

FAMILY LIVING IDEAS

October 2004

Avoiding and Resisting Temptations

When my daughter Samara was four, I showed her a delicate glass vase and told her it was my mother's and I instructed her to "never, never touch it." Without hesitation she said, "Then you should never, never put it where I can reach it."

Her remark reminded me of an Oscar Wilde quote: "I can resist anything but temptation." Samara understood the power of the temptation and shifted the responsibility to me. If I wanted the vase safe, keep it out of her path.

Unfortunately we can't always count on others to do that. In fact, there are lots of people who will find advantage or comfort if we give in to temptation.

To protect ourselves from making short-term choices that damage character and reputation or injure or endanger our future, we must consciously avoid tempting situations. As Mark Twain said, "It's easier to stay out than to get out." It's reckless and arrogant to subject ourselves to seductive forces. Even people of character can succumb to temptation at weak moments. It's been said that temptation usually comes in through a door that has deliberately been left open, so beware of the tendency to unconsciously invite temptations.

If you're on a diet, don't let them bring out the dessert tray. If you're on a tight budget, don't window-shop for things you can't afford, and leave your credit card at home. And if you're committed to celibacy or fidelity, don't get near situations where your resolve could be tested.

When temptations are unavoidable, remember: the power to resist grows each time we exercise it. Emerson tells us that "we gain the strength of the temptation we resist."

Source: Michael Josephson, Josephson Institute of Ethics

Diabetes Classes in November and December

Two diabetes classes are planned for November and December. They will be taught on Tuesday evening from 6:30 – 8:30 and Wednesday morning from 9:30 – 11:30 starting November 9 and 10. The place will be determined by what town people live in who pre-register. The classes run for 5 weeks with a follow-up class 3 months from the first class. This is the WSU/Joslin diabetes class that is a research project and contains 4 nutrition classes.

If interested, call Betty or Laurie at the Extension Office, 754-2011 Ext. 413 or 765-2160 Ext. 413 to pre-register.

Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?

Have you and your family talked about the transfer of your non-titled property after you die? Estate planning discussions often focus on land, houses, cars, stocks, bonds and savings accounts. Too often, non-titled property doesn't get discussed. For many people, personal items carry more meaning and are more important than the titled property.

Non-titled property can include furniture, photos, books, tools and jewelry. Many people have fond memories about their parents and grandparents using such items in their home.

To learn more about the transfer of non-titled property, attend "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" on Thursday, November 18, 2004 from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the Multi-Purpose Room in the Justice Bldg. behind the Grant County Courthouse in Ephrata. This program is sponsored by WSU Extension. To register call 754-2011, Ext. 413. Betty J. Meloy, Extension Educator, Grant/Adams Area will be the presenter.

Find someone to encourage. It will lift you up too!

When Gluten Is The Problem

Gluten is a component of wheat: it makes flour elastic and smooth, and it also contains a protein called gliadin. A small percentage of people are born with an intolerance to gliadin. It produces such symptoms as diarrhea, weight loss and skin rashes. Eventually, damage to the small intestine may result. This condition is known as GSE (gluten sensitive enteropathy), celiac disease or nontropical sprue. It is most often diagnosed in children but can occur in later life as well. It is a genetic ailment, more common in people of European descent, though other factors, such as infection or childbirth, may trigger it. As many as 1 in 150 Americans and Canadians may have GSE, though estimates vary markedly.

Many people troubled by indigestion, fatigue or other symptoms conclude they are allergic to the wheat or gluten and decide to change their diets, or are told by some practitioner to do so. You'll find websites blaming GSE on modern agriculture or genetic engineering of foods. However, it has nothing to do with modern agriculture. The condition has been recognized since ancient times; the first scientific description of GSE was made in 1888. Only a physician (usually a gastroenterologist) can diagnose GSE; the treatment is a lifelong gluten-free diet.

If you have chronic indigestion or are always exhausted, you need medical advice to pinpoint the cause. If you prove to be gluten-intolerant, you'll need help to plan your diet. For example, you'll find lots of products labeled "gluten-free" and "wheat-free." This can be confusing: a wheat-free product can still contain gluten and would not be suitable for a person with GSE. Corn and rice are fine—they contain no gliadin.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2004

National Eat Dinner Together Week – The National Pork Board will celebrate its ninth annual National Eat Dinner Together Week October 3-9. To determine what obstacles prevent families from eating together more often, the Pork Board conducted a national survey and found that most meal preparers (91%) spent more time preparing the meal than actually enjoying it with their family. The meal preparer wanted more table time and less time putting the meal together. They also wanted quick meal tips, just 4 to 6 ingredients, and preparation ideas rather than recipes so that the cook can tell at a glance what's needed to get the meal on the table. Just over half of respondents (51%) eat together 4 or more days a week, and 18% of families seldom eat together (1 to 3 days/week). When asked the ideal amount of time spent at the dinner table when eating with family during the week, 46% responded 20 to 30 minutes, and 27% preferred 30 to 40 minutes.



