

THE MOUNTAIN

PITTSBURGH'S CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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A BRAND NEW

SEASON OF CHANGE AND TRANSITION

TRANSITION

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WOMEN'S
HISTORY
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MANY OF US DO NOT REALIZE THAT WE ARE A "BRAND".

We usually associate branding with products like Coca Cola, Toyota or Celebrities, and we believe that branding is not for everyday people like us! From the minute we are born the branding process begins. "Did you see Suzy's baby Brandon? You can tell he's going to be just like his father!" Your brand is simply how people see you. It's your reputation.

There are some of us who embrace our brand with vigor; while there are others who may be attempting to re-brand themselves based on past mistakes. If you've had a troubled past or made a very bad decision, the way people see you may have defined who you think you are or how you think you should act; however, God has equipped us with the power to re-brand ourselves. For some reason, we think the way people see us is how we should remain, but this is not true. We have the ability to change how people see us and how we see ourselves. Have you noticed that we are more willingly to forgive and forget when it comes to celebrities, but are so harsh on others and ourselves?

Actor Robert Downey Jr. over the last few years has had record success with movies such as *Iron Man*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *The Avengers* that it's hard to imagine that this brilliant actor was ever on drugs and had a life crumbling addiction. His addiction ultimately ended in jail time, divorce, and a nose-dive career. It wasn't until 2003 that he began to turn his life around. In 2008, Robert landed the role as Tony's Starks in the popular blockbuster movie *Iron Man*. Despite his difficult situations, bad decisions, and constant negative media attention, Robert never gave up on himself; instead he forgave and reinvented himself, and we accepted him!

We have the power to do the same thing! All we have to do is ask God to come into our hearts, forgive yourself and others, read and apply His Word, and you and others will soon see a brand new you.

You don't have to boast or post your transformation on your Facebook page. God's light will shine through you. Successful rebranding doesn't mean inventing a new persona. God will use your testimony to inspire others. There is no age limit and no statute of limitations. Branding is a constant process. Your story is a great one, and no one else has it, but you.

ORLANA DARKINS DREWERY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, THE MOUNT



A BRAND NEW YOU!

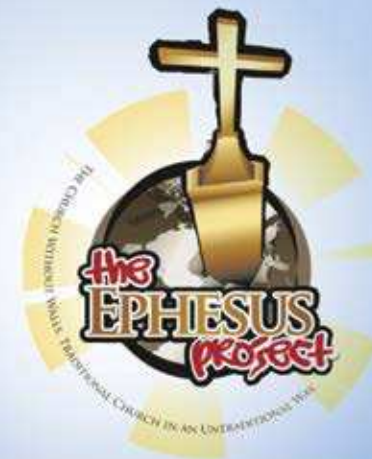
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WINNING THE TUG O' WAR TO ACHIEVE SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

BY MINERVA WHITE

It has been said that we are the sum of our choices. Spiritual transformation is certainly a goal that would benefit those who conscientiously choose to strive toward it. Unfortunately, few of us spend the necessary time meditating on the efficacy of the cross. Our knowledge of the work of Jesus Christ, completed on our behalf, is pivotal to our spiritual transformation. Everything about our lives as believers hinges on our understanding of not only who we are in Christ, but also, what is now possible because of His tremendous sacrifice for us. Romans Chapter 6 is a powerful chapter, which sets forth some basic principles every Christian needs to understand.

OUR MINDSET V. 1-5

The first thing Paul challenges is the wrong mindset of some believers. He explains that grace does not grant permission to sin and grace does not make sin acceptable. Operating with a “what can I get away with” mentality will always lead to a bankrupt Christian experience. Paul is utterly astounded that those who have trusted in Christ would even toy with such an idea. He challenges the notion by using baptism as a metaphor. Baptism represents our identification with Jesus. It symbolizes that just as Jesus died and rose again; we too have died and are raised to a new life.

