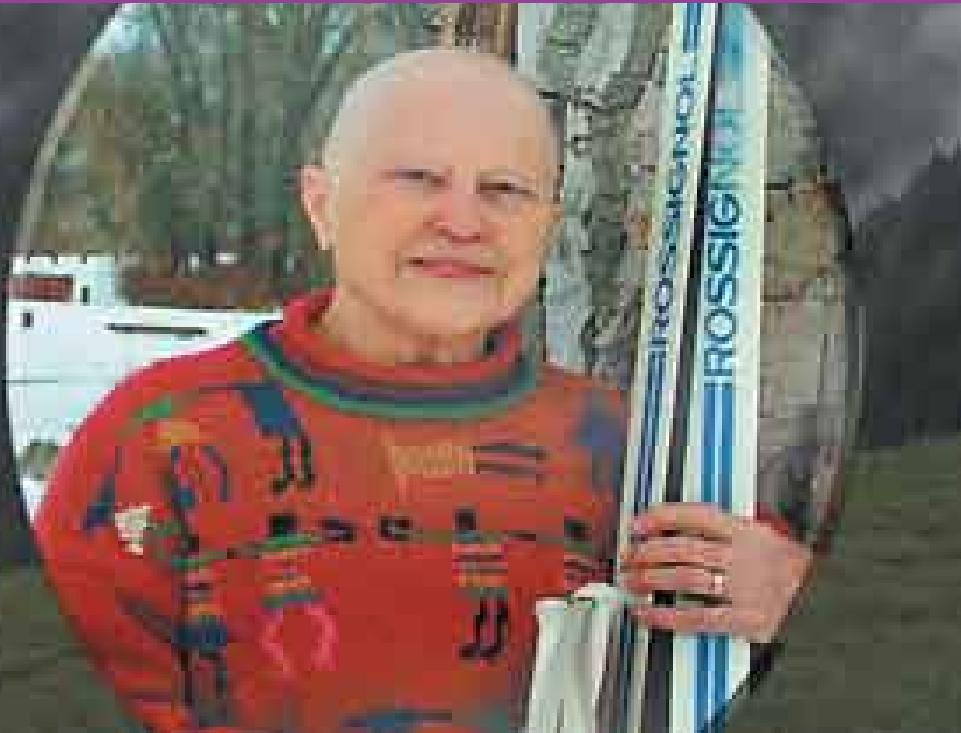


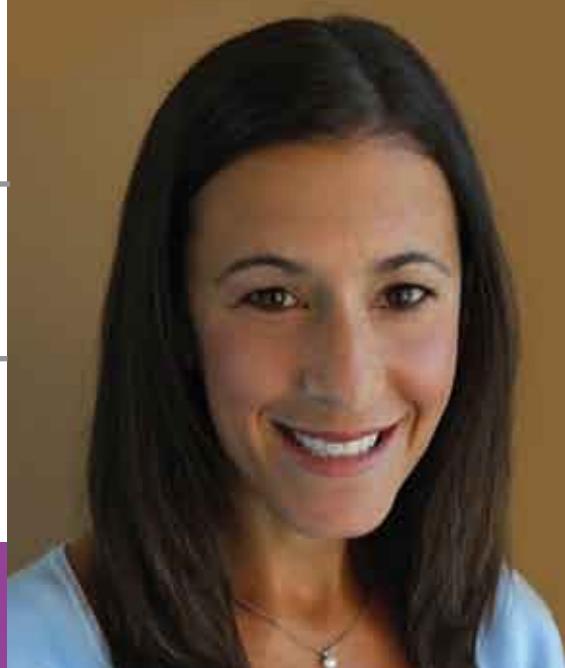
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Sept. 29, 2012

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Enhancing the lives of critically ill children

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Joslyn Wolfe
Publisher

Sometimes, the most compelling words and profound ideas are artfully expressed through our children. A recent encounter at bed time with my quite determined ten-year-old prompted me to assuage her fear of the dark as she cried almost inconsolably. She turned to me and said with her voice choked in tears, "I'm not afraid of the dark, "I'm just afraid of what's in it."

Taking time to reflect, I realized a powerful life lesson. As adults, we taste fear of the unpredictable, which sometimes cradles us in a vast ocean of the uncertain and unknown. If we deny and ignore it, we become weaker and defeated. If we embrace and accept fear, we are stronger and better. To our readers, supporters and advertisers, as you courageously encounter this life imposter, may you too find peace, strength and fortitude as your walk our life path with unwavering faith.

All the best,

Joslyn Wolfe

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CONTEST



girl scouts
of central maryland

Celebrating a century of a Movement that has changed girls' and women's lives by encouraging sisterhood and leadership

Girl Scouts has been an important part of the Baltimore area for generations. Baltimore's love of Girl Scouts began in 1913 with the first local troop, the Pikesville Poppies.

With the help of local supporters a Girl Scout clubhouse was donated to provide a place where these new Girl Scouts could meet and participate in activities. We continue to count on the generosity of the local community to help us provide a myriad of programs that allow girls to learn, to lead and to develop **courage**, **confidence** and **character** to make the world a better place now and in the years to come.

To celebrate our Centennial Year and preserve our local history we have created a keepsake memory book: *Girl Scouts of Central Maryland*.

The book chronicles the Girl Scout Movement in the Baltimore area from 1913 to present. To order your copy of the book, visit gscm.org, or call 410.358.9711, ext 231.



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Mrs. County Executive



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Focus on Women Magazine is a bi-monthly publication for women, to women, and about women which focuses on topics of interest to women and is geared towards a multi-generational audience.

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Election Scammers Count on Your Support This Fall Warns BBB

Scammers are already gearing up for this year's Presidential election, from robocalls offering a "free cruise" for taking a political survey, to promises that President Obama will pay your utility bill. Better Business Bureau | Greater Maryland is advising voters to be on the lookout for the growing number of scams that are likely to continue leading up to the Presidential election.

Scammers use incentives based on what they think citizens want to hear. Hot topics like health care, economic recovery and unemployment, are sure to be the alluring topics this election season, but it can be anything in the news that makes the pitch sound more realistic.

Here are a few election scam scenarios. Don't fall for them!

There will not be a "free cruise" at the end of the voting survey. The public opinion poll scam typically involves a recorded announcement offering a "free cruise" in exchange for participating in a telephone survey. At the end of the call consumers are asked for a debit or credit card number to cover "port fees" and taxes. Consumers who hesitate or ask if they can call back in order to verify the caller's identity are subject to high-pressure tactics, such as being told that the offer "is only good right now," and that if they hang up they will be disqualified.

President Obama is not going to pay your utility bill. As nice as that would be, it's not going to happen. Consumers have been contacted through fliers, social media, text messages, and even door-to-door with claims that President Obama is providing credits or applying payments to utility bills. Scammers claim they need the consumers' Social Security and bank routing numbers to arrange the payments. In return, customers are given a phony bank routing number that will supposedly pay their utility bills. In reality, there is no

money, and customers believe they have paid their bills when in fact they have not. Worse, they've just given away everything needed for identity fraud.

Fundraising calls for political donations may not be real. During election cycles, voters have reported calls from questionable groups. Be cautious while the organization's name may sound familiar, it may not really be related to either the Obama or Romney campaigns. It may not be legitimate at all. If you aren't sure, don't donate over the phone. If you'd like to contribute to a political campaign or party, locate contact information yourself rather than giving out financial information to a caller. Requesting a callback number is no guarantee you will be connected with a legitimate campaign fundraising committee. Call or visit candidates' websites to obtain contact information to make donation. No one will check your eligibility to vote. Your voter registration record is with your state and no one is going to call or email you to verify your eligibility. What do these callers claim they need to check? Just your credit card or Social Security number. No way!

Don't fall for these scams. Legitimate polling companies will never offer prizes for participating in a telephone survey, nor ask for a credit card number. Never provide your Social Security number, credit card number or banking information to anyone requesting it over the phone or at your home unless you initiated the contact and feel confident with whom you are speaking. Do not give in to high pressure tactics, whether over the phone or in person.

Website: www.bbb.org.

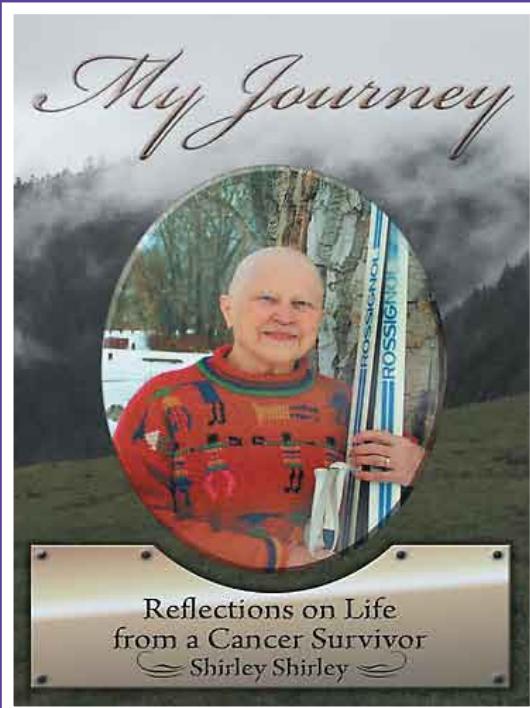
For more information, visit <http://greatermd.bbb.org/military-line/>.

