge I've been dealing with is digestion related. In my earlier corporate career, I worked in the advertising field. This was a highly demanding and stressful profession, but I loved it. Every day was different; it was creative, fast paced, great clients and always deadlines to meet.

As I was much younger, I felt indestructible. Eating on the go, in my car, at my desk was the norm. There were deadlines to meet. Who had time for proper lunches or mindful eating? As the years went on, I realized I was developing stomach issues. Not making the best food choices when I was younger was catching up with me.

Over the years, suffering from these digestive issues was taking its toll. Countless doctors' visits from traditional to alternative medicine had very little effect in offering a solution. I've drank gallons of medicinal concoctions and swallowed countless pills and alternative concoctions over the years. All these however would only offer temporary relief. Year after year the same problem. What new thing would I try this time to get relief? For all the people who suffer from stomach and digestive issues, I'm sure you can relate.

According to the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation, 20 million Canadians suffer from digestive disorders every year. Stomach disorders cost \$18 billion (2000) annually in health care costs and lost productivity. There is \$10 billion spent worldwide each year on antacids alone. I've also come to realize that stress is major contributor to digestive disorders. Digestive disorders left unchecked can lead to cancers, ulcers, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, lactose intolerance, liver disease, plus many other conditions.

Some of the tips the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation offers in helping with stomach disorders are, eating smaller and more frequent meals, choosing lean meats, having fish 2-3 times per week, taking probiotics, eating fiber rich foods, avoiding greasy foods, drinking plenty of water and getting plenty of exercise.

One of my goals this year is to find better solutions to my stomach issues. I would like to alter my eating habits so I can take better care of my health.

I'm not a medical doctor, so I'm not making any medical claims or recommendations. However, what I have found to be effective for me is intermittent fasting and getting more sleep. I have pretty much gone to one full meal a day, along with smaller snacks and have restricted my eating to roughly a four-hour window each day. I find I get good results, my weight is better regulated, I have more energy and I feel better overall.

My results made me wonder if we eat too much in North America. Is the model of three large meals a day still effective? Back when this was the recommendation, the population was far more active and physical work was more the norm. Today, we spend far less time being active, more time is spent sedentary. Is it time to shift our thinking then?

Find a new food regime this year that works for you. You will feel better and you will be glad you did.

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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700 Franklin Boulevard
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Cambridge, ON N1R 7Z1

by Linda Calder

The Golden Years



I'm a dog person and for most of my life there has been at least one dog as part of my household. After my Pug Disco died, I wasn't going to get another dog. ...However, it doesn't hurt to look.

Suzie came to me from TAGS (The Animal Guardian Society of Durham Region). TAGS is a charitable, non-profit organization run by volunteers. They rescue dogs and cats and place them in foster homes until a forever loving home can be found for them.

On weekends, dogs and cats are brought to various PetSmart locations. Volunteers from TAGS are there to give out information and answer any questions about the adoption process. I had seen Suzie's picture and information on the TAGS website. She was about a year and a half old when I adopted her, although she had had quite a life. Her owner died. When relatives went into the house, she took off. She was found about six months later with a litter of puppies somewhere in the Sudbury area where she had spent the winter. The reason they were able to get her was she wouldn't leave the puppies. She was terrified of everything, especially men. She spent several months in a foster home with some great people.

The adoption process started with a home visit by a couple of volunteers to meet me and see my house. The next step was going to their dog park where I met Suzie. Even though she was afraid of almost everything, I liked her. The dogs usually go home for a week with those who are planning on adopting them; Suzie came with me for two weeks because she had so many "issues". She was great on the leash and had no problem jumping in and out of the car. I went to the dog park every Saturday for about two months along with other people who were adopting dogs. We first taught them to sit which Suzie mastered. She did learn to sit by the door when someone knocked.

I had to do a lot of work with Suzie though. I kept treats by the door to encourage her to come in. She is an Australian Kelpie. They are cautious dogs by nature so some of her fear probably came from that. Australian Kelpie's are sheep dogs who use their eyes to control the sheep. When Suzie wants something, she sits in front of me and stares.

