

# FAMILY LIVING IDEAS

April 2004

## Live Backwards

Ben's very first duty as a new pastor was to conduct a funeral service for Albert, a man who died in his eighties. Since he didn't know the deceased personally, Ben paused from his sermon to invite members of the congregation to say a few kind words about Albert.

No one budged. So Ben said, "Many of you knew Albert for years. Surely someone can say something nice."

After an uncomfortable pause, a voice from the back of the room said, "Well, his brother was worse."

If you died tomorrow, what would people say about you? Would it make you proud of the way you lived and the choices you made?

There's an old saying: "If you want to know how to live your life, think about what you'd like people to say about you after you die . . . and live backwards."

Thinking about the legacy we want to leave can help us keep our priorities straight. When the end is near, it's not likely that any of us will say, "I wish I spent more time at the office." Unfortunately, many of us only begin to realize the value of the time we have after we have frittered much of it away in shallow ruts going nowhere important.

It's hard to think now what will really matter later. But doing so dramatically improves our chances of living a full and meaningful life with few regrets.

Knowing how we want to be remembered allows us to make a sort of strategic plan for our lives. And how much wiser would our choices be if we had the wisdom and discipline to regularly ask ourselves whether all the things we do and say are taking us where we want to be at the end? In a sense, we write our own eulogies by the choices we make everyday.

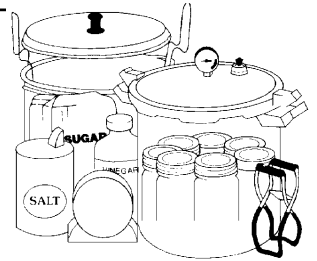
Source: Michael Josephson, Josephson Institute of Ethics

## Master Food Preservers

Volunteers are being recruited to participate in the MFP program for this year.

Learn how to preserve that summer bounty through 30 hours of training offered by Washington State University Cooperative Extension. In eight weeks, you'll learn food safety, pressure canning, water bath canning, freezing, jam and jelly making, pickling, drying and food storage. After you've learned all these skills, you get to share them with others by volunteering at farmer's markets, fairs and other demonstrations.

The training will be held on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. from May 3 to June 28. The classes will be at the Grant County Courthouse, Ephrata, Room 102. If this sounds like it's for you, call the Extension office at 754-2011 Ext. 413 or 765-2160 and register.



## Diabetes Classes in Ephrata & Desert Aire

Diabetes classes will start in Ephrata on March 29 and in Desert Aire on April 14. The classes involve 6 sessions to help a person better control diabetes through understanding medical tests and nutrition principals that apply to diabetes.

The Ephrata class will meet Mondays, March 29, April 5, 12, 19, 26 and June 28 from 6:30 – 8:30 at the Second Floor Conference Room in the Justice Building beside the Courthouse. To register call Laurie or Betty at 754-2011 Ext. 413.

The Desert Aire class will meet Wednesdays, April 14, 21, May 5, 12, 19 and July 14 from 6:30 – 8:30 at the Sage Brush Seniors Building. To register call the Mattawa Clinic at 932-4499 or Laurie or Betty at 1-800-572-0119 Ext. 413.

You need to pre-register. Family members and friends are encouraged to attend the classes.

**The only real failure in life is the failure to try.**

**Five servings a day of fruits and vegetables** are not enough. Men should have *nine* servings a day...and women, teenage girls and preteen boys and girls, seven. Children should eat five servings a day. *To gauge serving sizes:* Measure out one-half cup...or imagine one scoop of ice cream...or picture seven cotton balls. For dried fruit, one serving can be about the size of an egg.

*Source: Recommendation from National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, [www.5aday.gov](http://www.5aday.gov)*

**"Light" salad dressings** are loaded with sugar and salt. Read labels carefully. *Usually a better choice:* Oil-and-vinegar dressing, which has no added sugar or salt and no saturated fat. It contains heart-healthy monounsaturated fatty acids. If you are concerned about the higher calorie count, have dressing served on the side.

*Source: Suzanne Havalala Hobbs, DrPH, RD*

**Folic acid protects all women**, not just expectant mothers. It can cut colon cancer risk by 40% or more, even in women with a family history. *Good food sources:* Asparagus, beans, orange juice, spinach and turnip greens. *Recommended daily intake for all adults, excluding pregnant and lactating women:* 400 micrograms.