The Most Helpful Thing in my Cancer Journey

by Shirley Shirley

A friend whose husband has cancer asked me, "What did you find most helpful in your cancer journey?" After giving the obvious answer that you cannot take this journey alone, I considered the next most helpful things: journaling and writing. These were myways of bringing my deepest concerns to the surface where I could deal with them and seek answers.

When I received the cancer diagnosis I was over whelmed. I had not even the simple answers of how to proceed. Even harder for me than the initial diagnosis and surgery, was being told I would have to have chemotherapy, Herceptin infusions every three weeks for a year and take hormonal therapy for five years. In my book, "My Journey: Reflections on Life from a Cancer Survivor" I deal with many of my fears and how I overcame them.



Author of
**"My Journey: Reflections on
Life from a Cancer Survivor"**

In addition to my journaling I had the opportunity to attend writing classes at the Billings Clinic Cancer Center, organized by Amber Ussin-Davey, a social worker and led by, Dave Caserio, a gifted poet. I was taught free-form writing. He gave us a subject. Then I would written onstop for ten minutes, writing what ever came into my head. Those who wanted, read to the group. A positive and reinforcing discussion followed. Topics soon expanded from cancer to all phases of my life. I enjoyed my childhood memories recalled in "The Chicken House" with my brothers and "The Cribbage Board" relating to my father. I also went with the writing group to Angel Horses Ranch. In these experiences I learned to reach beyond my needs to others. That is what my book is all about; not just cancer, but all of life's experiences that give me meaningful direction and courage.

The cover photo of my book relates to how with the encouragement of my daughter I was able to get outside and still enjoy skiing during the chemo phase. One year after diagnosis I was still here to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary with our four children and their spouses, nine grandchildren, and many friends. The journey because of cancer had broadened my spectrum of joy and fulfillment to appreciate and enjoy each and every day with a new perspective. My life journey has only become better.

Some people question how I can find cancer a positive and empowering experience. I was not aware of this way of thinking in the early stages of treatment, but as time unfolded I became more appreciative of what I had been given. I found myself rejoicing as in the Psalms; "Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, praise him with tambourine and dancing, praise him with the strings and flute." Rejoicing brought new meaningof viewing my life in writing through the eyes of a cancer survivor.



Burned Out? You Might Just Need a Reboot Break

Giving yourself the “gift of time” can enhance your career as well as your personal life.

BY CATHERINE A. ALLEN

We are a nation on the verge of professional burnout. The financial crisis has taken its toll on everyone, from technology entrepreneurs, to retail managers, to employees up and down the ranks of corporate America. With stress levels skyrocketing and fierce competition from abroad, how can we as a nation, as well as individuals, reclaim our role as creative leaders and innovators?

If you don't believe we're really in a crisis here, check out these statistics. According to the recent MetLife 9th Annual Study of Employee Benefit Trends, employee loyalty across industries is at a three-year low. One in three workers hopes to find a new job in the next twelve months. More alarming, a recent Gallup survey found that 17% of employees interviewed were actively disengaged and trying to subvert their organization. Over 54% were passively disengaged – their bodies were still in the office, but they had essentially left.

No organization can flourish when half (or more) of its workers have a foot out the door. And no industry can thrive when its companies are bogged down with unhappy, unmotivated employees. Companies need interested, motivated people to

excel; disengaged workers cost companies money and seriously impede productivity. Stressed out front-line employees can cause serious reputation problems. In the worst cases, employees are sabotaging their employers through fraud and other insider crimes.

Many of these problems can be attributed to layoffs and increased stress for those who have to pick up the slack in the office. But there's something else at work here: a severe and chronic lack of time off. According to an Expedia.com survey, 63% of Americans work more than 40 hours a week and hand back more than \$21 billion in unused vacation dollars each year. Worse, we feel guilty about the little time we do take off, even though Americans put in two to three times more in total hours on the job each year than Europeans and two and a half more weeks than the Japanese. Here in the U.S., younger workers are leaving the fast track in droves to take less stressful jobs. Why? Because work demands keep rising while satisfaction and payoffs decline.

But before you jump ship or your employees do, there is a way you may be able to address the morale, stress and burnout problems through a simple and age-old practice: a sabbatical (we call it a Reboot Break!).

What is a sabbatical, exactly? It's a set period of time away from work. A sabbatical can last from one month to a year, and it allows workers to take a break to renew and refresh their lives and better balance their priorities. Corporate sabbatical programs vary from paid for time off (usually for a period of one to three months) to unpaid time off with benefits intact and a guaranteed job at the end.

Intel is a leader in offering sabbaticals, and provides a good example for other corporations. Established 15 years ago, Intel's program has enabled more than 69,000 of the company's workers to take a significant period of time off. All levels of employees, from the CEO to assistants, are eligible after seven years to take two months off at full pay. Most employees save up vacation time, tacking on another month to their break. Management likes the program because it helps Intel attract and retain good people and broadens the knowledge and skill sets of those who cover for the sabbatical taker. The real payback comes when they employee returns with renewed energy, creativity and a fresh perspective.

Companies are catching on. Fortune magazine recently added sabbaticals to their criteria for naming the 100 Best Companies to Work For. Twenty-one companies that made the 2011 list offer sabbaticals, including Microsoft, The Container Store, REI, Adobe Systems and several law firms.

If you think you can't do it, or you think your company would never agree to giving you some time to reboot, think again. There's a lot you can do to get yourself some time away from work. In a new book, *Reboot Your Life: Energize Your Career and Life By Taking a Break*, I and my co-authors offer a step-by-step guide to getting the time you need – and making the best of that time once you get it.

Here are just a few of the steps you can take now to get yourself the time you need:

Research

Find out through human resources (or your company's equivalent) if your company has a sabbatical program. If not, see if they would be willing to read a proposal. Ask about requirements, and look to other companies in your industry for models. (A successful competitor that offers a program could help you make a compelling argument!)

Fund Your Freedom

For most people, finances are the number one barrier to taking time off. Instead of deciding you can't do it, get creative. Are there assets you can sell? A house or apartment you could rent out while you travel? Could you borrow some of the money, or tap (gently) into your savings, and then live on less during your time off? Or, take the long view and start

saving now for time off. Stash the money in a separate sabbatical savings account.

Make Your Case

Create a plan for what you want to do, when you want to do it, and how much time you need. Outline exactly how your responsibilities will be covered while you are gone. Identify ways the organization could benefit, such as increased innovation, retention and attraction and better morale. Assure them.

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

Talk to your spouse, partner, family and colleagues about what you want to do and how it might affect them. Get their support. Talk to your boss about how you'll make a smooth transition.

Unplug

As part of your break, unplug from the office and clients. Tell them ahead of time when you are going and returning, but don't stay tied into the office. (AARP actually requires their employees to unplug during their one-month paid sabbaticals.)

Sabbaticals are life-changers

They can renew and reinvigorate your life and your career, helping you reprioritize and better balance your life. Don't be surprised if, as the burnout fades, your perspective about your work changes. You may decide that staying right where you are is the best thing for you, and all it took was a break.

Ms. Allen is the chairman and chief executive officer of The Santa Fe Group, a strategic consulting firm based in Santa Fe Group, New Mexico and sits on several corporate and nonprofit boards. She is the co-author of *Reboot Your Life: Energize Your Career and Life by Taking a Break* (Beaufort Books, 2011) with Nancy Bearg, Rita Foley and Jaye Smith.

She can be reached at cathy@santa-fe-group.com.



