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Durham Region Community Publication

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From the Publisher

Happy 2016 everyone! Spring is just around the corner and I couldn't be more excited. Spring is about rebirth, renewal, new beginnings and starting fresh. Nothing signifies this more clearly in our lives than nature. Nature comes alive each spring, and quite honestly, I believe so do we.

Although January 1st is the calendar date when many of us tend to make resolutions, spring can also be a time to make a fresh start, a new resolution, or a new goal. ... Especially if you haven't followed through on your New Year's resolutions these past few months. ... And especially if one of your resolutions is to "get healthy".

If indeed one of your resolutions is to get healthier this year, then we can help. Our spring 2016 issue is dedicated to you getting healthier, getting stronger and getting fitter physically and mentally. We want you to be the best YOU, you can be. We want to show you simple steps you can take to make positive changes in your life.

I strive to be physically active and eat healthy on a regular basis because I know how important it is for my health. I may have my "cheat days" when I indulge, but it's definitely not the norm. I also meditate because it helps me clear my mind.

I encourage each of you to make it your goal to get healthier this spring. As I mentioned earlier, The Local Biz Magazine is here to help you. We have a great lineup of feature articles discussing the different facets of being healthy. Many of our regular columnists have also chosen to write about this topic. So, whether you want to exercise more, eat better or be more positive, we've got you covered. We're also going to show you how technology can be your best friend in implementing these changes into your life.

I hope you enjoy this spring theme issue and feel free to send us your feedback on it. Finally, don't forget to also visit The Local Biz Magazine website (www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca) and read up on what our bloggers are up to. All the best.

Antoine Elhashem
 Publisher



From the Editor

My weighing scale... I've had a love-hate relationship with it over the years. When I managed to lose a good 30 pounds a few years back, it was my best friend. I anticipated stepping on it to see the numbers go down. But in years when my weight slowly climbed, I dreaded stepping on the scale. I knew what I would see, and I didn't want confirmation of it.

Nowadays, I barely step on my weighing scale and instead use my clothes as an indicator of where I'm at. I do this because since incorporating resistance training into my cardio-only routine, I've built muscle. Muscle is denser than fat and you weight more (in a good way) when you build muscle.

More importantly, I've educated myself on good food and healthy eating, and have made gradual changes in my diet. I read somewhere, diet accounts for 80% of your weight, while exercise accounts for only 20%. This means food plays a huge part in your overall health. This doesn't discredit the importance of moving your body – we actually have a feature article written by fitness expert Bianca Schaefer which discusses the importance of exercise and how to incorporate it in your daily life – but it gives you an idea of the impact food can have on our bodies. This is why we've got a feature article that teaches you how to make healthy food choices and educates you on proper nutrition written by none other than our food columnist Shirley Ouellette.

Of course, an issue on being healthy wouldn't be complete if we didn't also include an article on the importance of a healthy mind. Many people may overlook this aspect of being healthy because it's internal. You can have a healthy outside but an unhealthy inside; you can have a fit body, but a sick mind. The reality is, eventually an unhealthy inside will manifest itself on the outside. This quote by Manly P. Hall sums it up perfectly, *"An unhealthy mind, even in a healthy body, will ultimately destroy health."* Not to worry though, writer Julie Antoinette discusses the research behind this phenomenon and provides simple tips that can help you achieve your "inner Zen".

The best part is, in our tech savvy world, technology can help tremendously in the quest to be healthier; technology blogger Jennifer Liwanag shows you how in her feature article.

I hope you enjoy reading our healthy living spring issue as much as we've enjoyed putting it together for you. Send us your thoughts on it. You can email me (editor@thelocalbizmagazine.ca) or connect with us through Facebook and Twitter. Till next time!

Wendy Chiavalon
Editor-in-Chief

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Navigating Your Way To A Healthy Lifestyle & Diet

by Shirley Ouellette

There is a lot of talk about healthy living, and with the barrage of information that comes at us daily from magazines, TV, Radio and the internet, it is hard to know what path to follow. Certain foods can be the best thing for you, “a miracle” one day and on the worst foods to eat list the next. Fad diets come at us from the “diet industry” including pills, supplements, meal replacements and ridged food plans that are not sustainable.

So what is the answer? How can you navigate your way to healthy eating and an overall healthy lifestyle? Take some time to consider what really needs to change in your diet and daily habits. Making a list of those changes will help you with the transition from bad to good. You may only need to tweak a few things in your current diet, or you may want to try something completely new. Below, I have laid out options to consider from vegan and vegetarian to the paleo diet. Read on.

Vegan – What is it?

The vegan diet, considered to be the total vegetarian diet, does not contain animal by-products such as eggs, dairy or honey. They also avoid other items like, leather, fur, silk, wool and cosmetics or soaps that are derived from animal products. Vegans are usually driven by ethical reasons that shape their diet, however, health reasons often come into play believing that staying away from meat and meat products that can cause high cholesterol, is a natural way to ward off heart disease and aid weight control that in turn protects you from Type2 Diabetes which is linked to obesity.

The vegan diet largely consists of vegetables including lots of leafy greens, along with whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes and fruits. There is an abundance of soy products available now, which make it much easier to follow this kind of diet. Also nut milks offer a great alternative to dairy. Making sure you consume enough protein on a vegan diet requires some planning. Most foods contain a certain amount of protein including lentils, chickpeas, potatoes, spinach, kale, broccoli and peas. Nut butters are also a good source along with various soy products like tofu, also known as bean curd, made from soy milk.

Vegetarian – What is it?

A vegetarian diet can be similar to the vegan diet, but there are several variations; lactovegetarian includes dairy products and ovo-lactovegetarian also includes eggs, they only exclude meat and fish. By eating dairy products and eggs it is much easier to ensure essential protein needs are met.

Paleo – What is it?

In current society, the Paleo diet has been around for approximately 15 years, although the concept of it was brought forward by Boyd Eaton in a scientific paper on Paleolithic nutrition in 1985. It is a diet



based on foods that our distant ancestors might have eaten before they farmed land and domesticated animals. The diet would have mostly consisted of meat, fish, vegetables, herbs, fruits and nuts. It considers that any processed foods are detrimental to natural health, it also excludes grains and dairy products as they were not consumed by hunter-gatherers.

Faithful followers of the Paleo way believe that many of our current medical issues across the globe are caused by our diet stating that the human body has not changed since the Stone Age and therefore to gain optimal health we should be following a similar diet to our ancestors. All meat eaten should be raised on grass; you are what you eat, therefore if the animal has eaten processed food or been pumped with hormones or antibiotics you are consuming that too, albeit second hand. All wild fresh fish and seafood is fine, but farmed fish is discouraged for the same reasons as the meat. Eat lots of fresh organic vegetables and fruit. Eggs should be from free run hens and organic. Nuts and seeds are good but stay away from legumes and peanuts. For oils, stick to cold pressed olive and nut oils, not refined oils including vegetable oil as the process to remove the oil is not a natural one. Stay away from cereal grains, dairy, potatoes and all processed foods.

Raw Food – What is it?

The raw food craze is gaining momentum in North America. With this diet you can shape your own menu by following a few simple rules. Firstly, never heat your food above 46°C, which cuts out cooked meat, as this would not be considered a safe temperature, however, you could eat tartare of both steak and fish or sushi. You can also eat cheese made from raw milk and raw eggs. The diet mostly consists of vegan choices like vegetables, fruit, raw nuts and seeds. Cold pressed oils, including coconut oil are staples as are freshly squeezed vegetable and fruit juices.

What else?

There are many other diets people choose to follow including gluten free, which can be due to an allergy or sensitivity but more often now due to a decision to avoid wheat products as they have been linked to many health issues. There are also commercial companies like Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig who offer support to help you follow a healthy balanced diet. It is important to make the distinction between “going on a diet”, especially the latest fad which can be extreme and always temporary, to making sensible lifestyle changes that are intended to be permanent to make a healthier, happier you.

What does all this mean?

Knowledge is the most powerful weapon you can have. You cannot make educated decisions on your diet and overall health without knowledge. Understanding the food you eat and the effect it has on your body will help you choose the right plan. We are human and with that individuals, and our lifestyles dictate the way we approach nutrition and our overall health. Personally, I do not follow exactly any of these diets, I take what works for me from each concept.

Changing habits

Bad habits may be hard to break, but when replaced with a good habit the effect can be considerable. For instance, when you get the urge to pick up “fast incredibly over processed has no nutrition food”, STOP! Instead, go to your nearest large grocery store, pick up a cooked chicken, baguette and big bag of salad. If you need dressing, make it a vinaigrette, stay away from the creamy ones. Now you have protein, carbs and leafy greens instead of processed burgers or greasy deep fried chicken that are loaded with who knows what. Education wins!



breast and ground meat are great options, but there is so much more. The tougher cuts of meat tend to be cheaper; they need to be cooked for longer at a lower temperature, but it is worth it – the intensity of flavours and fork tender meat win me over every time!