High-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), used to sweeten soft drinks and many foods, is partly responsible for the rising rates of obesity and diabetes, according to two recent reports in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. HFCS now supplies nearly 10% of all calories consumed by Americans. The figure is closer to 20% for some people, including many children. Those excess daily calories are bad enough, but HFCS may be worse for you than regular sugar, since large amounts can actually impair blood sugar control and stimulate appetite, and possibly have other adverse effects.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2004

Seattle Schools Ban Junk Food – This week (Sept. 1, 2004) the Seattle School Board established a new policy banning foods containing high levels of sugar and fat, and will phase out its exclusive contract with Coca-Cola. The policy goes into effect this month in elementary and middle schools, and in early 2005 in high schools. The school meal program which serves 100 schools is directed to offer fresh, local, organic, unprocessed food whenever feasible.

Source: <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/news/x40903nr.xml>

Yes, you Can Afford to Eat Healthfully

One argument often given for why people don't eat better is that fruits and vegetables are too expensive. Not true. When researchers at the US Department of Agriculture systematically priced 154 different types of produce, they found that more than half of them cost less than 25 cents per serving. And 127 of them cost less than 50 cents per serving. "That's 127 different ways to eat a serving of produce for less than the price of a 3-ounce candy bar," they write in their report, *How Much Do Americans Pay for Fruits and Vegetables?*

Granted, their values are based on 1999 prices, but between then and now the cost of produce has not gone up that much. The numbers the investigators generated still make pretty reasonable ballpark figures.

How can it be that fruits and vegetables cost so much less per serving than they seem to? After all, sometimes sweet peppers cost up to \$2.99 a pound. The answer, the researchers point out, is that there are usually several servings to a pound. For instance, a pound of peaches, at about \$1, affords four servings of the fruit, even if there are fewer than four peaches in the bag. (It doesn't take all that much to make a serving.) Even blackberries, the most expensive fruit the researchers came across, came out to only 66 cents per serving. (The fresh version of many types of produce was often cheaper than frozen or canned, despite common notions to the contrary.)

Another way to look at it: Americans spend about 15 cents out of every food dollar on bakery items, soda pop, candy, gum and mints. Surely there's room in the budget for spinach, apples, baby carrots, watermelon, broccoli and Romaine lettuce, all of which cost less than 25 cents a serving.

Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, September 2004

Progress report

A major new government report shows that the overall rates of new cancer cases and deaths from cancer in the U.S. have been declining gradually since 1991, and survival rates have generally improved. Here are the four major cancer killers:

Lung cancer: Still the biggest cancer killer of both men and women. For the first time in decades, the incidence (new cases) in women has started to drop, while the death rate has leveled off, thanks to declining smoking rates. The incidence in men has continued to drop, as has the mortality rate.

Breast cancer: Still the most common cancer among women, but more women die from lung cancer. Breast cancer incidence has been rising slightly because of increased detection due to wider use of mammography (and perhaps because of increasing obesity and HRT use). But the death rate has declined by more than 20% over the past decade, thanks to early detection and improved treatments.

Prostate cancer: Since 1994 the incidence has risen because of early detection by PSA test. But the death rate has declined, probably due to early diagnosis and improved treatments.

Colon cancer: The incidence and death rate have been declining, largely because of advances in screening and treatment. Screening can actually prevent colon cancer.

The bad news: Blacks and Hispanics are still much more likely to die of cancer than whites, in large part because minorities have less access to early detection and timely treatment.

Source: Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, September 2004

Being awake for 18 hours can impair driving abilities as much as drinking two shots of alcohol, according to a new Australian study. Thus, besides the risk of falling asleep at the wheel, there's an increased chance you'll get in a crash because of delayed reaction time, poor hand-eye coordination and impaired judgment as a result of fatigue.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2004



SCARE FACTOR!

Tricks for treating spooky Halloween stains

Trick-or-treaters aren't the only ones who'll show up at your door this Halloween. Creepy critters called *stains* often tag along, too. Have no fear, The Soap and Detergent Association offers easy tips for scaring tough Halloween stains away? In addition, avoid hair-raising surprises by reading and following garment care labels before laundering. Some costumes *are not* washable.

