

# FAMILY LIVING IDEAS

January 2006

## Good Relationships Make a good Life

If we interviewed 100 people who are unusually happy, I think the most prominent common denominator would be unusually good relationships. Despite the widespread promotion of materialism and vanity in our popular culture, wealth and beauty are simply not enough to produce happiness. In fact, they're not even necessary. What's more, bad relationships — at work, in the family or at home — are a surefire source of anguish and heartache.

For most of us, the relationships that most strongly influence our level of happiness are family relationships. And the most powerful of all are at the inner core of family, especially parent-child relationships.

No matter what your age, your relationship with your parents will always have a unique capacity to generate comfort or pain. Many children have ambivalent feelings about their parents. Yet most crave their approval, respect and love. Parents have a similar need.

If you're a parent, resolve to make more consistent and conscientious efforts to make your children feel appreciated. If you want to make their lives and yours happier, be careful to not demean or diminish their achievements and to avoid expressions of disappointment. Tell your child that you are proud to have him or her as a son or daughter.



And if you still can, give your parents pleasure by showing them that you love them, not only for what they did for you as a child, but for who they are now. Talk to them frequently and talk of meaningful things. Ask their advice and don't roll your eyes in disdain when you disagree with it. One of the best ways to express your love is through respect.

Source: Michael Josephson, Josephson Institute of Ethics



"Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" class will be held January 10 and 17 at Othello High School from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Have you or 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.

To learn more about the transfer of non-titled property such as furniture, photos, books, tools and jewelry, attend this class.

If you are interested in the class, call Addie Brandenburg at 488-6195 to register.

## Did you know that...

### ...funny movies are good for your health?

Blood-vessel diameters increased by 22% during comedies, according to a recent study. Larger vessel diameters reflect the release of healthful chemicals that reduce heart attack and stroke risk.

Source: Michael Miller, MD, director, Center for Preventive Cardiology, University of Maryland Medical Center

### ...aerobic capacity declines at a higher rate

with each decade, whether or not you exercise regularly? However: Those who exercise maintain a higher aerobic capacity from the start and so may be able to remain independent longer than those who have a lower aerobic capacity.

Source: Jerome L. Fleg, MD, cardiologist, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

Ability may get you to the top.  
But it takes character to keep you there.

## Full of beans

Beans are among the best of all food buys. Also called legumes, they include not only dried beans—such as adzuki, black, cranberry, garbanzo, kidney, lima, pinto, soy and white beans—but also lentils and peas. Here are some bean basics.

### How healthful are beans?

Very. There's a reason why beans have sustained civilizations throughout history: They are an inexpensive source of protein, complex carbohydrates, B vitamins (including folate), iron, zinc, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, some calcium and healthful phytochemicals, but very little fat. Beans are some of the best sources of fiber—a half cup has five to nine grams (about 25% of your daily goal), including both insoluble fiber, which helps prevent constipation, and soluble fiber, which helps lower blood cholesterol. The FDA recently allowed labels on beans to claim that "diets including beans may reduce your risk of heart disease and certain cancers." Beans may also help control weight as well as blood sugar. Eat a variety to get the broadest range of nutrients.

### Do dried beans count toward the new 9-a-day goal for fruits and vegetables?

Yes. The government's dietary guidelines consider legumes to be vegetables. A serving is half a cup, and three cups a week are recommended. Keep in mind that beans contain more calories—90 to 120 per half cup—than other vegetables.

### Are canned beans as nutritious as dried?

Yes, bean for bean, canned and dried beans provide the same nutrients. If you look at the numbers, canned beans may seem to contain fewer calories and less fiber, but that's because they are often plumper (from absorbing more water), so there are fewer beans per serving. Their main drawback is the added sodium. However, you can rinse away as much as 40% by draining and running them under water for about a minute. Or look for low- or reduced-sodium versions. Keep a variety of canned beans in the pantry for last-minute meals.

### Do I need to eat beans with grains to get a "complete" protein?

No. With the exception of soybeans, beans do not contain all nine essential amino acids needed to make a complete protein. But this is not a

problem, since other proteins you eat any time that day will provide the missing amino acids.

### Why do beans cause gas?

Beans contain complex sugars, called oligosaccharides, which are fermented by bacteria in the intestines, producing gas. Navy and lima beans are the worst offenders. Eating beans more often actually lessens the problem. Soaking the beans and changing the water before cooking reduces the amount of flatulence-producing substances. Adding some baking soda to the soaking water might also help a bit—but can increase the loss of B vitamins.

### What about Beano—will it reduce gas?

Yes, its active ingredient, an enzyme called alpha-galactosidase, breaks down some of the complex sugars in beans that we don't digest. Beano comes as tablets or drops that you swallow along with the beans or add to them. Similar products, including less expensive generics, contain the same active ingredient.