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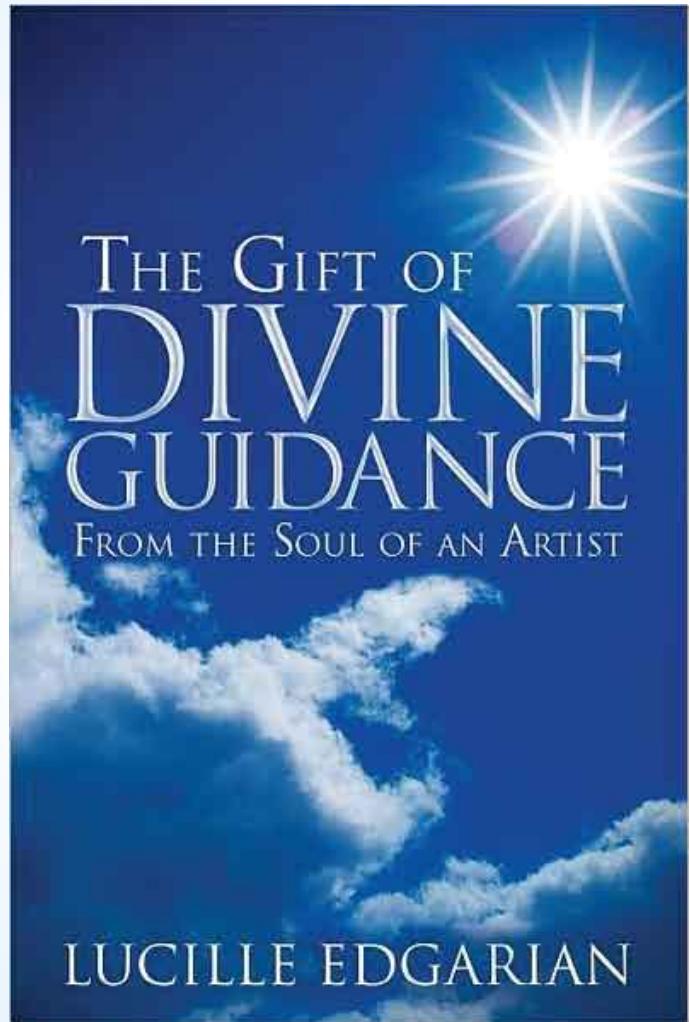
Today, people everywhere are dealing with day-to-day struggles similar to what we experienced during the Great Depression. One big difference is during the depression, children, particularly girls, were not expected to attend school beyond the eighth grade. With wages at pennies per hour during a dismal economy, families relied on their children to help out financially. The general outlook was that by age sixteen, girls would get married and their husband would take care of them.

When I turned sixteen, after completing my junior year in high school, I had to quit school to join the workforce. Children today do not realize how lucky they are to have the freedom of being able to stay in school and even go on to college. The depression years deprived us of many freedoms that are taken for granted today. Since we lived under poverty levels, we had to learn to conserve, to sacrifice, and save until we could afford to buy what we needed. No one complained and we knew how to adjust to our circumstances and maintain a positive outlook. My siblings and I endured added stress coming from a broken home and having to rely on the care of a Catholic Convent in our early years. Our deprivation enabled me to learn to persevere in spite of obstacles and to keep faith by tapping into what I discovered was spiritual guidance at an early age.

I always had an interest in writing and in 2000 I began writing my story mainly because I was encouraged by one of my daughters to learn to use a computer. I had no concept of the challenges I had undertaken for myself not only in learning to use a computer, but also in understanding what is involved with publishing a book. I soon learned the longer I wrote the more help I needed. With the help of caring friends and my two daughters, I was encouraged to persevere. Typing out stories and reflecting on many traumatic memories from my past seemed simple enough but often brought me to tears. Knowing that my story, a modern day life filled with tests of faith, it would indeed help others endure through their own misfortunes.

The essence of my story focuses on the Spiritual Guardian that has helped and guided me since I was a child. I vividly remember February 7, 2011, when I was awakened from a sound sleep at two o'clock in the morning with an inspiration that the title of my book should be "The Gift of Divine Guidance." I know it was divinely inspired, that it could serve as a means of showing the world that God does exist. I spent the following year organizing my story as if an unseen hand were guiding me, and found answers from multiple sources that helped me achieve my goal.

Unbelievably, my book: "The Gift of Divine Guidance-From the Soul of an Artist." was published in March 2012, by Balboa Press.





www.denisescancersurvivorfoundation.org

BAHAMAS “CRUISE FOR A CAUSE” OFFERED BY DENISE’S BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR’S FOUNDATION

Reservations are being taken for the First Annual Breast Cancer Survivor’s Cruise to the Bahamas, hosted by Denise’s Breast Cancer Survivor’s Foundation, a nonprofit charitable organization based in Stormville, NY. Sponsors include Denise’s Travel Agency, Hopewell Junction, NY; Topical BioMedics, Inc., Rhinebeck, NY; and Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), Miami, Florida. Guests depart from Miami on March 25, 2013 aboard Norwegian Cruise Line’s elegant “Norwegian Sky,” with ports of call at Nassau Bahamas, Grand Bahamas Island, and Great Stirrup Cay Bahamas before the ship returns to Miami on March 29th.

The “Cruise for a cause” is raising funds to help breast cancer patients and survivors, their families, and caregivers through Denise’s Breast Cancer Survivor’s Foundation, with a portion of the proceeds to benefit Assistance in Healthcare, a charitable foundation headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

“I outlived and survived my diagnosis and want others to know there is help,” says Denise Robinson, founder of Denise’s Breast Cancer Survivor’s Foundation and Denise’s Travel Agency and herself a breast cancer survivor. “I know by personal experience that everyone who is experiencing this illness is facing hardships on multiple levels in some form or fashion whether it is emotional, physical, and financial or a combination of them all. I am grateful to be in a position to now offer help, support, and comfort to others in need to get through their journey. That is why I have created Denise’s Breast Cancer Survivor’s Foundation, and why I am pleased to offer this life-affirming ‘Cruise for a cause.’”

The keynote speaker on the cruise is Lou Paradise, president and chief of research, Topical BioMedics, Inc., and inventor of the Topricin line of natural biomedicine pain relief and healing creams. Mr. Paradise will be addressing pain management and the roles nutrition, supplements, exercise, and hydration play in health, healing, and wellness in a lively and interactive workshop.

Open to the public, the cruise is offered to men and women who are currently receiving breast cancer treatments, breast cancer survivors, caretakers, families, friends, and anyone who simply wishes to enjoy a relaxing vacation knowing they are, at the same time, helping individuals who are coping with cancer. Activities include a welcome cocktail party, workshops, guest speakers, and other special group functions, with plenty of free time for enjoying the tropics. “Come join us as we celebrate life!” says Mrs. Robinson.

There are a range of special price options, starting at \$410 for an inside cabin, \$450 for an ocean view, and \$699 for a balcony. Prices are per person based on double occupancy, and include cruise fare, meals, group activities, port charges and fees. Reservations are open until October 25th. For more information about the cruise or to make a reservation contact [Denise Robinson at 845-592-1458 begin_of_the_skype_highlighting](skype:begin_of_the_skype_highlighting) [FREE 845-592-1458 end_of_the_skype_highlighting](skype:FREE 845-592-1458 end_of_the_skype_highlighting) or email denisestravelagency@gmail.com.

For more information on Denise’s Breast Cancer Survivor Foundation visit www.denisescancersurvivorfoundation.org

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Reservations are open until October 25th.

**contact: Denise Robinson at 845-592-1458,
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ABOUT DENISE'S BREAST CANCER SURVIVOR'S FOUNDATION

www.denisescancersurvivorfoundation.org

Denise's Breast Cancer Survivor Foundation is dedicated to assisting those who are having hardship due to breast cancer by building up hope, developing faith, providing encouragement and support by giving information , resources and spiritual guidance to increase their knowledge as well as financial assistance to help the stress that comes along with breast cancer.

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“Empowerment, Inspiration, Motivation & Maximum Results!”

For the dads out there that have daughters, I have a must read book for you! Moms, you may want to read it too, and if dad won't read it, read it for him and teach him the lessons!

While shopping with my kids - in Target of all places - I stumbled upon “Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters: 10 Secrets Every Father Should Know” by pediatrician Dr. Meg Meeker. Simply put, it blew me away and made we wish I could recapture all those lost years and lost lessons with my soon-to-be-20-year-old daughter Olivia. I'll tell you more, but go to Amazon.com right now and order it for all the dads in your life!

My story starts in New York City last Thanksgiving. I was celebrating the holiday, taking in the annual Macy's Parade (scratch that off the bucket list!), and happened to be lucky enough to score a fourth row center seat at the play “Stick Fly,” a great play written and scored by Alicia Keyes. While it had a short run and never made it off Broadway, I learned a lesson through it that will stay with me forever. Hear this, dads! I have two daughters, so I can speak with some credibility. There is a scene in the play in which the maid's daughter discovers she is the illegitimate love child of the family patriarch, a renowned surgeon. The family has gathered to have a week of vacation at their summer home on Martha's Vineyard. The daughter, now in her twenties, discovering the secret her mother had been keeping all these many years, looks at our patriarch and tells him: a father is the first man to love his daughter, and it is from this love that she will judge

the men in her life and decide how men can and cannot treat her. That line hit me like a ton of bricks; I looked around to make sure no one was watching the grown man in the fourth row crying! As tears poured down my cheeks, I felt I had missed this monumental obligation and had somehow abandoned my own daughter Olivia. For Isabel, just 10, I still have time.