Portion control is also very important. With supersizing being so popular, we have become accustomed to it and it's hard to know exactly how much we should be eating at each meal, and our overall calorific intake on a daily basis. According to an article in the Huffington Post, fast food restaurant portions are approximately four times what they were in the 1950's. We get used to seeing larger portions and it soon becomes the norm. No wonder we are seeing an alarming rate of obesity. Even though we are eating more calories, on average we spend less percentage of our household income on food, proving we eat more cheap calories, with very little nutrition.

In order to maintain a healthy weight, we need to find out what that healthy weight is for our body types and how many calories it takes to maintain it. Understanding your basal metabolic rate (BMR) which represents the number of calories you would burn if you were sedentary is essential to setting goals. You can find several calculators on-line to help you work out your BMR and how you can safely lower your calorific intake if you want to lose weight. Simple rules to follow include, vegetables should make up 50% of your plate, with carbohydrates and protein making up 20% and 30%

Other easy switches to improve your diet include staying away from pop – all pop. There is no such thing as calorie free! Drinks that say zero calories are sweetened with non-caloric artificial sweeteners (NAS) and are among the most widely used food additives worldwide; however, studies have indicated they can spur glucose intolerance and need more studies to understand who is susceptible to potential negative effects.

We need to drink more water, plain water. No matter what diet you decide to follow, ensuring you are well hydrated is an essential factor for good health. Our bodies are approximately 60% water and we need to keep up that ratio to ward off heart disease and strokes. Did you know that water is a vital nutrient to the life of every cell in our bodies? It also regulates our internal body temperature by sweating and respiration. The carbohydrates and proteins that our bodies use as food are metabolized and transported by water in the bloodstream. Water assists in flushing waste out of our bodies mainly through urination and also acts as a shock absorber for our brain, spinal cord, and fetus. Water is also essential for us to formulate saliva and lubricate our joints. So quite clearly it is an essential part of good health. Make it a habit to drink at least eight glasses of water a day. Keep a count of the glasses you drink, or fill up a jug each morning and make sure you finish it by end of day. It is thought that approximately 75% of North Americans are dehydrated. Over time, failure to drink enough water can contribute to a wide array of medical complications, from fatigue, joint pain and weight gain to headaches, ulcers, high blood pressure and kidney disease.

What should you be eating?

A healthy diet should consist of a wide variety of foods, if you are not following a specific diet as described in the options above. Think colour when you are choosing vegetables. The rainbow effect is what you are aiming for, the more colours the better, this ensures you are getting the essential vitamins, minerals, calcium, magnesium and fibre. Fruit should also be a staple in your diet. If you are a meat eater make sure you try the amazing array of cuts available. Sure chicken



respectively. If you eat lots of vegetables, including raw vegetables, you can have meals with no traditional carbohydrates like potatoes, rice, pasta and bread. Most foods have some carbohydrate value, so get used to filling up on vegetables and lean protein.



The Way forward

Now that you have had a chance to consider options and the changes you might want to make to your diet and daily routine, it is important to implement those changes. All too often we procrastinate on our ideas and never quite get to the execution part. Hold yourself accountable and write down action items and a timeline that you intend to follow. It is always easier to change bad habits when you have support so share your ideas with family and friends, but beware the doubters and don't let them derail the course you have laid out. Believe in yourself and become an agent for healthy eating and change.

Shirley Ouellette grew up in the far south west of England. Since living in Canada she has been actively involved in promoting the Local Food Movement. Sustainability concepts on a broad spectrum are close to her heart and she encourages everyone she comes into contact with to consciously practice sustainable living habits. Shirley works for an international consulting firm that tackle a wide range of environmental issues working with their clients to create leading edge solutions.

Home Cooking – A dying art?

Previously, I talked about the power of knowledge that will help you make decisions on what you eat, but you also need the knowledge of how to cook the products you have selected. Home cooking is a dying art as the food industry introduces more “convenience” foods from prepared meals that you just pop in the oven from peeled veggies and mashed potatoes in a bag. Seriously, we can't peel and mash potatoes now? Also, have you looked at the ingredients? It is not just potatoes!

In a recent study it was found that almost half the children studied between ages 8 and 15 had no cooking skills at all, and did not even know how to boil an egg. In fact only half under 30 years of age knew how to cook a roast meal. If we fail to teach our children and grandchildren how to cook, we are allowing the food industry giants to teach the next generations how to eat. Trust me; this is not a good situation. If we become dependent on the food industry, we will surely perish.

I have spoken to many people about why they do not cook at home more often, and why they frequently buy pre-prepared food, and it is quite concerning that the consensus is that cooking is a chore. Concerning but also enlightening, we need to turn this ship around. Cooking is not a chore! Cooking your own food is a pleasure and an adventure. When I come home from work, I find preparing food relaxing. We spend the time discussing how our day went, then we sit down to a home cooked meal. Sharing meals is an important part of bonding with our family and friends. Breaking bread together has been a symbol of friendship and sharing across the world since time began. There are so many amazing recipes you can try together and cultures you can learn about. You can find so many recipes on line, and it is easy to learn how to cook new unfamiliar items. You can also buy great informative recipe books on different cultures and foods that contain history about the recipes and ingredients plus colour pictures of what your end dish should look like. Why not sign up for a cooking class? Not only will you learn a lot of new cooking skills, you will also make friends and share tips.

Summing up:

- **know what weight you should be and aim for it**
- **educate yourself on calorific and nutritional value of different foods**
- **control your portions**
- **stay away from processed fast foods**
- **learn to cook and teach your family**
- **enjoy food preparation time and make meal times a social event**

The Durham area is truly blessed with the local food available to eat all year round, enjoy and be thankful.



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Move Your Way to Better Health: Get Fit Without "EXercising"

by Bianca Schaefer

People often don't exercise because of what they think the experience needs to be like – a daunting chore that they really don't have time for at the end of a long, busy day.

But the truth is, we live in an age where moving your body and burning calories has never been easier! The only thing that may be holding you back is a common misconception of what exercise needs to be like - and if you can spare a few moments, I hope to expand your view and ignite a desire to get you off the couch and excited to move, even if you hate exercising!

So, what continues to stop so many people from becoming active or staying committed to exercise? It's usually a combination of a few different circumstances, the 10 most common reasons being:

1. No time
2. No money
3. Too many family obligations (parenthood / caring for elderly)
4. Too many work-related obligations (i.e. business travel)
5. Don't know what to do / how to do it
6. Don't like "exercising"
7. Embarrassed to exercise in public
8. No space / equipment
9. No motivation
10. Have an injury / disability



Body movement is important...Use it or Lose it!

When it comes to maintaining a healthy, fit, vibrant body, every week you put off becoming active, your body is becoming stiffer, weaker and softer. You have been gifted with limbs, joints, muscles and bones and if you don't keep active, that expression "use it or lose it" will ring true. Physical activity is necessary in order to maintain your health, decrease the risk of disease, and slow down the process of premature aging. In essence, by not moving the body, you're denying yourself a better quality of life because you're not using the body the way it was designed: to move!

Exercise is important because it decreases the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, helps with weight management and increases both strength and stamina. But being active has far more advantages than the physical benefits you may be familiar with. When you start to move your body as it was intended, you not only challenge your physical body, you enhance your mental, emotional and spiritual bodies as well.

So how does this happen? Moving the body helps reduce stress, increase mental focus and clarity, overcome fears and obstacles and it increases self-confidence. It's not just about getting stronger and reducing your waistline; although those are great benefits. As you begin the journey to becoming more active many things happen simultaneously; your mood improves, you sleep better and you're more likely to eat better as well – all of which have an enormous impact on the state of your overall health and longevity.

3 Tips to Inspire a More Active Lifestyle:

1. Like what you do!

Start by doing something you like that challenges you to move your body! One of the reasons people don't exercise is because they think they need to do it a certain way, like go to a gym or lift weights. If that's not your thing, start by doing something that you enjoy. I can't stress enough how important it is to actually like the way you move your body because if you don't, you won't continue with it. It's also important to choose something that you can actually stick to on a consistent basis. There's no point in choosing surfing as your form of exercise if you don't live near water and can only do it once a year.
Tip: Write down all of the physical activities that you enjoy and pick one to start with. Try it for a 4 weeks and re-evaluate if it's something you can commit to consistently.

2. Ditch your "I have to do it THIS way" attitude

Another reason people don't become or stay active is because their idea of exercise, and its time requirements, make it difficult to even

start or continue. For example, I recently had a client tell me that the reason she hasn't been exercising for years, was because she kept sleeping in and couldn't squeeze in the full 90 minutes she felt she needed to work out and get ready for work. Sure, it's great to have a plan, but if it hinders you even getting started in the first place, dial down the expectation.

I offered her a simple solution: start with 10 minutes of any type of physical activity and build from there. While some people may

think that 10 minutes isn't enough time to get in a "good" workout, 10 minutes can have a profound effect on your mood and motivation. First of all, it gets you started and doing something is always better than doing nothing. Second, your mood will be elevated because you followed through with a plan giving you a sense of accomplishment! And better still, when you commit to 10 minutes on a daily basis, you're more likely to do more in the long run.