*Source: Edward Giovannucci, MD, ScD, assistant professor of medicine*

## Portion Sizes Start Shrinking. Will You?

In response to cries to the food industry for help in dealing with the obesity crisis, Kraft Foods is poised to roll out smaller single-serving packages of some of its offerings. Other companies are joining what appears to be an emerging trend. You can now find 8-ounce Coke and Pepsi cans, for instance. And the sandwich chain Quiznos now offers 4½-ounce Diamond Mini Meltz as an alternative to its much larger subs.

Will such downsizing help? Perhaps. It certainly can't hurt. But it won't do the job of slimming people down to healthy weight all by itself—or make the diet more healthful overall. Smaller serving sizes still have to be met at least halfway by some paradigm shifts in lifestyle: less soda pop and more water (along with some skim or 1% milk); fewer meatball mini melts and more basic sandwiches like tuna or turkey on whole-wheat bread plus a couple tomato slices and lettuce leaves; and fruits and vegetables over, say, smaller single-serving cakes and other fatty, sugary snacks. Physical activity levels have to rise, too. That is, obesity cannot be eradicated by altering the serving sizes of foods you shouldn't be eating too much of in the first place.

*Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, March 2004*

## Did you know that...

**...some foods may be addictive?** Chocolate, cheese, meat and most foods that combine sugar and fat cause the brain to release pleasure chemicals called *opioids*. Scientists disagree about whether these chemicals actually create an addiction or simply lower stress.

*Source: Neal Barnard, MD*

## Stressed Out?

The world changes quickly, and you have to respond. You have responsibilities at work, at home, in relationships, with civic and religious organizations and you have hobbies and recreational interests. Can you get it all done? As you age, you seem to take more time and energy to complete your difficult tasks, leaving little energy for more enjoyable activities. Are you doomed to lead a life of high stress, fatigue and dissatisfaction as you age? The short answer is no, but you must make lifestyle management a priority to break the stress and life overload cycle.

### Reshaping Your Life

Everything seems important, but you must do some prioritizing to allocate your time for things that really matter. Overall, you need to know what you value most and make time commitment choices consistent with your values. As you do this, your stress level goes down because you are generally pleased with how you are spending your life energy.

### You Know You Need To Restructure Your Lifestyle When:

- You regularly ask yourself where the day went and you did not get anything important done
- You have consistent distractions at home and work that limit your productive time
- You have a general sense that things are out of control and you are not focusing on what's important to you
- You tire easily and have little reserve energy at the end of the workday

*Source: David Gobble, PhD*

## Clean Ideas

### The Cure for House-i-tosis?

*Tips for a home sweet home*

**1. Ditch the dirt.** Forgot about that bag of dirty clothes in the corner? Get rid of dirt and odors by laundering the clothes using your favorite detergent.

**2. Freshen beds.** To add freshness to your bedding, place scented dryer sheets into unsealed envelopes. Then fold them into the sheets before storage.

**3. Refresh it!** Use fabric refreshers to neutralize odors in upholstery, curtains and carpets (after vacuuming).

**4. Toss and clean.** Throw away old food and ice in your refrigerator and freezer. Along with spills, they can cause odors. Clean your refrigerator and freezer regularly using a non-abrasive all-purpose cleaner.

**5. Zap mold and mildew.** Use a cleaner that's specially formulated to remove mold and mildew in the bathroom. Follow the label directions.

**6. Scent-alize!** For sweet-smelling toilets and trash bins, clean them with a scented, all-purpose cleaner. Choose from lemon, orange, eucalyptus, rosemary and more!

**7. How sweet it is!** Use scented candles, air fresheners or potpourri in rooms that attract the most odors, such as kitchens and bathrooms.

For more information, visit: [www.cleaning101.com](http://www.cleaning101.com)

*Source: The Soap and Detergent Association*



## Zap Allergens!

### Spring cleaning help for allergy and asthma sufferers

Spring cleaning makes our homes look great! It also creates a healthier environment — particularly if anyone in the household suffers from allergies or asthma. Help for allergy and asthma sufferers is here!

#### What are Allergens?

The common allergens in our homes (animal dander, cockroaches, dust/dust mites, mold/mildew and pollen) are a serious problem for people with allergies and asthma. Allergens are often airborne and may be widespread, making them difficult to avoid. They collect in bedding, furniture, carpeting and wherever there's warmth and moisture. If they're not removed, they'll accumulate, causing an even greater threat.

#### Cleaning Removes Allergens!

When done properly, cleaning removes or reduces common allergens. When done regularly, cleaning stops allergens from accumulating, which helps minimize allergy and/or asthma symptoms.

While cleaning is important, simple acts of cleaning, vacuuming and dusting stir up the air and increase the level of allergens in the immediate vicinity. And, just as with other airborne particles, cleaning products can trigger a response in some allergic or asthmatic people. However, particles from cleaning products remain in the air for only a short time, whereas allergens will continue to accumulate if they aren't removed.