The book I mentioned earlier, “Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters,” does an outstanding job of outlining the profound, lifelong impact fathers have on their daughters. The abundance of love and attention, of treating her like your princess, establishes the playing field for every suitor, boyfriend, and love interest that enters her life. We are that benchmark, guys! Ignore your daughters, treat them poorly or indifferently, and we are telling her it's okay if other men ignore her, or even abuse her, emotionally or physically. We are sending the message that she is not worthy of love, attention, respect, and adoration. The man sets the tone; why didn't anyone ever tell me this? I look at my own daughters and the daughters of my friends, raised in a fatherless household or an abusive household, and it's no wonder these girls struggle to find their identity or end up attaching themselves to men who abuse them. You, my friends, know who you are.

I don't want to give it all away. Meeker's book is an easy read, just 237 pages - 237 pages that can change your life, your family, and certainly your daughter's future!



Honoring the Balance of Masculine and Feminine

By Christian Michael Steele, M.D., author of "Mastering the Power of Life"

In a world that is less than respectful, women can feel judged harshly if they do not seem to meet certain standards. Yet, it may be difficult for women to establish themselves in what appears still to be a male-dominated world.

Appearances, however, can be deceiving.

The ability to reclaim our power is innate, no matter what our gender. As divine beings, we have within us both the masculine and feminine. It is the balance between the two that needs to be healed. Rather than trying to heal the world, turn your attention to healing yourself.

You don't need to change the world – only the way you see it.

When women are abused, often the reaction is to use abusive masculine ways in defense. Then the cycle continues, where the masculine and feminine trade injuries. Each belief system within our being is like an infinity sign, two sides connected by a center point. In this case, the abusers are on one side while the victims, or the abused, are on the other. Being able to see that we actually have both sides within us often requires an expansion of our consciousness. One side may be hidden, but one does not exist without the other.

The balance we are trying to achieve is the creation of a new center within our being that does not take sides but rather honors both the masculine and the feminine.

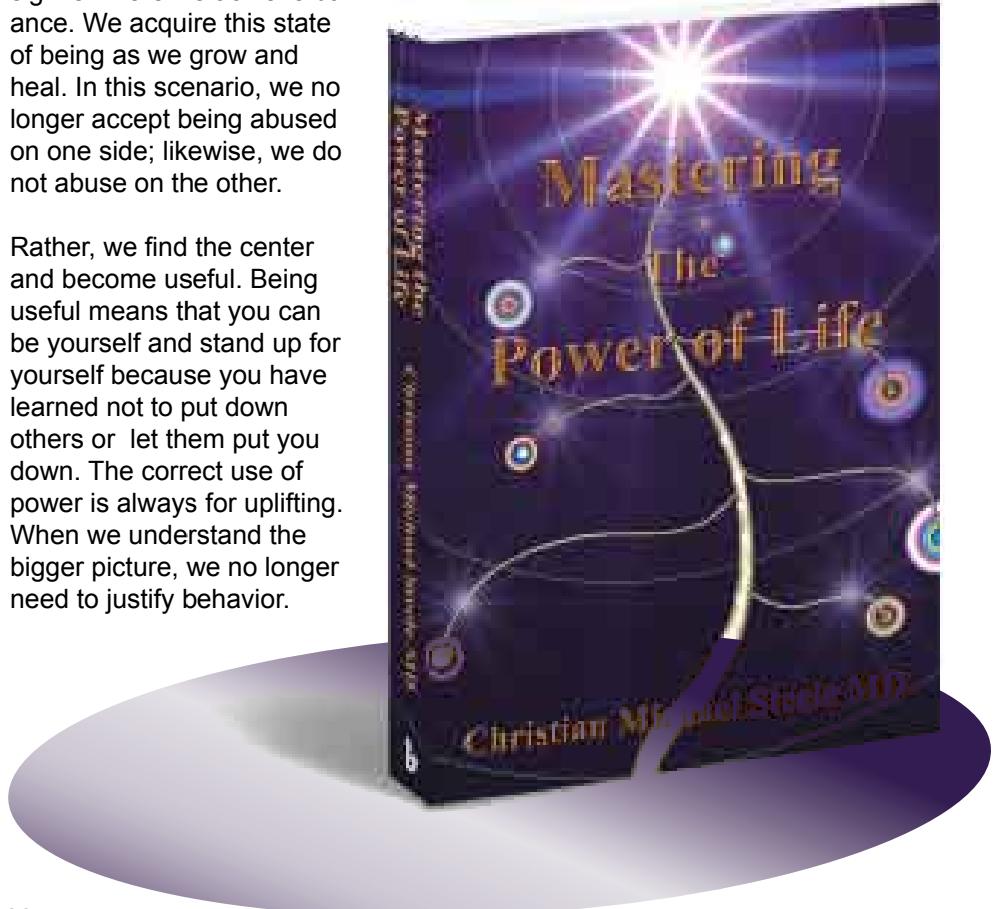
This practice allows us to remove one belief after another as we overcome each of life's challenges and perfect

our being. It is only by honoring both the masculine and the feminine that the internal marriages within our being can take place. Become real when healing each side; forgiveness and self-responsibility are more valuable than blame.

The center point of the infinity sign is where we achieve balance. We acquire this state of being as we grow and heal. In this scenario, we no longer accept being abused on one side; likewise, we do not abuse on the other.

Rather, we find the center and become useful. Being useful means that you can be yourself and stand up for yourself because you have learned not to put down others or let them put you down. The correct use of power is always for uplifting. When we understand the bigger picture, we no longer need to justify behavior.

smallness or avoidance. You do more for this planet by healing yourself than by what you engage in on a daily basis. Every time you change your mind, it affects not only your individual world, but the entire world for everyone.



You are an integral part of this world. It doesn't matter what the world is doing; it is only showing you something about yourself. You achieve your freedom by conquering this world through outgrowing it. This does not occur through weakness,

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“The Agony and Ecstasy of Taking my Daughter to the Katy Perry Movie: Pop Culture’s Contradictory Portrayal of Empowered Womanhood”

By Patricia Leavy, PhD



Patricia Leavy is a pop feminist author and expert commentator. She has published a dozen books including the novel *Low-Fat Love* (Sense Publishers, 2011).

Pop culture has long offered contradictory images of womanhood, mixing messages of empowerment with stereotypical imagery. Some of the most commercially successful women in the music industry exemplify this paradox. For example, Britney Spears, Beyoncé, and Madonna have all sung about being strong, ditching deadbeat guys and expressing oneself, yet they have all done so while presenting hypersexualized images of femininity.

Let's face it, when bikini-clad women with tassels hanging from their breasts sing about female empowerment it is often hard to take. When it's aimed at our girls, it is even trickier. This is especially true when we are just as apt as they are to belt out the empowering tunes as we try to sidestep the "ickier" parts of the music we dance to. Case in point: Katy Perry.

I have to admit I was thrilled when my eleven year old daughter Madeline recently asked me to take her to the Katy Perry movie. I knew I would enjoy it far more than anything else she was likely to want to see. Perhaps more telling, her request paved the way for me to satisfy my guilty pleasure with a clear (or semi-clear) conscience. I wanted to see the movie myself, and my daughter's request provided just the opportunity where I could claim to see the movie for her. I would get to see the Katy Perry movie and be a "good mom" all at once. Of course, it's generally those very behaviors we need to find excuses for that we most critically need to investigate and this is no exception.

The movie was documented Katy Perry on her last world tour

and, as expected, was a lot of fun. It was nearly two hours of eye-candy. In fact, candy was a major theme in the movie as Perry went from one pin-up meets candy-shop costume to another. Perry dressed up as everything from an ice cream sundae with a cherry on top to a peppermint candy with swirling candies placed strategically on her chest. The costumes were highly sexualized and simultaneously infantilized versions of "candy" meant to appeal to everyone from little kids to adults; which is exactly the problem.

Madeline and I came home from the movie playing the Katy Perry CD we had just bought. I'll give it to Perry that she sings some of the most empowering lyrics to come out of the commercial world... urging girls to complete themselves, never sacrifice who they are or diminish themselves for a guy. The content is surprisingly feminist and completely at odds with the image Perry publicly personifies. Herein we find a real dilemma for mothers looking to raise strong and confident daughters.

While Madeline and I were listening to our new CD, both of us singing on top of our lungs, she told me that Perry is a role model to a lot of kids like her. I said, "I don't think she's necessarily a good role model" to which my daughter, never missing a beat responded, "Well you like her music." I stopped singing long enough to tell her that there's a difference between liking someone's music and seeing them as a role model, but I have to admit, I doubt that distinction was helped by my obvious enjoyment of the CD and the movie. What's worse, like my daughter, I also found Perry's costumes "pretty and cool"; which is exactly the problem.