3. No space, money or fancy equipment? No problem!

Some people aren't active because they think they need a high-end gym or a special place!

This simply isn't true! If going to a gym or community centre isn't up your alley, there are many ways to get and keep fit without digging deep into your pocket. One of the best places to get fit is outdoors! Seasonal activities such as swimming or cycling in summer or skiing or snowshoeing in winter are great ways to stay active year-round and add variety to your palette. Even if you're on a budget, why not walk, hike or go for a run? If you prefer to stay indoors, don't be fooled into thinking you need a ton of space! I literally trained people in their laundry room, garage and den with nothing more than a mat and their own body-weight! Another great option is to follow an exercise DVD or even download an online program onto your phone or tablet.

It's easy to become active!

Any time you move your body *more* than what you usually do, you're moving in the right direction. It doesn't have to be as hard as you think. Even for those with the busiest of schedules, there are always numerous possibilities. Here are practical, easy and even fun ways to accommodate any type of person!

For the multi-tasker:

I get it. You have no time and even mustering up an extra 5 minutes is just not do-able. Solution? You multi-task! Learn to identify all the different ways your body is active without forcing "exercise". Moving your body and burning calories can be super easy when you're: cleaning the house, washing your car by hand, vacuuming or mopping the floor, raking leaves, mowing the lawn, snow-shovelling, gardening and moving.

For the office-minded:

If you tend to sit at your desk all day, try taking a few minutes at lunch to go for a walk or stretch in your office. If you need some help, set the alarm on your phone every hour to remind you to take a 5 minute break. Some workplaces even have a gym or exercise room, so take advantage of using that space. Another great way to be active at work is to create a corporate team for a charity event or an in-house league. Working and training together can help foster great team cohesion in the workplace!

For parents / families:

Parents often find themselves rushed for time. If having separate workout schedules isn't easy to manage, try incorporating physical activity with family time. Go to the park, play a game together or even join a program. Practical Tip: Martial Arts is a great family option as many studios offer family classes and everyone begins at the same level. Another idea is to create home challenges or contests which involve fitness (a push up or sit up challenge can be fun!) or help the community by signing up for a charity event, such as a walk-a-thon, in which the whole family can train together.

For the business traveller:

Travelling can make exercise difficult, but with a little bit of effort and creativity, being active is easier than you think! Do some body-weight exercises in your hotel room or bring an exercise band with you for resistance training. Or if your schedule allows, use the hotel gym or pool. Many airports are even building gyms or yoga rooms. Take advantage of those opportunities!

For the budget-minded:

Being active doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg – no pun intended! Climb stairs, walk, hike, run, or dance in the living room; these are all great ways to get started! Body-weight exercises such as push ups and squats are another great option and feel free to hold water bottles for extra resistance. Use a mat, towel or carpet for cushioning when doing floor exercises. For small budgets, invest in some hand weights, a yoga mat, an exercise band, a jump rope, exercise/yoga DVD's or down-loadable programs. I even love doing my boot-camp style workouts outdoors. Lunges down the street anyone?

For the TV junkie:

Binge watching can be fun, but if you're going to spend hours on end catching up on your favourite episodes, use the time wisely! If you have any cardio equipment such as a treadmill, elliptical or stationary bike, hop on and get moving. Another way to stay up to date on your favourite show and exercise is to incorporate some body weight exercises such as planks, push ups and squats. Don't want to get off the couch? No problem! Get out some hand-weights

or bottles of water and do some upper body movements such as curls, front or overhead raises.

For the I-need-a-new-challenge type:

If you're bored or feel like you need to change things up, try signing up for a 5k or marathon run, a triathlon, a cycling event, a tough-mudder, or try a new activity like stand-up-paddling, trampoline, rock-climbing or salsa dancing. Make a list of things you'd like to try and go for it! Even get your friends on board, and together, create a team to raise money for your favourite charity.

For the injured/ disabled:

Working with an injury or disability can seem daunting and maybe even discouraging but it doesn't have to. I've been injured in the past and I've found it beneficial to look to others for help and inspiration during those times. Hiring a professional who can guide you through rehabilitation or work with your disability is something I highly recommend. With the right help and mindset, your injury / disability doesn't have to be the reason you're not active.

Last but not least...

Be open to a little bit of spontaneous "Bust a Move" moments. Identify opportunities where you can move more than you normally would. Turn up the music and dance a little in the kitchen while preparing your meals, incorporate some extra squats while looking for those pots and pans, wear ankle or wrist weights around your home, climb some extra flights of stairs, and if you really need privacy, close the door to the bathroom, take 5 minutes and do my famous bathroom workout: Squats to the toilet, push ups and dips on the tub and repeat until you break a sweat!

Ditch those reasons for inactivity and start reclaiming your health today! There is no circumstance that needs to hold you back when you've learned how to recognize active opportunities! My motto is: "Start where you're at with acceptance and an open mind. Be patient as your body adapts to change and have compassion for your inner self."

Bianca Schaefer is a 360 Holistic Health Coach and Owner of Mississauga Adventure Boot Camp who inspires a global community to take charge of their lives and happiness through nourishing their body, mind and spirit with delicious healthy foods, an active lifestyle and a mindset that believes anything is possible! Her mission is to help others realize their greatest potential and use their unique talents to be an inspiration to others. Find out more about Bianca on her personal website Bianca Schaefer.

Spring Events Calendar

March 12 to March 20,
2016

Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival

Join us over the march break for our 41st annual Purple Woods Maple Syrup Festival! Held at the historic Purple Woods Conservation area, this is sure to be an exciting event for the entire family to enjoy! Purple Woods Coservation Area (Oshawa)
www.cloca.com/msf

March 17, 2016

Durham Storytelling Gathering

Durham Folklore Storytellers focus on the advancement of storytelling in Durham Region. Storytellers convey tales, without using books or notes, and are considered part of the performing arts. Join in the rhythm of the story at Durham Folklore Storytellers gatherings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month at Northview Community Centre. Northview Community Centre (Oshawa)
durhamfolklorestorytellers.ca

March 20, 2016

Super Sunday

Visit Station Gallery on the last Sunday of each month for a SUPER family experience. Bring your imagination and a creative spirit! Pre-registration is encouraged. *Fees for individual sessions are charged per family. 4+ years
Station Gallery (Whitby)
www.whitbystationgallery.com

March 24, 2016

Dancing in the Streets

DANCING IN THE STREETS is performing at the General Motors Centre for the first time for 1 show only! The talented cast and band will bring to life the infectious, melodic, foot-tapping songs. Expect your favourite songs made famous by *The Four Tops*, *The Temptations*, *Stevie Wonder*, *Marvin Gaye*, *Lionel Richie*, *The Supremes*, *Smokey Robinson & The Miracles*, *Martha Reeves & The Vandellas* and many more. Tickets start at \$69.50
General Motors Centre (Oshawa)
www.generalmotorscentre.com

March 26, 2016

Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority's Maple Syrup Day

Through site tours, demos, stories, and games, learn all about the sweet tradition of syrup production with the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority. Let the kids create crafts and have their faces painted while you enjoy live music and a pancake feast in the Great Hall of the Ganaraska Forest Centre. Campbellcroft
www.grca.on.ca

April 14, 2016

Crit Crowd: For Adult Practicing Artists

Are you an artist in need of feedback, to invigorate your practice through lively discussion with peers? Join us in the RMG's studio for a 2-hour group critique facilitated by a rotating roster of professionals in the field.
The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (Oshawa)
www.rmg.on.ca

April 30 & May 1, 2016

Lake Scugog Studio Tour 2016

Lake Scugog Studio Tour is self-guided, allowing you to visit your favourite artists at your own pace. There is no admission fee.
art@marionmeyers.com
www.scugogstudiotour.ca

May 1, 2016

Alzheimer Society Chocolate Lovers' Luncheon

Join us for our 25th annual Chocolate Lovers' Luncheon for our silver celebration. Guests will enjoy a delicious 3-course luncheon culminating with an endless chocolate buffet include treats from local bakeries throughout Durham Region. The event also includes entertainment, silent auction, raffle and more!
Tickets are only \$60.
Ajax Convention Centre
www.chocolateloverslunch.ca

May 7, 2016

Maple Festival

Join us for the Historic Downtown Bowmanville's Annual Maple Festival! Featuring sidewalk sales, tasty treats, and fun for the whole family!
Downtown Bowmanville
www.bowmanville.com

May 8, 2016

OPG Second Sundays

Celebrate Mother's Day at the Gallery! Create a unique tile mosaic, a beautiful card and gift wrap for a special person in your life. Projects suit art lovers of all ages and skill levels. Ideal for children 3 and up, however kids work with their parents & art instructors.
The Robert McLaughlin Gallery (Oshawa)
www.rmg.on.ca

May 14, 2016

Toccata & Tea

78 Church St S, Ajax, ON
Tickets available at the St. Francis Centre Box Office, the Ajax and McLean Community Centres, the Audley Recreation Centre, online at www.stfranciscentre.ca or by calling 905-619-2529, ext. 2787.