THE PRESENCE OF EVIL DESIRES V.6-12

Our new life is now lived to glorify and fulfill the purposes of God. The Cross set us free from the rule or power of sin. Where we were once powerless to resist sin, NOW, in Christ we can say, “No!” In verse 12, Paul exhorts us, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.” Paul is reminding us that we can decide not to sin. He is explicitly stating, “Do not let.” Do not allow sin to control you. He also makes clear in the same statement something that still evades many of us: the presence of evil desires does not mean that I have to give in to those evil desires. In other words, simply because “I feel” sin still active in me, doesn’t mean that I have to give it access to my body. A brief example: let’s say you have a difficult relationship with a co-worker/family member; they’ve done things that have wounded you. As a Christian, you have the power to resist the evil desire to strike back, gossip or otherwise engage in ungodly activities. You do not have to give your eyes permission to roll when they enter the room or give your tongue permission to say things that you know shouldn’t be spoken. At every point of decision, you may struggle. However, spiritual maturity means remembering that you are free and resisting the temptation to sin. You learn that just because you feel like utilizing unbecoming language and acts towards others, doesn’t mean you have to. Paul says that instead of offering yourself to sin, offer yourself to God.

PAUL WARNS US, AGAIN! V.15-23

Don’t let the fact that sin is no longer counted against you make you tolerate sin. Sin yields only death. Paul teaches us in verse 21 that the things we use to do when we had no power to resist sin, only brought death and shame. So,

his question is, “Now that you have an option, why would you willingly continue to live that way?” We are slaves to that which we give ourselves to. Before we had no choice but to serve sin; and how did sin repay us...? With death! As the Bible states and living our lives has proved, the wages of sin is death (v.23a). Now, in Christ, we can choose to serve God. We can be “slaves” to doing what is right and that leads to holiness and eternal life.

MAKING PROGRESS

It sounds simple, but it’s not easy. You can read Romans 7 to witness Paul’s own struggle with sin, firsthand. He acknowledges the tug of war going on inside; further he tells us in Galatians (5:17) that every choice we make is a mini-skirmish. It will feel like an actual war is going on inside of you. Holding your tongue, not paying back in kind/seeking revenge and blessing your enemy will be difficult and painful. At times you will fail, but every time you resist, you grow stronger. Keep resisting! One day, it will hurt less and eventually it will stop hurting. Why? Because you died to it and it no longer has any power over you. It won’t happen that way for everything. Some battles we may fight all our lives. Be encouraged. You are no longer a slave to sin. The Holy Spirit will guide you and He will give you strength to overcome. Draw close to Jesus. Remember, he resisted sin to the point of death (Heb. 12:4).

In his struggle, Paul sets the example of how to live as an overcomer:

1. Stop buying into the lie that sin is inevitable. Although it’s true that we can’t be sinless (at least not on this side of glory), we can all certainly sin less.
2. Know who you are and what Christ did for you. I don’t have to sin. Jesus set me free from the power of sin. I can say, “No!” In every temptation, look for the promised way of escape and take it!! (1 Cor. 10:13)
3. Set your mind. Spiritual growth will never happen by accident. Consider what you’re thinking about and set your mind on the things of the Spirit, which bring life and peace. (Rom. 8:6)
4. Follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Many times, we struggle because we get excited and overzealous. We bite off more than we can chew. The Holy Spirit is the perfect teacher. Ask Him to show you what to tackle first. (Gal. 5:16)

NOTE: There will always be something to tackle. The Christian life is a marathon. Don’t let that discourage you. Continue to grow in the grace our Lord.



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SEASON OF CHANGE AND TRANSITION

BY TAUNYA MARIE TINSLEY, PH.D., NCC, LPC

Are you seeing signs of the change in the air? Do you welcome or dread the season of change and transition? How do you handle the change of seasons?