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About BBB of Greater Maryland

Headquartered in Baltimore, BBB | Greater Maryland is a non-profit organization that was established in 1922. It serves 18 Maryland counties and Baltimore City. In 2011, BBB provided over 1 million Business Reviews and handled over 11,300 marketplace disputes. BBB is supported by Accredited Businesses that have passed a comprehensive review, met BBB's Standards for Trust and agreed to the organization's Code of Business Practices governing sound advertising, selling and customer service practices that enhance customer trust and confidence in business. For more information please contact your BBB at 410-347-3990 or visit bbb.org.

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Company Closing Leaves Ailing Appliances, Homeowners in a Fix

Better Business Bureau | Greater Maryland alerts policy-holders that American Fidelity Services, LLC, also known as American Fidelity Home Warranty, a Columbia, Md. based company, has closed its doors according to messages posted on the company's website and telephone.

On June 28, 2011, after a spike in customer complaints, BBB formally issued a pattern letter to American Fidelity Services for failing to respond to customers complaints, calls, emails, and for failing to uphold the terms of their service contracts according to customer allegations. A day earlier, the Florida Insurance Commissioner issued an Order for the company to "cease and desist engaging in the unauthorized and unlicensed business of a home warranty association in the state of Florida."

"Here's a company that had only one complaint filed with BBB in the last three years," said Angie Barnett, president/CEO, BBB | Greater Maryland. This spring, something happened and customer service began to plummet. We received 29 complaints in two months and now their doors are closed."

American Fidelity Service began local operations in 2007 and served customers across the US. It applied for and was accredited by BBB in April of 2011. The company was formally notified by Barnett in June that its accreditation had been revoked. BBB reports revocations for one year from the date of issuance.

BBB offers these consumer tips when a business closes or files for bankruptcy:

- >> Try to contact the company directly first with a certified letter.
- >> If the certified letter goes unanswered and there is no way to contact the company, you can file a dispute with your credit card company if that was your method of payment. To be eligible under the Fair Credit Billing Act, you must file the dispute within 60 days of the transaction.
- >> If the company files for Chapter 7 bankruptcy, you have 90 days to file a claim with the bankruptcy court.
- >> If the company files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, it means they intend to stay in business and need time to reorganize. During this time, they typically honor contracts and gift cards, and try to fulfill delivery of goods and services already purchased.
- >> File in small claims court. If the company owner does not file for bankruptcy, consumers can file in small claims court.

Website: www.bbb.org.

For more information, visit <http://greatermd.bbb.org/military-line/>.

A Mother's Struggle To Find College Money Results In Simplifying The Process For Others

College and the financial aid planning process should start as early in a child's life as possible. It can be a frustrating and complicated puzzle, and parents often have no idea where to begin or how to help their children get through it.

If I Knew Then What I Know Now! College & Financial Aid Planning From A Parent's Perspective (Pendium Publishing) by Cynthia Hammond Davis, is the true story of her struggle to find help putting all of the pieces of the college search, financial aid, scholarships, athletics and extracurricular activities together.

After experiencing first-hand how complex this journey can be, Davis decided to combine her findings and include them in a book to help other parents and students with early college awareness. This book acts as an invaluable guide to help parents understand their role as well as offering basic tips on how they can assist their children through the process as efficiently as possible.

Want to know where a lot of scholarship money can be found? Want to find out how your child may be able to attend an out-of-state college while paying in-state tuition costs? Want advice that will save time during the college admission process? Answers to these questions and more can be found in this book – outlined in a short, simple, and to the point approach.

Davis believes that there is nothing to prepare parents on how and where to begin and they struggle through trying to help their children, just as she did, and it was through trial and error she

learned how to get to the right information. In her instructive book, she is very candid about mistakes she made along the way in hopes of helping other parents avoid making those same mistakes.

Cynthia Hammond Davis is a College and Career Advisor, Founder/Executive Director of The Light of the City, Inc., a nonprofit organization, and President of CollegeAndCareerAdvice.Com. She is the radio talk show host of her own Saturday morning talk show, "The College and Career Information Hour," and an in-demand public and motivational speaker.

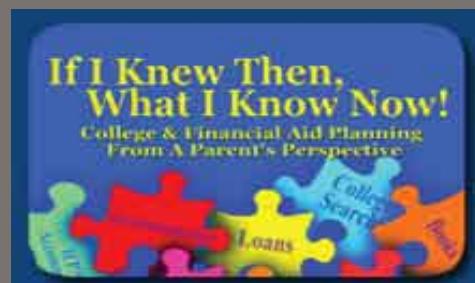
As a college and financial aid advisor since 2001, she has helped many parents and students get through the process, resulting in their receiving scholarship offers that total over \$1 million collectively each year. What Cynthia Hammond Davis does, she does with the passion of someone who truly cares about her work and about helping students to become tomorrow's professionals.

College is one of the most expensive things parents can plan for their children and now they don't have to waste countless hours doing their own research – Davis has done it for them. All they need to do is read the book!

Radio Talk Show



The Book



On Line Videos

[Cynthia Hammond-Davis Interview with Fox 31 News](#)

[Cynthia Hammond-Davis interview with the Richmond Public Schools](#)

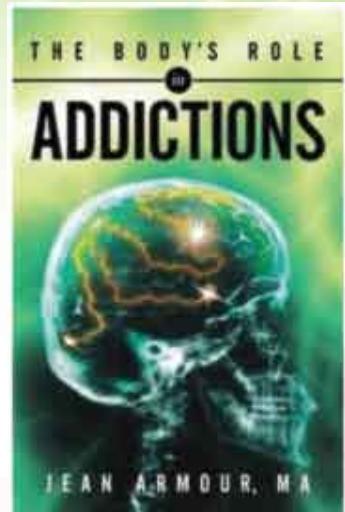
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The Body's Role in Addictions

*... Jean Armour, MA,
LPC, BSN, CACIII*



The pain from the use of addicting chemicals can be experienced on many levels, especially for women. It might stem from their own use, it might be from the use of their significant other, or the pain they experienced growing up in a family where chaos was created from parental use. It might also include watching the destructiveness that results when their children begin to use. Along with the pain comes a cascade of questions about what to do now. The search begins for answers that will be helpful, identifying resources, questioning their role in the situation, dealing with the anger and frustration that often accompanies the situation. Many families dealing with these issues have already tried a variety of interventions they had desperately hoped would be the answer.

When frustration arises from the lack of effectiveness, more questions arise about whether the situation is simply hopeless, have they overlooked something, or is there another approach that could be helpful. An encouraging inclusion in many treatment agencies now is paying attention to what is happening in the body, especially as it relates to brain chemistry and the potential vulnerability of the person having an ancestry with addiction issues.

The body makes about one hundred chemicals that are called neurotransmitters, which simply means they transmit messages from one nerve cell to another one. They have important jobs such as helping us think and make decisions, maintaining a cheerful mood, being able to go to sleep easily and rest well, helping us keep calm in stressful situations as well as many other tasks. Neurotransmitters are all made from the food we eat and so it follows that when there is a lack in nutrition there is a corresponding lack in the body's ability to stabilize these functions.

All addicting substances mimic one or more of the neurotransmitters and when the substance is used a cascade of events begin to happen in the body. One of the primary events is that the addicting chemical sends a message to the body that it doesn't need to make that neurotransmitter any more so the user becomes 'dependent' on the outside chemical because the body no longer makes the internal one. When someone discontinues their use of the outside chemical the body doesn't have either chemical and it complains. We call this withdrawal, which can be very uncomfortable, and in some cases life threatening.

An easy place to begin to deal with addictions is by paying attention to what we eat every day. The body tries to repair itself if the proper ingredients are available in the bloodstream. We can't promise that the brain or body will be as perfect as before they began to use, however, in many cases there is considerable improvement and sometimes the user even feels better than before they began to use. Recovery is never simply stopping the use of the substance, it is regaining quality of life and that means restoring brain function as a basis. There is hope!

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The trauma of Rape from the perspective of a survivor of the world's worst genocide - By Consolee Nishimwe



Rape in any form or fashion is one of the most traumatic experiences a person can undergo, but when such an act is committed against a minor who either becomes infected with HIV or becomes pregnant as a result, that trauma is magnified a million times.

In 1994, my family and I were forced into hiding for three months trying to evade capture and almost certain death by hordes of extremist Hutu militiamen and civilians, who were intent on eliminating all members of my Tutsi tribe. Apart from the myriad of traumatic experiences we encountered during that period, I was personally targeted and subjected to rape and torture and was infected with HIV at the tender age of 14.