May 20 to May 22, 2016

Castrol presents the Victoria Day SpeedFest Weekend

The kick-off to Canadian Tire Motorsport Park's season features the NASCAR Canadian Tire Series and the Pirelli World Challenge (all classes). The Canadian Touring Car Championship will round out the on-track action. The traditional Victoria Day Weekend fireworks display will take place on Saturday evening.
Canadian Tire Motorsports Park (Bowmanville)
canadiantiremotorsportpark.com

For events that may have been added after the publication date and other ideas to plan your perfect day in Durham Region, visit www.durhamtourism.ca.

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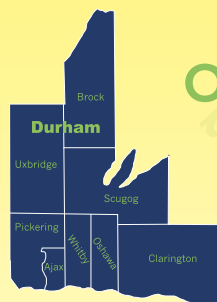
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A HEALTHY MIND A HEALTHY LIFE

by Julie Antoinette

“AN UNHEALTHY MIND, EVEN IN A HEALTHY BODY, WILL ULTIMATELY DESTROY HEALTH.” – MANLY P. HALL

We are living in a time when the mind-body connection is being explored and validated as we merge Eastern and Western approaches to health.

We hear statements like, ‘the mind is the body and the body is the mind’, ‘thoughts are things’ and ‘perception is reality’. If these statements are true, then having a healthy mind is of great importance. Our thoughts and mood directly affect our body. It is said by those who can view auras that diseases are present in the aura long before they show up in the body. Stress for instance may be intangible, but it takes form eventually. Not only do we live in our bodies, but we also live in our minds. Face it, there’s no escape. So, why not make both our minds and bodies healthy and pleasant places to live? In this article, I will touch on a handful of tools that will hopefully offer insight and benefit toward achieving a balanced and healthy mindset, and as a result a healthier and happier you!

YOGA

“WHEN YOU OWN YOUR BREATH, NOBODY CAN STEAL YOUR PEACE” - AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Yoga is an ancient Sanskrit word which means “union”. The union is a connection between the soul (individual) and Spirit (God or universe). There are 8 steps or limbs in yoga which are:

1. Yama (Do's)
2. Niyama (Don'ts)
3. Asanas (Positions)
4. Pranayama (Control of breath or Life Force)
5. Pratyahara (Sense Withdrawal)
6. Dharana (Concentration)
7. Dhyana (Meditation)
8. Samadhi (Spiritual Ecstasy)

Yoga has tremendous benefits for your physical body – it is great for strength training and flexibility. Yoga poses also help strengthen your core and improve your overall posture. But what about the mental benefits of doing yoga? According to a Harvard University article, yoga has been found helpful with reducing anxiety and depression by helping to regulate the stress-response system by lowering blood pressure and heart rate as well as improve breathing. By concentrating on the breath and the body, tensions and stresses are discharged and the mind receives a soothing rest.

Yoga has also been found to boost memory and concentration through a practice known as Dharana (concentration). This practice focuses on clearing the mind, calming the senses and clearing the static noise in our heads, allowing us to focus, remember and concentrate with greater clarity.



Yoga may also be useful in assisting with the difficulties of adolescence. A study published in the Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics involving two groups of adolescents found that the group practicing yoga displayed better moods, lower levels of anxiety and tension, better anger control, improved resilience and enhanced mindfulness.

MEDITATION

"BE MASTER OF MIND RATHER THAN MASTERED BY MIND." - JAPANESE PROVERB

Although there is some overlap between meditation and yoga, there are some distinctions. Meditation is Dhyana, which is the 7th element of Yoga. Dhyana is the area concerned with mental relaxation and attentiveness. Awareness is focused on stilling the mind and on breathing. The idea is that drawing awareness to breathing automatically organizes thinking and calms the mind.

Although meditation is a practice dating back thousands of years, only recently has it been so widely used and studied as a health benefit. A recent study at the Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) found that patients who practiced mindfulness meditation were less likely to relapse after stopping medication. Meditation was found to be useful in regulating emotions and increasing coping capacity.

Meditation also increases the amount of activity in the front left-side of the brain, an area of the brain associated with positive mood, enhancing positive emotions and making us less vulnerable to stress. It is also linked with improvements in immune system function. People who meditate are better at regulating immediate responses to negative or threatening situations, have greater emotional resilience and less psychological stress and anxiety.

Want to give meditation a try? Here are a few simple tips to get you started:

- Breathe deeply, sit quietly paying attention to your breathing.
- Repeat a mantra while staring at a candle.
- Listen to a guided meditation (many are found free online)

LAUGHTER - THE BEST MEDICINE

"LAUGHING IS, AND WILL ALWAYS BE, THE BEST FORM OF THERAPY." - DAU VOIRE

We tend to overthink things – a lot! Sometimes, there are simple answers to our problems which we tend to overlook because they seem...too simple! In this case, you shouldn't! Did you know, one of the simplest things you can do to achieve a better mindset is laugh? A recent study showed that people who laugh produce brain waves similar to a true state of meditation. These brain frequency levels are shown to enable us to think more clearly and have more integrative

thoughts. This is valuable for when we want to revisit, reorganize or rearrange aspects of our lives to make us feel more whole or focussed. In short, laughter can help us make sense of our lives.

Laughter can also break the cycle of psychological negativity, and if you think about it, this makes a lot of sense. People who laugh easily and frequently have better self-esteem and a more positive outlook in general. Laughter is a survival skill that relieves tension and keeps us flexible instead of rigid in the face of change. While laughter does not change our outer circumstances, it changes our perspective about our circumstances. This is pivotal for having a healthy mental state because it allows us to see situations in a more realistic and less threatening light, which makes us feel less overwhelmed. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins (the body's natural feel-good chemicals), and also dissolves distressing emotions. It is impossible to feel anxious, angry or sad when you're laughing.

Want to laugh more? Here are some tips for creating more opportunities to laugh:

- Watch a funny movie or TV show
- Go to a comedy club
- Read the funny pages
- Seek out funny people
- Share a good joke or a funny story
- Check out your bookstore's humor section
- Host game night with friends
- Play with a pet
- Go to a "laughter yoga" class
- Goof around with children
- Make time for fun activities (e.g. bowling, mini-golf, karaoke)

SLEEP – A PRIORITY!

"A GOOD LAUGH AND A LONG SLEEP ARE THE TWO BEST CURES FOR ANYTHING." - IRISH PROVERB

In today's fast paced information driven world in which we can be connected 24/7, sleep often takes a backseat to other priorities in our life. But sleep needs to be a priority too; our body and mind depend on it!

The importance of proper sleep was recognized in Ancient Greece. Asclepius, the teacher of Hippocrates, known as the Father of Modern Medicine was known to have established 'Incubation Temples' throughout ancient Greece to cure the sick through proper deep restorative sleep.

What about sleep is so restorative? In the initial stages of sleep, the brain settles down to rest along with the body. Heart rate, breath, muscles and other organs slow down as we stop reacting to the external world. In deeper layers of sleep, the body, including the immune system, muscles and organs undergo repair from wear and tear of the day. If this does not happen, disease and chronic pain may result.



The deepest layer of sleep, called 'REM' (Rapid Eye Movement) has direct links to our mental health. This is the stage of sleep where we dream. Our unconscious mind processes and integrates issues and threats that appear in our waking lives through the symbolic dynamic of dreams. If we miss REM sleep, severe stress may develop because we become overwhelmed and cannot adapt to new information. If we don't achieve REM sleep for more than 72 hours, a sense of peace is not restored and delusional breakdowns are common. This can be dangerously critical on a chronic basis as our mental and emotional systems suffer burnout. Medication may not be the answer as sleep drugs diminish our ability to achieve the deep levels of REM sleep required to process unconscious information.

Here are some relaxing bedtime ritual suggestions that may help getting into the mood for a good night's sleep:

- Read a book or magazine by a soft light
- Take a warm bath
- Listen to soft music
- Do some easy stretches
- Wind down with a favorite hobby
- Listen to books on tape
- Make simple preparations for the next day
- Dim the lights in the hours leading up to bed

MANAGING WORRY

"I'VE HAD A LOT OF WORRIES IN MY LIFE, MOST OF WHICH NEVER HAPPENED." - MARK TWAIN

For many, worry is a constant companion. It must serve some purpose. Why do we worry? Worry is like a mental pre-emptive strategy responding to the imagining of something bad happening. It addresses our 'catastrophic thinking' by convincing us we are mentally managing things. Its purpose is to keep us safe and surviving. It makes us feel we are actively responding (think fight or flight response) and preventing bad things from happening to us. In the actual presence of threat, this is useful, however, in the absence of actual threat, worrying is largely unnecessary and taxing on our mind and body.