Fruit-based stains (pumpkin, apple cider, fruit punch).

Scare factor: *If not treated immediately, they can oxidize and turn brown.* **How to clean:** Treat these stains promptly.

Remove excess fruit and run the fabric under cold water.

Wash item as soon as possible using the warmest water and bleach that are safe for the fabric.

Hot chocolate & caramel candy stains. Scare factor:

Creates an eerie mess on the prettiest of costumes or clothes.

How to clean: Pretreat with a prewash stain remover or liquid laundry detergent. Then launder.

Chewing gum. Scare factor:

It casts a ghostly stain even when it's promptly peeled away.

How to clean: Remove gum residue by rubbing the stained area with ice. Then use a dull knife to carefully scrape off the excess. Saturate the area with a prewash stain remover. Rinse, then launder.

Face makeup. Scare factor:

It can leave smears and smudges in its wake.

How to clean: If makeup is oil- or wax-based, remove excess with the back of a spoon. Sponge the remaining stain with a prewash stain remover. Wash in hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

Nail polish. Scare factor:

It may be impossible to remove.

How to clean: Place stain facedown on clean paper towels. Apply nail polish remover to back of stain (don't use nail polish remover on acetate or triacetate fabrics.) Replace paper towels frequently. Repeat until stain disappears. If it disappears, rinse, then launder. If stain doesn't disappear, treat again.

MENTAL AEROBICS

Scientists studying animals have learned that aerobic exercise, which enhances cardiovascular fitness, also produces beneficial changes in the brain. It promotes the development of new brain cells (neurons) and the connections between them (synapses), as well as boosting the brain's blood supply. The result: an aging brain that is more efficient and adaptive and less impaired by age-related changes.

Many studies have shown that physical exercise helps older people stay sharp and improves problem-solving skills and other mental abilities. Now researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign have found that people age 58 to 77 who stay fit not only perform better on attention-taxing tasks than their less-fit counterparts, but also display improved brain activity (as seen in a special type of MRI scan) while they take the tests. In another study by the same researchers, older people who took part in a six-month aerobic-training program (moderate walking for 45 minutes three times a week) showed similar improvements in test performance and brain activity. A group that took only a stretching and toning program did not get these benefits.

Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2004

Building Intimacy

Does it seem like you and your partner have barely seen each other for months or feel like you don't know each other anymore? If so, you're not alone. In this hectic world, where relationship breakup is common, it takes a special effort to keep relationships strong. A large part of relationship happiness is intimacy and it is as important to men as it is to women. Although there are some differences in how men and women show emotion, a lack of strong emotional ties is depressing for both. Creating intimacy takes time and effort. Here are some things that happy couples report doing to keep their relationship strong: Be positive with each other, look for your partner's good qualities and emphasize these good parts. Share with each other. Talk directly about activities, concerns and feelings. Reassure each other that you're committed to continuing the relationship even though you're frustrated. Maintain a strong network of family and friends. Protect couple and family time, and your energy and traditions from the pressures of the outside world. Share your household jobs and responsibilities.

Source: *Intentional Harmony, Managing Work & Life, University of Illinois Extension*

BEWARE

Unforeseen cost of retiring early: Premiums and out-of-pocket costs for medical insurance. Until Medicare eligibility begins at age 65, a 55-year-old retiree who must buy his/her own health insurance may spend between \$140,000 and \$234,000. A worker retiring at age 55 with employer benefits may spend \$75,000 on medical costs over the same 10-year period. Every situation is different. Evaluate yours with the Retiree Health Savings Calculator at www.choosetosave.org.

Source: *Paul Fronstin, PhD, director of health research programs, Employee Benefit Research Institute, Washington, DC*

Fall Maintenance on Turf

Lawns are in the last stages of growth for the year. With the cooler temperatures, less water is needed. Cutting back on your irrigation to once a week is sufficient even for sandy soils.

Late October to early November is an excellent time to put on a last fertilizer with a low nitrogen content. The object is to fertilize the roots (not the top growth). Having healthy roots going into winter before the ground freezes means a healthy lawn that's ready to grow in the spring when the soil temperatures are optimum for turf growth. Check your local garden centers and nurseries for a fall fertilizer with low nitrogen for best results. Do not thatch lawns this time of year. Exposure of plant crowns to freezing temperatures will damage and possibly kill the plants. Spring, when no killing frosts are likely, is time to thatch and use a pre-emergence for annual weed control.



Source: *Grant/Adams Master Gardeners*

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



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