From the perspective of a rape victim, I believe that it is the victim's right to choose what course of action is acceptable to her in dealing with pregnancy resulting from rape. Given that victims have different religious or moral beliefs, or could be affected by cultural pressures or circumstances, individual choices in such a situation may differ from one victim to another. Also, the psychological or emotional impact of the situation on individual victims may also vary, and could therefore affect their decision.

In our particular situation in Rwanda following the

genocide, many victims of rape (and in many cases gang rape) who were impregnated in the process, had no choice but to give birth to those kids. Some of them were under severe risk of losing both their lives, and that of their unborn child, due to pregnancy complications, as no medical services were available to them.

While I did not get pregnant during the sexual assault on me, the trauma of the experience itself, as well as the fact that I am now destined to live with HIV for the rest of my life, still plagues my life. Nevertheless, I have made a conscious decision to remain positive and not allow those terrible circumstances to overcome my positive outlook on my future. However, I am fully aware that this is the way I personally chose to deal with my particular circumstances, but I know of other victims who chose the option of ending their lives instead.

About the Author

Consolee Nishimwe is a survivor of the 1994 Rwandan genocide against Tutsis, and is the author of a newly-released memoir, *Tested to the Limit: A Genocide Survivor's Story of Pain, Resilience and Hope*. She suffered insurmountable physical and emotional torture during her three months in hiding and miraculously survived with her mother and younger sister. She is a committed speaker on the genocide, a defender of global women's rights and an advocate for other genocide survivors. She now lives in New York.

Wearing the pants: Working women



Diane Tupper

“ As mothers we have to do what we think is best for ourselves and our family and then keep our fingers crossed and hope we have made the best choice. ”

With the divorce rate at about 50% and the rising cost of living, more and more women are working outside the home. About 79% of women with school age children both in the United States and in Canada are employed. In addition to the rising divorce rate and the rising cost of living, I suspect that young people's expectations are also a factor.

As a single mother with five children, we managed with one bathroom, one T.V. and a second hand Honda Civic. My children and their friends "need" at least 2 bathrooms, T.V.'s in most rooms and 2 cars, at least one being a S.U.V.

It is very hard to advise your daughters. How will working full time and parenting affect the quality of their lives? Being a mother with a career is hard work and leaves very little time to actually spend with your children. On the other hand, we want our daughters to have a career in case their marriage does not last or their husband is laid off or down-sized. If our daughters are out of the work force while their children are young, it may be hard for them to catch up in their given career.

Even the most helpful of husbands very seldom does half of the household chores even though their wives are working as many hours as they are. I have three sons who are married with children. Their wives have all thanked me for bringing up husbands who change diapers, shop, cook dinner, do laundry, etc. They are helpful, partly I believe because as a single parent I expected them to help as much as my two daughters.

Another question we must ask, how are children affected with both or one parent working full time? When they are preschoolers, will they be cared for in a daycare or by a babysitter? Either of which will use up a substantial amount of income. Once they are in school, day care becomes a little more complicated as parents need to find before and after school care with someone who is able to take the children to and from.

The most difficult time is when a child is about 12 years old and no longer needs, or thinks he needs a babysitter. At this point children are often coming home to an empty house where they have a number of hours to fill. Most children will not come home, make a healthy snack and then sit down and do their homework. Many will have friends over to an unsupervised house and homework will be left until after tired parents have made dinner and organized the house for the next day. This often ends up in frayed tempers and everyone having an unhappy end to their day.

Many mothers have to work. Those who do not, have a very difficult choice to make. There is no simple solution. As mothers we have to do what we think is best for ourselves and our family and then keep our fingers crossed and hope we have made the best choice.



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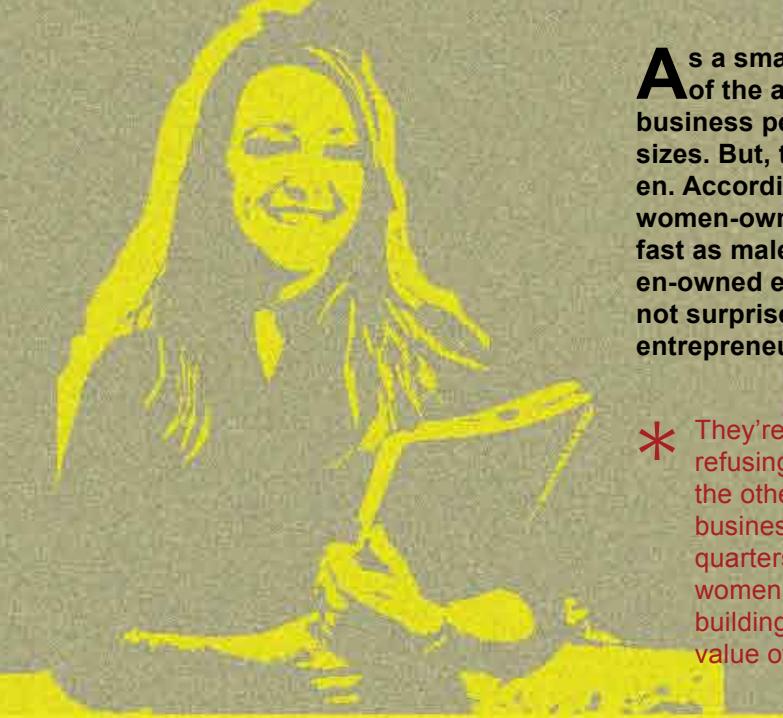
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Strengths of Female Entrepreneurs



As a small business consultant, I am constantly reminded of the ability of people from all walks of life. Successful business people, like the rest of us, come in all shapes and sizes. But, there is one demographic I am partial to – women. According to the National Women's Business Council women-owned firms grew 44% from 1997 to 2007, twice as fast as male-owned firms, and 88% of the 7.8 million women-owned enterprises in the US are small businesses. I'm not surprised. From my experience, women make the best entrepreneurs, and here's why:

- * They're willing to ask for help. The cliché of a husband refusing to pull over for directions says just as much about the other person in the passenger seat. I've mentored small business owners for several years, and roughly three-quarters of my clients have been women. As a general rule, women are much less likely to let their egos play a part in building a business and much more likely to recognize the value of seeking a mentor.
- * They have maternal characteristics that make them better managers. These include an innate ability to multi-task, engage different personalities, and compromise. They're generally more creative problem-solvers and have a great deal of patience, usually obtained from dealing with our lot. I'd argue running a small business is not unlike running a small family. Today's mother has experience with building schedules, balancing budgets, and keeping an eye on the bottom line. Ask any cashier who's more likely to use a coupon and you'll see my point.
- * They're accustomed to being the underdog. We're all familiar with the statistics: women are conferred 60% of Masters degree but still only earn 80.2 cents for every dollar that a man earns. It's unbelievable this gap still exists today, but it does. Unlike men, women don't expect to be successful from the start. According to statistics published by the Small Business Administration (SBA), only 51 percent of start-ups survive more than five years. Women, more so than men, are familiar with fighting uphill battles.

Of course not every female entrepreneur will have a family at home or have natural maternal characteristics, and not every man is incapable of running a successful small business. The point is this: many women come to the table with innate abilities that cannot be overlooked or underestimated.

Victor Green has a long record of founding and growing businesses in a variety of industries. Now retired, he mentors small business owners and new entrepreneurs in partnership with the US Small Business Administration. In *How to Succeed in Business By Really Trying!* (Amazon, \$16), Green shares more than 40 years worth of practical business advice.

For more information, visit: www.howtosucceedinbusiness.com.



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Personal Development in the Adult Years

by Richard W. Coan

The roles of men and women in this country have been undergoing a change in recent decades, and perhaps our ideas of what is masculine and what is feminine have as well.

We tend to think of masculinity and femininity as the ends of one grand continuum, with men tending to fall near end and women toward the other. Yet followers of Carl Jung view one as having both a masculine and a feminine side. In their view, we to develop one side as we grow into early adulthood, while the other side remains largely unconscious. Many Jungians believe, however, that as we mature through the adult years, we tend to develop and blend the two sides and become more androgynous (both masculine and feminine).

I believe the Jungian stance has considerable merit. It is a mistake, however, to think of masculinity and femininity as just two qualities that lie at opposite ends of one grand dimension. We are really dealing here with over a dozen different qualities. We think of some of them as masculine and the others as feminine. Most of us tend to show a mixture of some "masculine" qualities and some "feminine" qualities.

Of course, we may encounter a tough "macho" male who

one
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insists on being "all man" in every way he can, as well as a docile Stepford wife who goes to the opposite extreme. Alas, both of these people are stuck in ruts that prevent much personal development.