The months of January and February represent a time of change and transition. It is during these months that we begin the transition from one year to the next, where the weather begins to change from cool to cold, from rain to snow. The leaves on the trees have fallen leaving the trees naked and bare. The birds have completed their trek, migrating to warmer and sunnier climates. On New Year's Day, there is the remembrance of last years' achievements and failures, singing and toasting. And of course, there is the college football national championship game, the NFL Super Bowl, and there are New Year's resolutions where many of us become more serious about life!

It is also during the months of January and February where individuals begin another cycle of change and transition in their lives, from one season to another. In her book, *The Seasons of Change: Using Nature's Wisdom to Grow Through Life's Inevitable Ups and Downs*, Carol L. McClelland describes one's personal change and transition metaphorically using the seasons of winter, spring, summer and fall. The winter solstice season "is the turning point in your transition journey, the time in the process

when you let go of the old patterns, goals, explanations, thoughts, ideas, ways of perceiving, and usher in the new. Until you experience the shift in your thinking, you can't possibly create a new vision of your future, let alone implement it in the world" (p. 117).

Schlossberg (1981, p.5) defined a transition as "an event or nonevent that results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behavior and relationships." Transitions, whether positive or negative, can be accelerated by events such as a change in physical context, change in relationships, routines, assumption as well as taking on a new role or physiological changes. "Moving through a transition requires letting go of aspects of the self, letting go of former roles, and learning new ones (Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012, p. 39). Moving through the season of change and transition can often cause confusion that can have an impact on one's ability to focus, work, play and love.

McClelland (1998) provides five questions to consider for determining how the changes you're experiencing came about:

Did you initiate the change yourself, or was it forced upon you?

Did you know the change was coming, or was it unexpected?

Do you think the change you're going through is good or bad?

Is this change time and in sync with the normal pattern of your life, or is it untimely and out of sync?

Are you making a decision or taking action?

Some of these changes include predictable and anticipated life events, both athletic and non-athletic; unpredictable, unanticipated, and involuntary life events, both athletic and non-athletic; and nonevent transitions, both athletic and nonathletic. Examples of changes may include, but not limited to, ending a relationship, divorce, declining fame, dealing with physical injury, reoccurring health problems, experiencing a physical death, moving to a new city, marriage, financial issues, academic or vocational issues, having a child, working for a new

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit"

-Romans 15:13, NIV

supervisor and/or with a new team, being released from a job or retirement from work. Whatever the change you are experiencing in this season, in the new year, all change and transition require us to take a journey, a journey of growth, which every human being must experience to become wiser and whole. Although your reactions to transitions change over time, you can still experience feelings of grief and loss as you leave familiar roles and try to develop new roles. Kay and Schlossberg (2010) suggest that you assess, evaluate and strengthen your 4'S to master the season of change and transition:

Situation – What is going on in your life at the time of change? How do you see the transition? As you contemplate making a change or weathering a change, think about the situation. Is it positive or negative; predictable and anticipated; or unexpected, unpredictable, or involuntary? Are you dealing with more than one life event? Have you had previous experiences with similar transitions? It may help to think of ways you can seek advice, negotiate, take optimistic action, and assert yourself. Try to see a positive outcome to the transition or reframe the transition by viewing it in a different way.

Self – Who are you? How well do you know yourself? What are

your internal resources for dealing with change? Do you have the inner strength to deal with it? Do you feel overwhelmed or challenged? Do you have an optimistic outlook? It may help to see yourself in a different light. Understand that feelings of grief, loss, sadness, or anger are normal and transitions take time to integrate. Also, view the transition as strengthening your ability to cope as well as practice affirming yourself.

Supports – What help do you have from others? Do you have the external resources and support to deal with change? Do you have support from family, close friends, teammates, and/or co-workers? Do you have support networks in your community and on the job? Is there a match between what you need and what you have? It may help to think about what you need and how you can get it. Also, practice asking for support, it gets easier.

Strategies – How do you cope? Do you know when to take direct action or when to refrain? Do you have the abilities to utilize a variety of coping strategies? Can you change the way you view the transition? How do you manage your reactions to the transition? To strengthen your strategies, it may help to review your strategies and coping skills. Determine what is working and identify new strategies and skills that

may assist you during your transition. Whether or not the transition is one we want, all change and transitions require time for adjustment. Additionally, because everyone's transition is unique, each person's strategy for working through change may be different.