Worrying makes us anxious, in extreme cases, even panicked about the "what-if". It effects our sleep because our mind is not at peace. Research suggests that worriers are also more likely to have physical symptoms such as a decreased immune system making them more susceptible to colds and illness, irritable bowel syndrome, nausea, fatigue, aches and pains, generalized anxiety disorder and depression.

So how can we tame the worry beast? Here are a few suggestions from the experts:

1. Make a list of your worries. Identify what you are worried about.
2. Analyze the list. Are your worries productive or unproductive? A productive worry is one that you can do something about. For

example: 'I'm worried that I may fail my exam.' This is productive because there is an action you can take such as studying. An unproductive worry is something you cannot take any action on and only enhances your feeling of powerlessness. These types of unproductive worries are usually based on 'what if' type thinking usually about situations over which you have no control and where there is no productive action which will lead to a solution. For example, losing sleep worrying that you may contract cancer is unproductive.

3. Embrace uncertainty. Once you have listed your unproductive worries, identify what you need to accept in order to get over them. Accepting our own limitations and uncertainties may be required. For example, one day you or one of your loved ones may in fact become ill. No one knows what the future holds. Equating uncertainty with a bad outcome is not necessarily correct, as uncertainty is really neutral. When we accept uncertainty, we don't have to worry anymore because we can let go of the nebulous unknowns and focus on what is known, what we can control, enjoy and appreciate.
4. Put anticipation into perspective. Anxiety or worry is all about anticipation. The anticipation of any event is always far worse than the actual event itself. Look back at all the situations you worried about and how you felt once they were completed. Did you need to suffer so much? Remind and congratulate yourself on the situations you handled so well despite how catastrophic they may have seemed beforehand.
5. Express Yourself. The emotional parts of our brain are suppressed when we worry and can affect us with gastrointestinal problems, fatigue or rapid heart rate. E-motion is 'energy in motion'. Don't keep it trapped festering in your body. Let it out. Cry out loud, scream into a pillow, journal or express anger in a safe and productive way. Channel your emotions rather than trying to get rid of them because when we are emoting, we are not worrying.
6. Talk about it. Every counsellor knows that the client holds all the answers to their problems. Sometimes having a good chat with a great listening soundboard can help you realize you had the answers all along, and that's reassuring.

Enjoying the benefits of a healthy mind can certainly be achieved by striking a mind-body balance and by using the many tools at our disposal whether they be yoga, meditation, laughter, sleep or getting a handle on worry. This season, let's turn over a new leaf. A wise man once said, "Knowing is half the battle." The other half is applying what we know.

Julie Antoinette is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. Her personal motto is "Health and wellness above wealth and hellness."

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To get started call 905.431.8276
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How Technology Can Help You Get Fit, Eat Healthy & Be Positive!

by Jennifer Liwanag

As I'm getting older, I'm finding that maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a task in itself. And with the numerous tasks I already have needing completion on a day-to-day basis, life can become quite exhausting.

How does one find the time to work-out regularly? Or find the energy and motivation to make and eat healthy meals every night? Or find the inspiration to constantly have a positive outlook on life?

I'd have to suggest routine and tracking... Along with a little help from your tiny robotic friends—your mobile devices, your computer, the Internet, and many other technological friends!

What a time to be alive! Especially with all of the resources at the tips of our fingers to tally, moderate and assist with habit changing and routine making. Whether your goal is to get into shape, eat healthier or have a more positive outlook on life, there is something in the digital world for you.

FITNESS GOALS

Trying to lose weight? Trying to make muscle gains? Or maybe you're just trying to maintain fitness for health motives. No matter what your goal is, I think these suggestions may help out.



Fitbit

The Fitbit is an all-in-one package. It is a bracelet (or you have the option for a watch, with the Blaze and Surge models) that tracks your day and night activity, sleep trends, and exercise trends. All data is transferred to their free app which is available for Apple, Android and Windows users. It does all the tracking for you; your only job is to be active and wear it at all times.



7 Minute Workout "Seven"

Seven is a free app (available on both Apple and Android devices) that gives you work-outs that only take seven minutes of your day. Finding time to go to the gym especially with a busy lifestyle is difficult—which causes many people to skip

out on going to the gym altogether. With Seven, you can put aside just seven minutes of your day to get a full body workout. How great does that sound?



Daily Yoga

Daily Yoga is a free app (available on both Apple and Android devices) that provides pre-made yoga work outs. This app provides work-outs specific to areas of the body such as slimmer legs or tighter abs, or certain weight-loss/muscle gaining goals such as body building, slimmer stomach, and flexibility. It also has work-outs for better sleep, glowing

skin, and stress relief. By paying for "Pro", you also have access to pre-made programs which require you to follow a daily pre-made routine for a certain number of weeks. You also have access to a community of others striving to reach similar goals as yourself.

HEALTHY EATING

Eating healthy is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. When you eat junk, you feel like junk. Similarly, when you eat food that is good for you, your body feels good, too. These apps and websites I suggest below are great for tracking your eating habits and include some great suggestions for some healthy recipes.



My Fitness Pal

My Fitness Pal is a website and free app created by Under Armour which acts as a food diary. Their website states that "keeping a food journal doubles your weight loss." This app works to track your calorie intake and exercise. In specifics to healthy eating, logging the food you eat will encourage you to eat healthier. If your food journal reveals that

you are eating unhealthy and are taking in more calories than you burn off daily, this may encourage you to tweak your food intake, eat more foods that are good for you or exercise more. There is also a barcode scanner which makes it easy to scan foods into the app making logging foods simultaneously simple.

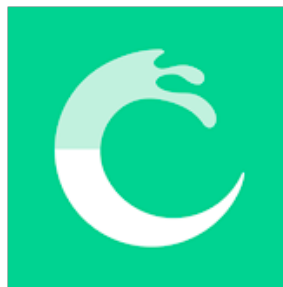


My Diet Coach

My Diet Coach is another free food diary app (available for Apple and Android devices) which allows you to log your daily meals. This app also allows you to set goals, take photos of your weight loss progress and gain rewards (like clothing for your avatar) for regularly logging your food and water intake. This app not only tracks, but also motivates you to continue working towards your goals.

POSITIVE OUTLOOK

I could not agree more that it is just as important to have a healthy mind as it is to have a healthy body. Below, I have suggested two apps that can help you achieve a positive outlook in life, especially if you struggle with anxiety and depression.



Pacifica

Pacifica is a free app (on both Apple and Android) that promotes itself as a daily tool for stress and anxiety. It allows you to rate your current mood (from Poor to Great) and has a small section for journaling. After rating your mood, it suggests a couple of activities that may help you relax or feel more positive. These include relaxing in meditation, choosing

goals and journaling your thoughts. This app also provides a health tracker for activity, a progress chart, pinning your moods through a weekly basis, and a community where you can seek support from others.



Gratitude Journal

Gratitude Journal is exactly what it sounds like, but with more! It is a free app (only available on Android) that gives you space to journal daily (or as often as you feel necessary) about the positive things in life. There is the general area to journal what you are grateful for that day, but there are also specific topics such as: Three Good Things where

you journal about three good things that happen that day; Meaning In Work where you journal about the positive experiences and skills you learn in the work field; Honoring People where you have space to write about people in your life you are grateful for, and many more. There are similar apps available within the Apple App Store, but I find it's rare to find an app that goes beyond just looking at generally positive things in your life, and instead pushes you to look at specific areas where positivity may be overlooked.

No matter your goals, I hope you try these apps, websites, and gadgets to create a routine that helps you achieve an all-around healthier lifestyle. Just by checking them out, you are one step closer to achieving your goals and becoming a healthier you. One more reason to thank our little robotic friends.

Jennifer Liwanag is a blogger, technology enthusiast, and candidate for an undergraduate degree in legal studies with a minor in communication and digital media studies at The University of Ontario Institute of Technology. She is known as Jennibearxo on social media, where she shares her experience with new gadgets, popular culture, and photography. Check out her blog *You, I & A Digital Life* where she talks about how technology can make positive changes in your life!

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AT THE BOX OFFICE

Spring promises warmer weather and summer on the horizon; it also promises some anticipated movies! Check out what is coming up in theatres:

Comedies

The husband and wife comedy team, Melissa McCarthy and Ben Falcone, have created a hilarious film starring Kristin Bell, Peter Dinklage, and Kathy Bates, with McCarthy as the lead in **The Boss**. A tyrannical leader of industry, McCarthy plays Michelle Darnell, who, after being released from prison for insider trading finds that people don't forgive and forget wrong doings. Opens April 8th.

Mother's Day is a romantic comedy starring Jennifer Aniston, Julia Roberts, Kate Hudson and directed by the legendary Garry Marshall. This film is a fun and heart-warming flick with intertwining stories about the lives of several mothers as the title holiday approaches. Opens April 29th.

Action and Adventure

Captain America: Civil War, opens on May 6th. Split apart by government interference, once friends, Steve Rogers and Tony Stark, lead two teams of Avengers, bent on defying what the other deems as right. We find many of our favourite Avengers returning including Black Widow, Hawkeye, War Machine and the Winter Soldier.