We can think of each quality or trait as a tendency that is expressed in much of our acting and thinking. The qualities include such things as compassion, dominance, aggression, autonomy, rational thinking, intuition, aesthetic interest, spirituality, imagination, conventionality, impulsiveness, and sensuality. Even if we regard any one quality as either masculine or feminine, it is possible to think of both men and women (either public figures or people we personally know) who embody that trait. In mythology and folklore, too, we find both male and female figures who personify each of these qualities.

There is a risk in over-emphasizing any one of these qualities to the exclusion of others, and many of us do that in our early adult lives. As we continue through life, we need to cultivate qualities that complement those on which we have relied most heavily. The dominant or aggressive individual needs to cultivate compassion. The highly compassionate individual may need to draw back, addressing his or her own needs at times by developing more autonomy. Balance is the key to a harmonious and satisfying life. We could think of this as androgyny, a balance of masculine and feminine qualities. If so, androgyny can take many different specific forms. The quest for balance and inner harmony inspired me to write my book *Masculine, Feminine, and Fully Human*.



“A New Friend for New Mom! The Postpartum Doula”

by Rhonda Saulsbury

You're about two weeks into your postpartum period. It's 2 o'clock on a sunny, lazy afternoon and you've just awakened from a nap with your brand new baby. He/she is "cluster-feeding" and latching on quite well, I might add! Hooray!!...Breastfeeding is a success, but you find yourself asking, "Who's going to feed my little one while I get a shower? "What should I prepare for dinner and at what time should I get started? Feeling a little apprehensive and overwhelmed, you're wondering, "When will I have a chance to prepare after school snacks for the kids and start a load of laundry?"...Eeeeeek! New mom's responsibilities, especially during this time, can quickly become exhausting! Hmm...a long soothing bath and foot massage would be great right about now...An extra pair of hands and a listening ear just for me would be simply awesome, too!

Diapers, newborn outfits, disposable nursing pads and gift certificates to your favorite restaurant are all "occasion-appropriate" gifts once you've given birth and you're back home getting acclimated to new baby and new life. What new mothers really need, however, is a few weeks of time to rest and relax with baby, a break from daily chores and responsibilities, time to journal or read that really good book; Perhaps the opportunity to sit quietly on your front porch with a cup of herbal tea for a while. New moms need someone to focus on their needs, physically and emotionally, so they can focus on the needs of their newborns. Postpartum Doulas do just that!

Postpartum Doulas are in most cases trained and certified "Women's Servants" who provide tender, loving care and support for new moms who have just given birth or who have newly adopted a newborn. Postpartum Doulas assist new moms and their families in the home with infant care, breastfeeding, light household chores, meal preparation if desired, some sibling support and light errands. Postpartum Doulas are more than just an extra pair of hands. They are professional servants who endeavor to become a trusted friend and personal support person for mom.

The postpartum time shared between new mom and dad immediately after birth is one of the most treasured and memorable times they'll have in their lives together. Often, however, new moms need time to explore and appreciate this very special 'season' in their lives with a "woman-friend" or Postpartum Doula who has experienced similar issues after childbirth. After all! She has just endured the wonderful process of pregnancy and childbirth. There is such a range of emotions and physiological "peaks and valleys" that accompany that! The Postpartum Doula should be a woman who is a good listener and that mom can talk to about anything concerning this time in her life, confidentially. She is able to provide time and space for private reflection for mom, making her feel protected, honored and nurtured. Women everywhere have been given the enormous and sacred privilege and honor of populating the earth by giving birth. New moms deserve to be supported, cherished and "served" during this very precious time in their lives.

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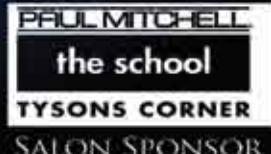
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PRICKLY PEAR BBQ GLAZED PORK TENDERLOIN with Jalapeño Cornbread & Red Chile Slaw

Yield: 4 Tenderloins, Servings: 4, Serving Size: 10 oz.

INGREDIENTS

4–4 oz. Portions	Pork Tenderloin, trimmed of all fat
¼ Cup Each Portion	Prickly Pear BBQ Sauce
Four 2 oz. Servings	Grilled Jalapeño Cornbread
¼ Cup	Red Chile Pecan Slaw
To Taste	Kosher Salt
To Taste	Black Pepper

For the Prickly Pear BBQ Sauce

7 oz.	Ketsup
5 oz.	Prickly Pear Syrup
¼ Cup	Apple Cider Vinegar
2 tbsp.	Agave Syrup
2 tbsp.	Molasses
¼ Cup	Cajun Spice

For the Grilled Jalapeño Cornbread

1 Cup	Cornmeal
½ Cup	All-Purpose Flour
1 tsp.	Baking Powder
½ tsp.	Baking Soda
1 Large	Egg, beaten
3 Large	Egg Whites, beaten
¾ Cup	Skim Milk, regular
¼ Cup	Canola Oil
1 Cup	Frozen Corn Kernels, roasted
½ Cup	Cheddar-Jack Cheese, shredded
¾ Cup	Diced Green Chiles
¼ Cup	Jalapeño Peppers, finely diced
¼ Cup	Cilantro, rinsed and chopped
2 tsp.	Fructose*
½ tsp.	Kosher Salt

recipe continued on page 2

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Women as Jugglers, Tightrope Walkers and Ring Masters:

Balancing Your Life so You Can Love, Live and Thrive

LeslieBeth Wish, Ed.D., MSS, MA

Today's woman is a busy woman. Think of all the variety of tugs on a woman's time. Working women spend more hours at the office doing her job and part of the job of the person who just lost her job—and often for the same or less pay for the now bigger job. Mothers schedule months ahead for ballet, baseball, soccer matches, church dances, math classes.

Allergy shots, dog haircuts. Grandma, gym, grocery shopping, mall hopping, laundry washing. Working mothers with spouses and partners long for date nights, light bites, kisses and hugs. Talking time over coffee mugs. And single women wonder if they'll recall the flutter of meeting a man who matters at all.

Pew! Take a breath. There should be The Women's Circus Award for Jugglers, Tightrope Walkers and Ring Masters. Establishing life balance is not easy. The Wall Street Journal's article "Single and Off the Fast Track," in the May 23, 2012, Personal Journal section addressed the struggles of both working mothers and singles to lessen stress and actually enjoy life. The article cited a More Magazine 2011 survey of 500 college-educated women over age 34 where 68% of childless women and 62% of mothers reported that they preferred more time rather than more money. Many women decided to get out of the rat race and adjust their goals so they could reclaim a sense calm and satisfaction.

But how do you do that? And what are the problems if you don't find peace and fulfillment? The Cookie cartoon below shows the pitfalls of putting all your energy and time into love and work.

Cookie Loses Part of Her Life

Cookie has been so preoccupied with finding love and settling for less that she barely has time for work as an attorney. In fact, her energy is so used up that she has nothing left for her closest friends. She makes a very bad juggler.

Here is a guide to help you establish balance in your life, reduce your stress, and find purpose and joy. Of course, no list is complete, but you can use these ideas as springboards for you to create a new—or renewed—life of your own.

1. On a small scale, get a perspective.

We all lose sight of what's important from time to time. Many years ago, a client came to me because she and her husband were bickering over her insistence on buying a certain lamp. The husband not only thought the lamp was too expensive, but he also thought they didn't need another one in the living room. The wife was so stressed over the issue that she could hardly speak during the session. There was no point in my telling her that she was getting upset about "small stuff" because to her it obviously wasn't small stuff.

As you're reading this, you're probably thinking you'd like to say to this woman, "get a life." The truth is, we all allow ourselves to get derailed by small stuff.

Your best protection against these emotional detours is to begin with getting a perspective. Ask yourself these questions:

- a. On a scale from 1-10, with 10 the highest, what is the level of urgency of this problem?
- b. How long can I wait to get to this issue?
- c. Is there anyone else who can do this or help me?
- d. Who will be most hurt, upset or disappointed if I don't act or participate in this issue? Ask that person for a favor: Ask him or her to understand your situation or find someone else who can do the job.

2. On a large scale, get gratitude.

It's easy to get overwhelmed and blindsided by the details and derails in our lives. You are entitled to your frustra-

tion. Having a broken arm may not hurt as much as a head trauma, and having a tooth pulled may not be as frightening as having a cancerous growth removed, but broken bones and teeth removal are still no picnic. So, go ahead and cry, be scared, complain. But do it with a perspective. Allow the "big picture" to calm you. Ask yourself:

Am I or my loved ones alive? Well? Well enough? Are there cures? Is there a roof over my head? Can I change to another roof if my finances diminish? Are there organizations that can help me?

Many of my clients discovered that, "even when the sky is falling, there are still patches of blue." In the support groups, some of the women kept pictures of 911 near their desk. Others kept photos of friends who struggled with life-threatening illnesses in the family.