### How do you cook dried beans?

After sorting through and washing the beans, soak them for six to eight hours or overnight. This shortens cooking time and makes the beans more digestible, so they are less likely to cause gas. If you use boiling water, soaking takes only an hour or two. When ready to cook, change the water and add herbs and spices, such as garlic, oregano, cumin and cayenne. Cooking times vary (generally 30 minutes to two hours), so see package for directions. Split peas and lentils (best for soups and stews) don't need soaking and cook up fairly fast—as little as five minutes for yellow lentils. Packaged instant beans (precooked and re-dried) take only five minutes or so to soften, but may be high in sodium.



### What are some meal ideas?

Toss beans in soups, salads and pasta; use them with, or in place of, meat in chili. Combine them for colorful bean salads. Mash beans with yogurt and spices for a sandwich spread (hummus is a spread made from mashed chickpeas). Canned refried beans—look for low-fat or fat-free versions—can be used for dips. Canned chickpeas can be roasted in the oven for a crunchy snack.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2006*

**Easy way to eat better:** Fill at least two-thirds of your plate with plant foods and no more than one-third with animal protein. This will increase your intake of fruits and vegetables and make meals higher in fiber and lower in fat and calories.

*Source: Karen Collins, RD, nutrition adviser, American Institute for Cancer Research*

**Eating just small amounts of fish may help keep the mind sharp,** according to a recent study in the *Archives of Neurology*, which followed nearly 3,800 people over 65 for six years. Those who ate fish at least once a week showed a 10% slower rate of decline on several tests of cognitive functioning, compared to those who seldom or never ate fish.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2006*

## "Chicken Noodle" Fitness

Here's a simple strength-training exercise for over-50 beginners from the National Women's Health Resource Center that uses light weights that you can even fashion yourself. Free weights improve your balance and posture, burn calories, and can reduce your risk of osteoporosis, injury and low-back problems, says Jaime Lonval, MS, a certified strength and conditioning specialist at the Centers for Behavioral and Preventive Medicine in Providence, Rhode Island. If you're just starting out, choose 2- or 3-pound free weights with handle-type holds. Or, Lonval says, you can create homemade weights from unopened soup cans or empty pint-size milk containers filled with water. Check with your doctor if you have any health concerns or joint pain. Get started with this easy arm curl:

↳ Sit or stand up with soup cans or weights in both hands by your side. (If standing, bend your knees slightly.) Keep abdominal muscles tight and your elbows by your side. Breathe normally.

↳ Bend your elbow and lift the weights up toward your body (count 3 seconds). Bring down slowly (count 4 seconds). Don't move your shoulders.

↳ Control your movements. The biggest benefit comes as you bring the weights down.

↳ Do 8-12 repetitions once a week. As you get stronger, increase to two or three times a week. You need at least one rest day after each lifting day.

*Source: National Women's Health Resource Center*

## Q **Is it true that people with osteoarthritis should avoid nightshade vegetables, such as peppers, eggplant, tomatoes and potatoes?**

**A** Though scores of studies have been conducted, no dietary regimen has ever been shown to alleviate or prevent osteoarthritis—except for a diet that helps you lose weight, if you're overweight.

There are claims about countless dietary regimens—from avoiding fruits and vegetables in the nightshade family, meat, dairy products, cooked or processed foods or wheat to eating large amounts of garlic, alfalfa, wheat germ oil or molasses. Anecdotal success stories are plentiful.

The problem is that osteoarthritis gets better, then worse, then better again, but can't be cured—only managed. As such, it naturally inspires home remedies. Anything can seem like a miracle worker at some point. That's the insidious part of it—and why osteoarthritis is such a fertile field for entrepreneurs.

Vegetables and fruits in the nightshade family, especially peppers and tomatoes, are nutritious and good sources of phytochemicals and fiber. Don't give them up.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2006*

## Home Fires

Due to an office support staff member in the Grant/Adams County Extension office losing her home and all her families' belongings to a fire this month, I would like to remind all of you to take precautions against fire and have an exit plan. Her family was not injured, for which we are all thankful.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, a residential fire occurred every 77 seconds in the United States during 2004. There were 410,500 residential structure fires resulting in 3,190 fire-related deaths and 14,175 injuries in the home.

December, January and February see significant increases in the number of residential fires. Many winter fires result from alternative home-heating methods, including but not limited to wood stoves, space heaters and fireplaces.