*Source: The Soap and Detergent Association*

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## Consumer Smarts

**C**anceling your cell-phone plan or Internet service? Some companies make it difficult for customers to discontinue service. *To make sure your cancellation request isn't ignored:* Write down the date, time, name and ID number of the representative handling your call. Use the words "cancel" and "disconnect" in your request. If your bill is paid automatically from your bank account, direct your bank in writing to no longer allow withdrawals earmarked for the company. If you continue to receive bills, write to the company. If service still is not discontinued, write to your state attorney general and public utility commission, and send a copy to the company. *Also:* If you paid by credit card, dispute the charge with your credit card company.

*Source: Michael Ostheimer, attorney, Federal Trade Commission Bureau of Consumer Protection, [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov)*

**A** tire can be unsafe even when its tread is worn down only halfway. Treads normally are one-quarter-inch deep. Tires are considered bald when one or more treads reach  $\frac{3}{32}$  of an inch deep, meaning that 75% of the tread is gone. Tires that get a lot of use in rain or snow may be dangerous well before they reach that level. Safety depends on weather and road conditions as well as the tire. *Helpful:* A tread-depth gauge—about \$5 at auto-parts stores. Check your tire treads at least once a season. *Important:* If your car isn't holding the road well, you may need new tires.

*Source: David Solomon, certified master auto technician and chairman, Nutz & Boltz*

**N**early one-tenth of electrical safety outlets don't work, according to National Electrical Manufacturers Association. Often they are installed improperly or are old and worn. Building codes require use of ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) in garages, on outdoor receptacles and in high-risk areas, such as kitchens and bathrooms. *Self-defense:* Test GFCIs monthly. Have a licensed electrician replace any that don't work.

*Source: Stephen Elder, home inspector and home repair specialist, Pittsboro, North Carolina*

## Did you know that...

**...27% of Americans** live alone? Many single-person households consist of recent graduates and widowed or divorced seniors. Almost one-quarter are never-married, financially independent people under age 35.

*Source: American Demographics, New York City*

## Beware

**Any home blood-pressure monitor**—no matter what the cost—may give inaccurate readings if not used properly. Basic *aneroid* monitors include a built-in stethoscope and a manually inflatable cuff. *Cost:* \$20 or less. *Semiautomatic* monitors also are inflated manually, but readings are generated without a stethoscope and displayed digitally. *Cost:* \$35 and up. *Fully automatic* monitors inflate by themselves and are easiest to use, but they cost \$50 or more. *Automatic wrist* monitors cost up to \$125—but may be inaccurate if the wrist is not positioned properly. *Important:* Make sure your monitor is properly calibrated. Bring it to your annual doctor's visit, and compare its reading simultaneously with those of the office sphygmomanometer. The doctor can calibrate your machine so that it is accurate.

*Source: Jonathan L. Halperin, MD, Mount Sinai Medical Center, New York City*

**A credit shelter or bypass trust** provides for your family while sheltering assets. Consider one if you are married and your joint assets will total more than \$1.5 million in 2004, making you subject to estate tax. The trust keeps some of one spouse's money out of the other spouse's estate upon the first spouse's death—usually the amount exempted from estate tax. The trustee can distribute some money to the surviving spouse if necessary during his/her lifetime. When the second spouse dies, this amount passes tax-free to children or other beneficiaries.

*Source: Edward Mendlowitz, CPA, East Brunswick, New Jersey*

### Almost all airline tickets sold now are

**E-tickets.** If you insist on a paper ticket, you will have to pay extra. *Typical fee:* \$20. *Good news:* E-tickets are as good as paper tickets on domestic flights and flights to other nations where phone, electrical and computer systems are unlikely to fail. *Possible problems:* For international flights with numerous connections that may have to be changed at short notice—you will have to get printouts of your E-tickets for proof. This can be time-consuming. *Self-defense:* If you don't want to spend the money for a paper ticket that will confirm your claim in case you have a problem, carry a printed itinerary from your travel agent. If you didn't book through a travel agent, print out the confirmation page from the airline's Web site.

*Source: Nancy Dunnan, editor and publisher, Travel Smart*

### Q: What's the proper way to wash pillows?

**A:** It's important to note that regular laundering of pillows removes many dust mites and their allergens. Launder pillows weekly. Wash two pillows at a time, agitating only one to two minutes on a gentle cycle. Dry pillows in the dryer. During the drying cycle, periodically take them out and fluff them to prevent clumping and to promote even drying.

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