I don't think, though, that you have to choose such grim stimuli to activate your resolve. Instead, make a list of things for which you are grateful. Here is a list of the kinds of things the women in my study and support groups kept on their Gratitude List. I recommend you keep your own version of a Gratitude List.

I am grateful for the following things:

- The support of my family and friends
- My ability to forge ahead
- My faith
- My flexibility
- My ability to stay focused on my goals and not give up
- My respect for the things I can afford-and the wisdom to not overspend on things I don't really need-even if I want to!

3. Develop intrinsic values rather than extrinsic ones.

What is the difference between fame and accomplishment?

Well, yes, at times fame can be very exciting, rewarding and useful in the world for opening more doors of opportunity. It can be a great thing to have-if your values allow you to understand its limitations. Fame fades, as we see too well when we hear about movie stars and athletes, for example.

The problem with fame intoxication lies in its source: fame comes from outside you. Imagine if your life's happiness rested solely on other people's appreciation of you. Yes, it feels great to be recognized. We certainly don't like it when we volunteer hours and hours to an organization and don't find our names mentioned in the brochure. But you get over it because you are able to say something like: "I hope it was just an oversight. I am not going to get bent out of shape. The goal was to help and make a difference-and I did."

Intrinsic values of self-worth can last a lifetime-especially if they are based on your unique circumstances. So what if you didn't graduate from an Ivy League College or get a job at the "best" company. Celebrate all your accomplishments.

It's good to set goals, but make sure they are appropriate for

you. I have always been fascinated by the cosmos, and I loved going to the planetarium as a child-and still do. But by the time I was in high school, however, I realized that I did not have nearly enough math skills to be an astrophysicist. They could tutor me until the end of time, and I still wouldn't have gotten it! It's okay to have big dreams for you and your abilities. Set realistic goals-with a bit of a stretch. Dream big-but not necessarily biggest.

One of the best ways to fulfill your hopes is to look at a globe. Locate your city or town. Now spin the globe while you hold out your finger. Look where your finger is pointing once the globe stops. How would you get back to your home base? Repeat the steps of spinning the globe and pointing your finger. Now how would you get home? See--there are many ways to get from here to there. Get flexible, get realistic to get happy.

Finally, intrinsic values will allow you deal with rejection better. There are many reasons why you didn't get that job, for example. Perhaps their first priority is to hire from within. Or, maybe you remind the interviewer of their hated sister-in-law. Or, maybe you are smarter and better educated or trained than the interviewer! The point is, there are lots of reasons that things don't go your way that have little to do with you! Don't let rejection stop you. You have too much to lose. If you get exhausted, take a break for a few days.

4. Withstand self-examination.

Remember that couple that was arguing about a lamp? Well, the wife realized that the emotional engine behind her anger was that she believed the lamp would make such a decorating statement that her sisters would be impressed and no longer see her as the "unimportant" one. "I was the middle of three girls. I wasn't as pretty or thin or smart. I didn't marry a man with a lot of money, and my son didn't continue the family legacy of lawyers. It sounds stupid, but I put so much into that lamp."

Find out-I mean really find out-what's eating away at you. It won't be easy, it will probably even make you cry and get angry at life and your caregivers, but you owe it to yourself to free up your energy, talents and sense of self-worth. No one else can.

5. Say no, give up perfection.

You don't have time or energy in your life to become a martyr. Delegate tasks to your children and be selective about how many of their activities you can attend. Explain that you can't be there for every game. In fact, sometimes your kids may not want you there. They want to feel "grown up." In addition, not being there all the time builds in those intrinsic values in your children: they play or perform well for themselves.

When possible, say no to your boss. If you can't, recruit other colleagues to help you. Get a free intern, for example, from your local university. Of course, you can only get help if you are willing to give up the notion of perfection. True, no

one will do the job exactly as you do—that is the problem for perfectionists. They believe there is one way to perform the task, which is always their way.

Perfectionism is the nonmilitary armor of people who fear criticism and who lack self-worth. Perfectionists are mortally afraid of making mistakes. To them, there is no such thing as a chink in the armor. Anything short of perfection weakens their defensive walls and invites rejection and attack.

The women in my study had to let go of an identity that trapped them into believing that perfectionism and its twin of control was the way to happiness and lovability. “It was a relief—well, eventually—to give up seeking respect by having to be right. I found more energy and time in my life,” several women said.

They replaced their old identity with a view of themselves as teachers, explorers and guides who were willing to take chances and learn from others. The women also discovered that they became better role models for their children. “I taught them not to be afraid of being wrong,” a mother said. They realized that a wrong path just makes it easier to see other right ones.

6. Take care of your health and mental health.

Get regular physical, necessary exams and sleep. If you have an eating disorder or substance abuse problem, acknowledge it now—and get help. An ill woman is no good to anyone—especially herself.

Know your signs of stress. Some people get headaches or stomachaches, some become huge procrastinators, and others get anxious or eat or drink too much. What are your symptoms? One of my single clients discovered that she used sex with men she hardly knew to make her feel good. But those good feelings didn’t last very long. “I wanted to feel alive, wanted to escape my long hours at work,” she said. “Sex with bad boys did the trick—for a while. Then I would crash and feel horrible about what I did. So to ‘punish’ myself, I went right out and had sex with the next bad boy again.”

Recognize your own patterns. Change is not easy. But you must tell yourself: “I deserve good things.”

7. Develop and maintain multiple roles.

Who are you? Are you a mother, daughter, sister, spouse, partner, friend, co-worker, teacher, painter, boss, gardener, hang-glider, hiker, church or charity volunteer? See my point? The more roles you have, the less depressed you will be when one or more of your roles is not as fulfilling at the moment. Having the depth of multiple roles also forces you to delegate, keep a perspective on your life and avoid isolating yourself or putting all your life eggs in one basket.

Most of my clients and research participants put too many of

their life eggs in their love basket. Like Cookie in the cartoon above, they placed all their other interest and responsibilities on the lowest setting to free up time and energy for their partner or new man in their lives. “I thought ‘this is it’—my last stab at happiness,” one of the women said about her new boyfriend. “I was at Paul’s beck and call. That’s what I thought I had to do to keep him. He was quite a catch—at least that’s what I thought at the time.” But Paul wasn’t. He was controlling and critical. He picked his women well. He could spot desperation across the room.”

Or, also like Cookie in the cartoon, the women allowed just enough room in their lives for love and getting ahead at work. Friends and social connection to their community dropped off. Research continues to show, however, that social support systems are crucial to happiness and stress reduction.

Now come up with your additions and edits to the list. Don’t worry about what someone else has on her list. It’s your life. But remember—it’s unlikely that you longed to be a juggler or tightrope walker. Get a perspective, get realistic, responsible, connected and brave—the best recipe for a happy and productive life.

Dr. LeslieBeth Wish, ED.D., MSS is a noted psychologist and licensed clinical social worker, specializing in relationships. For her book about women and love, she welcomes women to take her 17-20 minute online research survey at www.loveyictory.com.

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Petite with intense, striking brown eyes, Jaki Ulman is a behind the scenes powerhouse. A subcontractor manager for IBM, a mother of two beautiful little girls (Maddie 11 and Lily 6) and, did we mention, the wife of Howard County Executive Ken Ulman.

Meeting her husband during her junior year in college at the University of Maryland at College Park, she recounts how her marriage to him was built upon a friendship. "He was a legislator for the Student Government and I was the treasurer," she says with a subtle smile.

"Back in our earlier years together, I learned about the importance of being flexible." For Ken and Jaki, being together was a result of will and determination. "After undergrad, I went to Syracuse University and earned my Masters in Public Administration," she says. "He went to states like Iowa and Wyoming and worked as a field coordinator for the Clinton/Gore campaign." Jaki also speaks admiringly about her husband as she recounts the juggling he did when he worked in Annapolis while attending Georgetown's Law School at night.

And flexibility is the main ingredient which makes up Jaki Ulman's daily mantra: she telecommutes for IBM, is active in both her daughters' school activities, and is largely responsible for creating family time—now that's project management. "Ken works 24/7; we make it work," she says emphatically. Despite the demands on her time, Ulman keeps a clear perspective teaching her children valuable life lessons. "Our girls love the Howard County Food Bank and hosting various holiday drives at our home. My goal is to do whatever I can to teach them to be great human beings," says the third sister of four.

And her interests extend outside of her commitment to her family. "I feel passionate about being a public servant. Ken is the bridge that connects me to the community and for that, I am grateful to be his support and companion." Ulman's eldest sister, Michelle Grim finds her awe inspiring. "She has a great heart," says Grim. "She's very strong and extremely organized. I don't know how she does it, juggling so many things." But Jaki Ulman accepts her many roles with exceptional humility, she insists she's just passing on what she learned. "If I can be a fraction of what my mother is, she is so loyal and thoughtful.. then I have done something right."

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