It took Suzie a while to settle in. She didn't like 'pushy people' and took her time taking to people. Now she loves people and expects attention from visitors. Because I'm retired, I was around for her. It might be harder for people who work or have kids to have the time for a dog like Suzie.

To me, Suzie was completely worth it. It cost \$450 for the adoption process. The cost includes having the dog spayed or neutered, as well as a health check at the vets and whatever shots were needed. If I was going to get another dog, I would go through TAGS again.

To learn more about TAGS, visit their website:
www.animalguardian.org

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.

Spring Horoscope

March 2019 to May 2019

by Julie Antoinette



Aries (March 21 – April 20)

A painful event has caused you to be decisive about the end of a pattern in your life that has outgrown its place. This decision point marks a new trajectory for you, which will be incredibly fruitful. However painful this event was, immense gratitude is in order. Also, congrats on your courage.

Taurus (April 21 – May 21)

Ever the pleasure-seeker, you're searching for new ways to have fun. What you don't realize is that hidden negative beliefs have formed a blockage within you that is preventing the fullness of the pleasure you seek. Rumi said, "Seek not for love, but seek and find all of the barriers within yourself that you have built against it." Tweak and apply this wisdom in your case as needed.

Gemini (May 22 – June 21)

It's been an excruciatingly long winter for you, Gemini. Something about the warm weather and long sunny days make you feel in your element. If you didn't get away to a sunny destination this past winter, you deeply regret it. Springtime holds the promise of the return of your better moods. Load up on vitamin D in the meantime.

Cancer (June 22 – July 22)

You have been bitten by the declutter bug as spring cleaning activities take over your abode full force. With every toss of trash or donation to your local thrift store, you are incrementally enjoying the sweet liberation of freed up energy. You survey your cleared surroundings and rejoice in the reclamation of each cubic meter of space restored. Enjoy the sense of lightness and flow.

Leo (July 23 – August 22)

Your attention, care and focus is greatly required by your family at this time. There is an issue, or need that must be addressed in a way that only you are able. Others are relying on you to demonstrate a sense of leadership and responsibility so that safety and security are unquestioned. A Leo must look after his pride.

Virgo (August 23 – September 23)

You find yourself in the midst of a conflict between two opposing personalities. The problem is that you have love and devotion for both of them. Be careful not to allow yourself to think you have to choose one side over the other. Your role is to love and support each person based on your relationship with them respectively. The conflict is not your conflict.

Libra (September 24 – October 23)

Lately, you've grown tired of the state of your living space. You want to change it up, liven it up, do something — anything — to avoid looking at the same old décor day after day. You've been doing some research into interior design to get some ideas. The trouble is, there are so many ideas to choose from! Simplicity is key. Choose a theme and go with it.

Scorpio (October 24 – November 22)

You've had a tough few months Scorpio, but the change in season also represents the turning of a metaphorical page for you. No need to have your guard up or wonder when the other shoe is going to drop. The universe knows you need a break and is delivering a nice one right to your door. Just answer already!

Sagittarius (November 23 – December 21)

Uh oh... that feeling hasn't left for weeks now... The constant nudge of dissatisfaction with your career has got you worried that if you don't take action soon, a festering of dissatisfaction may erupt. It's not the money, it's the lack of personal fulfillment. If you can find a hobby that will give you that sense of fulfillment you seek, this may ease the tension.

Capricorn (December 22 – January 19)

Is there trouble in paradise? Lately, the friction between you and your significant other has reached uncomfortable levels. Under the surface, there are truths that remain unexpressed because of fear of upsetting or losing the other. If you could both somehow master the art of gentle expression, and non-judgmental listening, you could turn this friction into sparks! (The good sparks).

Aquarius (January 20 – February 19)

Someone who loves you has really hurt you. What you must understand is that this person is afraid to love you even though they unquestionably do. They are afraid of love in general because someone who didn't know how to love, hurt them, and they don't know anything different about love. This is an opportunity for both of you to heal old wounds and new ones together.

Pisces (February 20 – March 20)

Recently, something about listening to music really grips and stirs you deeply. Sometimes it's the lyrics and sometimes it's the musical arrangements or sounds. You feel it. It's alive and is conjuring emotions in the depths of you that want to surface. What will result, if you let it, will be equivalent to 10 years of therapy.

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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