The next instalment of the X-Men franchise is opening on May 27th with the awakening of the first and most powerful mutant: **Apocalypse**. The young X-Men find themselves in a battle with their greatest enemy yet, in order to save mankind from mass extinction.

Drama

Money Mon\$ter, directed by Jodie Foster, stars George Clooney as Lee Gates, an on-air personality who shares insider trading tips gaining the title of the "Money guru of Wall Street." After a viewer, following Gates' advice, falls into financial ruin, he holds Gates hostage on air. Ratings soar as the world tunes in to see how much one man's life is worth. Opens May 13th.

For the kid in us all

One of the most anticipated family movies is the live action, epic movie: **The Jungle Book**. We follow the story of self-discovery and new beginnings of the main character Mowgli, and all the animals that make up this literature treasure. But you'll find yourself on the edge of your seat as the studio that brought you Pirates of the Caribbean and the director that brought you Iron Man will bring a truer adaptation of Kipling's classic tale with action packed cinematic genius. Opens April 15th.

Angry Birds, based on the number one paid app of all time is coming May 20th. This full length feature follows the birds who attack pigs who have stolen their eggs. This wonderfully animated film is voiced by some great comedians including Jason Sudeikis, Bill Hader, and Maya Rudolph.

Stephanie Herrera is an Entertainment Specialist, speaking, teaching, and writing about Improv, Comedy and Life through her company, Durham Improv & Acting Studio. She is an award winning actor and singer performing regularly on screen and stage.

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The Magic Of Travel

Becoming fitter is a great goal for anyone as it allows you to enjoy life to its fullest, keep up with your children or grandchildren and live longer and healthier. However, even after knowing all of that, it can still be difficult to set fitness goals and keep them. One way to help and inspire you to keep your fitness goals is to combine them with your travel goals.

Imagine signing up for a 5K run or even a half marathon. Sounds like a good goal and it will give you something to aim for with your training. Now imagine signing up for that same run but you'll be running at Walt Disney World through Magic Kingdom and then you'll spend the rest of your family vacation enjoying Walt Disney World all on the high of accomplishing your fitness goal. You'll look forward to your run as it means that you'll also be on holiday! You can even sign up for a run at Castaway Cay, Disney's private island, when you're on your next Disney cruise.

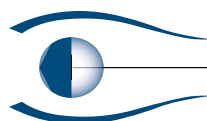
You may have heard of the Ironman race: a 3.86km swim, 180.25km bicycle ride and marathon (42.2km) run raced in that order and without a break. These races are held all over the world and there are also half Ironman and sprint triathlons with shorter distances. Consider setting yourself a fitness goal for any of these races and combining it with your family holiday. Imagine how much more you will enjoy your holiday after completing a race and meeting your fitness goal and then getting to explore Australia, Mexico, Switzerland or even Hungary, just to name a few examples.

So far we have included fitness goals that end in a race event but there are other ways to incorporate your healthy lifestyle with your travel goals. Consider discovering Europe on bicycles where you will be immersed in the countryside and you can experience things at a slower pace. There are different types of tours appropriate for your level and as a family you can get fit together leading up to your bike holiday!

A skiing holiday is another perfect opportunity to create fitness goals leading up to your holiday. When I lived in England, we would head to North America to ski generally once a year and the gym that we went to would schedule a circuit training class called ski fit. The idea was that you would start to build the muscles that you need for skiing but don't normally use. It was a fun class but it was even more fun knowing that we'd be putting our newly developed muscles to use on our skiing holiday.

You can use travel as a fantastic reward for meeting your fitness goal as well as something to look forward to during your training and leading up to your race. Your entire holiday can also be a fitness goal by taking an active holiday. However you decide to combine them, your body will thank you!

Along with her mother, Carol, Rhian owns the travel consultancy business, Magical Family Adventures. As a Family Travel Consultant, Rhian creates travel experiences that foster connections in your family that will last a lifetime and transform your children into open-minded, flexible, well-travelled people.



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FINANCIAL Fitness

Put a spring in your financial step

If you have been paying attention to the news over the past few months, you would have been left with the impression that the sky was (and still is) falling, the Canadian dollar has lost value, oil prices are tumbling – Alberta is struggling, stock markets worldwide are experiencing volatility, household debt in Canada is dangerously high... and we could go on and on. There has been and continues to be no shortage of bad news. My father-in-law who lived through the great depression said that turmoil and bad news about finances worldwide will always be with us. Whenever things don't appear rosy in the economy it usually fuels fear, and when we act based on fear our decisions tend to result in disaster.

No matter how bad you think your financial situation is, things can get better; you are NOT beyond redemption. In fact, I dare say that cultivating some good habits and remaining focused on positive outcomes will put a spring in your financial step, eliminate debt, the feeling of being trapped, and most importantly – eliminate fear. So where do you start?

The first step is to literally write your Income and Expenditure statement. We all have one whether we want to acknowledge it or not. Use a pen and paper or an excel spreadsheet to document every single thing (including seemingly trivial things like coffee) that you spend money on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis. There is an old saying that numbers don't lie, they tell a story, and they reveal patterns of behavior and habits. The purpose of this exercise is not so that you can beat yourself up, but rather to help you see where you are at, and to identify trends and habits. Maybe there are things you need to change, maybe not. The point is you won't know how to put a spring in your financial step until you know what steps you need to take to get you there.

Once you know where you are and what you need to act on, you then have to decide upon and commit to a course of action to change the habits, emotions and thoughts that created debt, unpaid bills, anxiety, stress and everything negative that usually ensues when finances become unmanageable. One of the things I often suggest to help in this process is to write down what you want your Income and Expenditure statement to look like, review it often and track your progress; this process will itself put a spring in your financial step. Gradually chipping away at what may appear to be gargantuan tasks will boost your self-confidence, eliminate worry and further motivate you to press toward your goal.

A financial advisor can help you with this process, however, the truth is you are the one who has to take the necessary actions that are going to get you out of debt, increase your savings, eliminate worry, and prosper in the face of a "tough" economy, sliding dollar, low oil prices and all the other factors that tend to generate fear. Writing down where you are financially today and where you want to be financially in the future will empower you to improve your financial health and put a spring in your financial step.

Karl Marshall is President of Marmac Financial Services Limited, an independent insurance and investment brokerage. He lives in Durham Region. You can read his blog, "The Elephant in the Room" online on The Local Biz Magazine website.

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Teens, Tweens & In-Between

"It's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it." - Lou Holtz

Hello readers! It is spring once more which means I am entering my third year with this column. I can't believe another year has gone by since I last wrote about spring. It seems like just yesterday I was writing about time and how fast it passes us by, and here we are, another winter gone and spring here in full bloom. Seeing as spring brings the New Year, I want to personally welcome you all to 2016. I hope you guys had an amazing and well deserved break from school full of family, friends, relaxation, and most importantly food.

Now that we are back into the swing of things, we can reflect on the year we've had and make new goals for the year ahead. As I looked back at 2015, I realized it was a really big year for me, full of different memories and revelations about myself and others, but the most important thing I learned was about myself. I found that I really evolved as a person and figured out who I was as an individual. I discovered what was important to me and what wasn't worth my time.

In the past, I've been a very stressful person who got worked up over every little thing. As the year progressed, I learned how to cope with it and know what isn't worth worrying about. Once I changed the way I viewed things and people, my life got so much better. I became a much happier and positive person and I don't worry about the things I can't control anymore.

Stress is something everyone has to endure in their life, but not everyone knows how to properly deal with it. I thought I'd share how I deal with my stress and hopefully it will give you some ideas to help with yours. When I have a problem, I always step back from my source of stress and get my mind off it for a little while. I typically end up doing something I really love, like reading one of my favourite books, writing, colouring, or listening to music. All these things really help me focus and not worry for a bit. Once I feel more relaxed, I'm able to return to whatever is stressing me out and fix my problem with a clear and focussed mind.

With that being said, my advice for you this spring is to focus on de-stressing your mind and learn more about what's important to you. Once you figure out what makes you happy, hold on to it and don't let negative or stressful things get you down. Always remember your health is important whether it be mental, spiritual, or physical. I hope 2016 treats you all very well and that you always remember to stay happy. Like the quote says, it isn't the load, it's the way you carry it. So go out there and learn to only carry what's important.

Victoria Cozza is a 16 year old grade 11 student in Ajax. She loves singing, playing piano and reading. She also has a passion for music and writing. She loves spending her free time with her family and friends.

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Tasteful Talk

by Shirley Ouellette



Spring again and a brand new year. 2016 – Wow, life is definitely speeding up. 2015 was a particularly hard year for us; we lost our beautiful dog Lizzie at nearly 15 years old, and also my father at a ripe old age of 90. Both had lived very full lives and were comfortable with their passing. The circle of life continues. Although 2015 had us say goodbye to two members of our family, we warmly welcomed two new members, twin boys to our son.