### Simple Steps To Make Your Home Fire Safe

- W Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm outside each sleeping area and on each additional level of your home. If people sleep with doors closed, install smoke alarms inside sleeping areas, too. Use the test button to check each smoke alarm once a month. When necessary, replace batteries immediately. Replace all batteries at least once a year. Smoke alarms become less sensitive over time. Replace your smoke alarms every ten years.
- W Consider having one or more working fire extinguishers in your home. Get training from the fire department in how to use them.
- W Consider installing an automatic fire sprinkler system in your home.
- W Determine at least two ways to escape from every room of your home. Consider escape ladders for sleeping areas on the second or third floor. Learn how to use them and store them near the window.
- W Select a location outside your home where everyone would meet after escaping. Practice your escape plan at least twice a year.

### Safety Tips In The Event That A Fire Strikes Your Home

- W Once you are out, stay out! Call the fire department from a neighbor's home.
- W If you see smoke or fire in your first escape route, use your second way out. If you must exit through smoke, crawl low under the smoke to your exit. If you are escaping through a closed door, feel the door before opening it. If it is warm, use your second way out.
- W If smoke, heat or flames block your exit routes, stay in the room with the door closed. Signal for help using a bright-colored cloth at the window. If there is a telephone in the room, call the fire department and tell them where you are.

**P**utting snow tires only on front tires can result in dangerous rear-wheel spinouts. *Best:* Have snow tires installed on all four wheels—even on front-wheel-drive vehicles.

*Source: C.J. Tolson, editor, MotorWatch, [www.motorwatch.com](http://www.motorwatch.com)*

# Did you know that...

**...only 10% of vehicles** achieve the EPA's mileage estimates? Gasoline-powered vehicles average 9% fewer city and highway miles per gallon than EPA stickers claim...diesels and hybrids, 18%. *Source: Study of fuel economy in 303 vehicles for model years 2000 to 2006, conducted by Consumer Reports*

**...manufacturer rebate deals** often are better than retailer discounts? *Reason:* Few manufacturer rebates are redeemed because of the complexity of getting the rebate, so manufacturers can make better offers than retailers' in-store discounts. You often can't combine offers, so check both options before making a purchase. *Source: SmartMoney*

## Beware

**Web sites that tackle credit card disputes** on your behalf charge hefty fees. Sites such as [www.disputemycharge.com](http://www.disputemycharge.com) work on a contingency basis. If they succeed in getting a charge removed from your bill, you may have to pay as much as half of the disputed charge. *Better:* Handle the matter yourself. The federal Fair Credit Billing Act allows you to dispute a charge and withhold payment if the item you requested is different than what you received or if it is not delivered as agreed. You must submit your dispute in writing to the card issuer within 60 days from the mailing date of the statement on which the charge appeared. Include any documentation of your side of the story. If you phone in the dispute, follow up with written confirmation. Send your letter with return receipt requested to be sure the card issuer received it.

*Source: Gerri Detweiler, president, Ultimate Credit Solutions, Inc., [www.ultimatecredit.com](http://www.ultimatecredit.com)*



**Less college financial aid** will be distributed in coming years. Uncle Sam has revised the formula that determines how much families must pay out-of-pocket before a student becomes eligible for aid. Middle-class families with the same earnings and assets as families in 2000 typically will pay an extra \$1,749 before clearing the aid-eligibility bar. The biggest impact will be on single-parent households and lower-income students who may no longer be eligible for federal grants. *Source: The New York Times*



**Install a carbon monoxide detector outside all bedrooms.** In some cities and states, it's the law. Carbon monoxide, an invisible odorless gas, sickens 15,000 Americans a year and kills another 500. Yet fewer than 10% of people admitted to emergency rooms for carbon monoxide poisoning have detectors, according to the CDC. Early symptoms are headache, nausea and dizziness. Carbon monoxide is produced by faulty or poorly ventilated gas and oil (not electric) appliances, including furnaces and water heaters. Detectors cost about \$25 to \$50. Follow instructions on proper installation and maintenance. Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) symbol. *Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, January 2006*

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**  
 GRANT/ADAMS COUNTY EXTENSION  


- BETTY J. MELOY - Family Living**  
 M. Christine Price - Chair - 4-H/Youth  
 John L. Kugler - Agronomy/Forages  
 Karen M. Lewis - Tree Fruit  
 Andy McGuire - Ag Systems  
 Mark A. Trent - Irrigated Vegetables/Seed Crop Systems  
 Sarah Smith - Animal Science

**World Class. Face to Face.**

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Washington State University Extension is implied. Layout and design by Laurie Berens, member of the Grant/Adams Area Extension Team.

Grant & Adams Area Extension  
 Washington State University  
 Courthouse, PO Box 37  
 Ephrata, Washington 98823  
 OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
 PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300  
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 EPHRATA, WA 98823  
 PERMIT #28