This edition of Local Biz is focused on healthy living, mind, body and soul, reminding us we need that balance to not only achieve longevity, but also to be able to enjoy it. Generally, people are living longer and expecting more of their lives. There is no doubt that your diet has a lot to do with your health, along with exercise. However, your overall wellbeing is said to be 80% diet and 20% exercise. Spring often sees us making changes in our lives, out with the old and trying something new. In my feature article I have listed a few diet options to consider. When making changes to your diet it is important to be realistic about what is sustainable for you. Quick fixes might be attractive but soon lose their lustre if they are too restrictive. The key to success is a well-balanced diet that allows you to eat a large array of foods.

The seasons tend to dictate our diet, partly due to the produce available, but also due to the cycles our bodies go through throughout the year. It is normal to put on a few pounds over winter, as we tend to eat more carbs, a natural reaction to the cold to give us more padding to keep us warm. Changing your diet once spring arrives ensures those extra pounds drop off.

Most of our local farmer's markets don't start up again until May, so we need to supplement our produce purchases at regular grocery stores. After the winter of comfort food we are bursting with desire for lighter food like green salads. You can still have this and keep seasonal. Take white, Savoy, red and Napa cabbage and shred them finely with a sharp knife. Also slice Brussel sprouts finely and mix together with a vinaigrette to create a crunchy fresh salad. Grill lean meats and fish to go with your salad. Other vegetables still left from winter are broccoli and cauliflower which can also be broken down to florets and enjoyed raw, giving a maximum boost of vitamins, minerals and good fibre. Shred broccoli stalks, cabbage and carrots to make coleslaw. Eating raw vegetables offers a natural fibre that cleans our gut and bowel, essential for optimum health. You can still find local apples and pears, these are also good sliced or roughly grated in salads; try to think outside of the lettuce box.

Keep your eye out for your local farmer's market to open and enjoy the lovely spring weather. As always Durhameers, vote at the cash register and buy local. Salute!

Shirley Ouellette grew up in the far south west of England. Since living in Canada, she has been actively involved in promoting the Local Food Movement. Sustainability concepts on a broad spectrum are close to her heart and she encourages everyone she comes into contact with to consciously practice sustainable living habits.



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Tasteful Recipes

by Shirley Ouellette

Baked Cod and Napa Cabbage Stir Fry

You will need...

- 6-8oz Filets of Fish per person (sea bass, black cod, halibut)
- 1 Cup Panko Bread Crumbs
- ½ Cup Parmesan, grated
- 1 Tsp. Garlic Powder
- 1 Tsp. Onion Powder
- 1lb Napa Cabbage, finely shredded
- ½ Each of Red, Yellow and Orange Pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 Sweet Onion, thinly sliced
- 1 Clove of Garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. Fresh Parsley, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. Fresh Thyme, rubbed off stalks
- 1 Lemon Juiced and the Zest, finely grated
- 1 Tbsp. Grapeseed Oil
- 1 Tbsp. Olive Oil
- Sea Salt & Fresh Ground Black Pepper



How it's done...

This brightly coloured stir fry is crunchy and bursting with fresh flavours, just what you need after a winter of more calorie dense foods. Make sure you have all your ingredients ready as it only takes a few minutes to sauté each item. Once you have prepared the vegetables get the fish ready.

Preheat oven to 400°C. Line a baking tray with parchment paper. Lay the fish filets on the paper and rub with the olive oil. Mix panko, half the lemon zest, 1 tbsp. thyme, 1 tbsp. parsley, and grated Parmesan, with the garlic and onion powders to make a coating for the fish. Sprinkle over the fish filets and press down to coat tightly. Place in the oven for 15 minutes.

Now in a large roomy sauté pan or wok, add the grapeseed oil and heat on low to medium. Add the onion and garlic and let soften - do not brown, approx. 5 minutes. Turn heat up a little higher and add the peppers, sauté for 3 minutes. Add the cabbage, stir to combine, then put on a lid to allow to steam for 3 minutes. Add herbs, lemon zest and juice, stir well then put lid back on for a further 2 minutes. Add a sprinkle of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serve immediately next to the baked fish for a perfect spring dinner.

Tip: Thick white fish should be just cooked, flake with a fork, but still be very juicy. Depending on how thick the filet is, after 15 minutes if when you push a thin knife blade into the middle, it does not come out warm to the touch, then put back into the oven for a further 3 minutes or so until it is warm through.

Did you know...

Napa cabbage is widely used in Asian dishes and is also known as Chinese leaves. Napa is packed with many antioxidant plant compounds. In addition, it is a great aide to losing weight as it a negative net-calorie food which means it requires more food energy to be digested than the food provides.

Wine Pick...

For this lovely light vegetable and fish dish try a Pinot Gris from Grange, Prince Edward County. Clear, pale straw colour; aromas of white flower, apricot, pear and mineral; dry with a medium body and zesty citrus finish for \$16.95.

Taking THE Lead

by Corry Hamilton



As the weather begins to warm up and you are looking at either getting more active or starting out with a new exercise routine, consider adding your dog or cat as motivation and as a workout buddy.

While researching ideas for this article, I came across something that while not big in Canada has been in practice for the last 15 years or so in Europe and the United States. Doga. Yes, you heard me, dogs and people doing yoga together. I have to admit that I really don't get it but I wanted to keep an open mind.

I'm a strong believer in Eastern medicine as it has been the most effective for me. I eat clean and exercise and love being outside with my dogs. That being said, this is one trend I'm having a hard time wrapping my head around.

Yoga has been practiced for thousands of years in an effort to achieve inner peace and improve physical fitness. Yoga is Sanskrit that means "uniting" so what better way to unite with your dog than practicing yoga together. Dogs are naturally social, playful and perform stretches daily; all components of a good yoga routine. In fact, dogs naturally perform downward dog every morning without even realizing it. Some people have said that it's a wonderful way to bond with your pet, while doing something good for you.

Some instructors will simply have you bring your dog to class, while others will have you work with your dog to complete the poses together. They look at it as a way to teach the dogs to trust in the relationship they have with us. Stretching, massage and lifting can all be a part of doga. Some poses that your dog/cat can perform are:

- Chaturanga- your dog/cat lies on its stomach and you stroke its back
- Chair- the dog or cat sits on its hind legs and you hold them from behind and raise their front legs in the air
- Savasana- where your dog/cat lies on its back and you rub their belly
- Downward dog –where you dog or cat just naturally bows and stretches

So, you think you want to try Doga? You can talk to your yoga instructor and see if they are willing to teach a class but more than likely you will need to buy a book, get a dvd or go online to watch videos.

As you and your dog/cat practice doga together, you'll both likely gain from the experience. Your pet will get to bond with you and feel more like part of the pack and you get a chance to workout. While I can't see it being the best workout for either of you, in my opinion, all exercise is a good thing.

We loved the name of Corry's business so much, that we decided to name her column Taking the Lead. Corry's furry family is full of special needs animals, and when she isn't planning her next great international adventure, you can find her curled up with a book, snapping pictures or taking a nap with her cats.

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Ask Sue-Ann

by Sue-Ann Bavlnka



Dear Sue-Ann:

A friend sat me down the other day as kind of an intervention and it shocked me what it was about. She told me that I had become very negative and that she was willing to help me, but that if I was not willing to do anything about it she was not going to be able to spend as much time with me anymore. I was told that my attitude was affecting her and that it was very hard for her to tell me this but that she can't take it anymore. Sue-Ann, after consideration of what she said, I agree, she is correct. I have become very negative. I also noticed that I have not been feeling well lately either. I do not know where to begin to find my way back. I am willing to do anything? Can you help me?

Signed: Negative Nelly

A. The most important elements that needed to happen to resolve this situation have happened. They are that you acknowledged the problem and that you are willing to change it. Now, things can change. That is the first hurdle that most struggle with. What has happened is that you have had an event or several events that were out of your control affect your life in a negative way. It was at that point that you chose negativity instead of hope and resolution. What happens is that you begin to look for negativity, thinking that you will be prepared in some way, but the result ends up being that identifying negativity becomes a habit. It is the path of least resistance because it is really easy to identify the negative aspects of everything. You begin to see the world through negative eyes. When you choose to change your focus and only look for the positives in every situation then your old habit of negative thinking can be replaced with a new one. A new habit where you can see peace, love, beauty and resolution all around you. The habit of positive thinking. There are elements of body, mind and spirit in everything we do which would explain why negative thinking would affect your health. The emotional becomes physical and the next step is the physical breaks. When you change your outlook to positive then you will naturally feel better. It was very brave of your friend to sit you down and have a real conversation. It shows that she values your friendship when she takes the time to constructively identify an issue. Friendships like that should be treasured.

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

COACH

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Lose your mind

For a lot of people that might not be a bad idea. As we enter this spring season, we see new life emerging. We see plants coming back to life. In certain parts of the country we see animals emerging from hibernation. There is a freshness in the air, the days are longer and its warmth feels so wonderful after winter. The birds are starting to return, wonderful colours are popping up all around us. Nature is renewing itself. What had ceased to be last fall is now new and vibrant.

We basked in the newness and renewal of nature. It invigorates us, it offers a renewal of hope of excitement, the cold and the misery of winter is starting to fade. Everything feels new and bursting with energy.

How about you?

For some people it's the same old, same old. What's new about you as everything around you is changing, shaking off the old embracing the new? Are you changing? Or will your thinking continue to be the same?

As humans, all our changes start in the mind. Will you change the way you think?

Will you continue to conform to the thinking of the world? Will you continue to listen to family and friends as they offer up their limiting beliefs? Will you continue to be held hostage to childhood beliefs and family dysfunctions? Will you continue to sabotage your growth with the poor me, why me mindset? Will you be held hostage to cultural limitations, glass ceiling, physical and emotional limitations, time wasting activities, friends that are happy to stay right where they are because it's comfortable and want you to keep their company?!

Or will this be your time of renewal, time of emerging from the cocoon and explore and achieve all that is available to you?

Will you step out of the box, get off the tread mill and live? *Really live?*

Life offers us no guarantees other than that cliché of taxes and the reality of death. I was reminded of the latter recently of a dear lady I knew, who just 10 days after retiring passed away. A lot of her plans were to be lived out after retiring didn't get a chance.

What about you? Are you putting off your today's, banking on your plans for the future? Don't make that mistake. Are you embracing the "freedom fifty-five" slogan, or is that now "freedom seventy-five"? Embrace each day that God gives you, do the things you need to do, don't wait.

As I reflect a lot on the importance of renewing our lives, I hear about taking care of ourselves physically, financial awareness and planning, however, one important area I don't hear a lot about is our spiritual lives. I know there are a lot of different thoughts about this. My hope for each person is that you settle the most important aspect of your life, what happens to you after you die.

Don't allow all your thinking to be caught up in the here and now. Like the plants and the flowers that died last fall but now are renewed to new life, let this thought become a part of your new everyday reality.



Adopt a new way of thinking. Embrace, enjoy and thank God every day for your chance at a new life each day.

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The Golden Years

I spent most of my life (first as a student, and then as a teacher) in school, and of course, in schoolyards. There always seemed to be one day in spring when skipping ropes, marbles and balls suddenly magically appeared and the fun began. Everyone seemed so freer back then...

No matter what age we are, we need to confront spring with the same enthusiasm we did when we were children. Most of us are probably beyond the skipping rope stage, but we still need to find activities that we enjoy to keep us healthy.

One of the simplest things we can do is walk. (And since its spring, we can finally start to walk outdoors!) Durham Region has a vast network of trails for walking, biking, cross country skiing (in winter time) and many other activities. For more information visit the Durham Tourism website and download their Durham Region Trails brochure.

Durham Region is also blessed to be part of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail that stretches from Pickering all the way to Clarington. The trail is great for walking and biking while offering spectacular views of the lake. Map your route out at www.waterfronttrail.org

If you like to exercise outdoors while also having a lakeside view, check out the outdoor fitness gym at Heydenshore Park along the Whitby waterfront. The outdoor gym offers 10 pieces of weather-resistant workout equipment ranging from cardiovascular endurance to upper and lower strength training, as well as an accessible piece that accommodates a wheelchair. There are 100 of these outdoor fitness gyms in parks across Canada, but this is the first of its kind in Durham.

Gardening is another great activity this time of year that gets you outside enjoying the sun and absorbing vitamin D. I do some of my gardening on my deck with plant pots, but mowing the lawn, getting the soil beds ready for the new planting season and pulling out the weeds are all great exercises for your body. Just make sure to stretch beforehand!

Consider also visiting your local community centre or Senior's Centre and take part in one of their many recreational programs. There are so many to choose from! For example, the Oshawa Senior's Citizens activity guide offers about sixty different physical fitness programs! There are even classes for those who have specific cardio, arthritis or osteoporosis concerns. The aqua programs are also very popular, especially if you suffer from joint pain.

Don't forget, eating healthy is just as important as exercise. We need to make sure we are eating plenty of good, nutritious, food. If you would like to improve your eating habits, Eat Right Ontario is a great resource. Their website provides easy to use nutritional information to help you make healthier choices. You can even call their toll free number and speak with a registered dietician about any nutrition related questions you may have. www.eatrightontario.ca

We need to do what we can to stay healthy and strong while we age. Let's treat our body with the respect it deserves by moving it and feeding it well. So get out and enjoy the sun. Walk, bike, run... maybe even dig out that old skipping rope! Enjoy spring!

Linda Calder is a retired teacher. She likes to write and enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys going on cruises, taking pictures and scrapbooking.



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Horoscope

(March 2016 to May 2016)
by Julie Antoinette

Aries (March 21st – April 20th)

Time to clean out your closet, Aries! Your theme is Spring Cleaning. Getting rid of old clothes and objects that are no longer useful will free up stagnant energy. Once you do, watch new opportunities flow into your life effortlessly. Not to mention how much lighter you'll feel. Remember: The state of your place is the state of your mind.

Taurus (April 21st – May 21st)

Do your life experiences reflect in your expression, Taurus? Bad times will come and go. There is no need to carry them with you permanently. These were pivotal learnings toward your character formation. Take the rich lessons and leave the rest. Spring asks you to start afresh. New emotional experiences await, but only if you are willing to leave the past in the past. Travel lightly and you'll go far.

Gemini (May 22nd – June 21st)

What are you craving Gemini? The planets are piquing your appetite for intellectual stimulation. You'll encounter new people randomly or by joining like-minded groups. This will satisfy your desire to stretch your mind beyond its limits. A wonderful intellectual adventure awaits you. Stretch your neurons and enjoy the journey!

Cancer (June 22nd – July 22nd)

That dream, that thing you really want to do, that passion that nudges you in your quiet moments - is calling. Are you waiting for permission Cancer? The stars declare the only permission you need is your own. Your loved ones will support your dreams, but you must take the lead. You are the one you've been waiting for.

Leo (July 23rd – August 22nd)

Someone from the past misses you and wants back into your life. You must decide whether to let them in based on your inner wisdom. Your heart will tell you if they are being honest or lying. There is a risk of repeating an old pattern, so exercise your right to "Just say NO!" Nancy Regan would approve. Careful, old habits die hard.

Virgo (August 23rd – September 23rd)

You have turned down far too many exciting offers Virgo. It's time to acquaint with the idea of "YES". You have mastered the art of self-sacrifice and delay gratification. You understand the concept of long-term benefit vs. short-term gain. That's wonderful. Put it on your resume. You're older now and wouldn't mind feeling meaning and happiness in life. Prescription: Watch the movie YES MAN with Jim Carrey. Enjoy with popcorn. And butter.

Libra (September 24th – October 23rd)

Spring marks the opposite season of your birth. Being the zodiac sign representing zero-point balance, Spring's message for you is simple: Spring Break. Be honest; you're exhausted. You've been multitasking like a juggler with 87 pins since Christmas. Immediately following reading this horoscope, get on the phone or internet and book your vacation. Somewhere warm near saltwater - you need the vitamins and minerals that only the sun and sea can offer.

Scorpio (October 24th – November 22nd)

It's time to dig deep, even for you, brooding Scorpio. Something has been bothering you but you're not quite sure what it is. This nagging feeling is hovering beneath the surface of your conscious mind, begging to be known. It is a part of you that will reveal a lot about who you really are. Until you uncover this secret about yourself, you'll be quite confused about your own unusual behavior. Prescription: Journal. The things that bother you the most are key.

Sagittarius (November 23rd – December 21st)

Time for new inspirations Sagittarius! Your job will require fresh new ideas this season. You may source this from the rich emotions that will wash over you. Notice them and put them to use rather than letting them pass you by neglected and forgotten. Capture them in art, writing or music. Big ideas are wanting to take form and are choosing YOU as their vehicle. Buckle up

Capricorn (December 22nd – January 19th)

Your analytical skills will take center stage as you shine in dealing with difficult people this season, wise old Capricorn. You have a firm and fair approach that always achieves sound resolution. You are also using your intuition in business to sniff out new inspiring opportunities. Good for you!

Aquarius (January 20th – February 19th)

Your right and left brain collaborate this Spring. A link between finances and numbers, creativity and the arts takes place. Maybe you'll be creative financially in the way you handle your investments or perhaps there is money to be made in the arts and entertainment. Whatever your combination, these two worlds colliding will definitely prove a lucrative hit!

Pisces (February 20th – March 20th)

Family time is the focus for this season. You are asked to strike a balance in the way you spend time with loved ones. No longer allow them to take a back seat to your professional pursuits. Focus on spending time together. Decorating project or home improvements worked on together add value to your home, but also adds quality and richness to your relationships. It's bonding time!

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In this horoscope, she seeks to relay intuitive messages of guidance from the collective astrological archetypes. As above, so below.



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