The change in seasons from one year to the next is inevitable and is a natural progression, one we cannot control, as it is with life changes and transitions. Just as you navigate, maneuver and plan accordingly to transition successfully from one season to the next, you need to plan accordingly to navigate and maneuver through life's transitions, which will increase your potential for growth, increase your happiness, and increase your total health and wellness. Furthermore, planning, and developing strategies, for tran-

sitions will allow you to have a good chance of success during your season of change! Happy New Year!

References: Anderson, M. L., Goodman, J., & Schlossberg, N. K. (2012). Counseling adults in transition: Linking Schlossberg's theory with practice in a diverse world (4th ed.). New York: Springer Publishing Company. McClelland, C. L. (1998). The seasons of change: Using Nature's wisdom to grow through life's inevitable ups and downs. Berkeley, CA: Conari Press. Schlossberg, N. K. (1981). A model for analyzing human adaptation to transition. The Counseling Psychologist, 9(2), 2-18. Schlossberg, N. K., & Kay, S. (2010). Transition guide: A new way to think about change. Rockville, MD: TransitionWorks, Inc.



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OVERVIEW The Mount Ararat Counseling Center (MACC) is designed to fill the gaps identified in both the Church and in the greater Pittsburgh community by providing affordable and accessible services as well as trained licensed mental health professionals who incorporate culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate counseling services that include spiritual, Christian and faith-based interventions.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES MACC's approach to addressing client needs integrates spiritual, Christian, ethical and religious values. It is MACC's belief that the infusion of these elements into the counseling process is essential for the overall development of those that will be served. Another goal of MACC includes providing Christian-based psychological and emotional support, as well as social services to clients, who may or may not be members of Mount Ararat Baptist Church (MABC), but who are in need of professional guidance and advocacy in dealing with issues that may prevent effective and responsible conduct of their daily lives.

TARGET POPULATIONS The target clientele for MACC are individuals, couples, families, and groups across the lifespan (i.e., children, adolescents, adults and older adults). MACC will be targeted to members of MABC, to other church congregations, to members of the East Liberty area of Pittsburgh, and to members of the greater Pittsburgh Community.

COMMON CONCERNS ADDRESSED BY MACC

Depression; Anxiety; Stress; Abuse; Crisis Support; Relationship Issues; Grief, Death & Loss; Self-Esteem; Alcohol & Substance Abuse; Identity; Development; Career Planning & Development; Anger; Life Skills; Deficits; Retirement.

MACC STAFF Trained professional or clinicians (i.e. licensed or masters-level) with diverse qualifications and backgrounds, including professional counseling, marriage, couple and family therapy, psychology, pastoral counseling and counseling sessions. Some counseling services may be provided by qualified students enrolled in masters-level and doctoral degree programs under the supervision of MACC licensed mental health professionals and faculty members or doctoral interns who are licensed mental health professionals.

INSURANCE & FEES Highmark, UPMC, and Community Care Behavior Health (CCBH) insurance companies cover MACC's services, and we also offer fee-for-service and sliding scale for those who may not have insurance and/or may have difficulty paying. In extreme cases of financial hardships and lack of insurance, pro-bono assistance may be available. Please contact MACC for further information on the rates for counseling services.



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Q: My mother recently died and I wanted to know when Christians die do they immediately go to heaven?

- MARIA D., MONROEVILLE, PA

A: Great question! But can be somewhat of a complex question to answer. The only way to accurately answer that question is to go straight to the Word.

A: In the November edition of the Mount magazine "Ask A Deacon" section, we responded to the question "Can I Really Get To Heaven Just By Believing That Jesus Died For Me"? The answer to the question was an emphatic YES. We said that in order to get to heaven, you have to "Repent of your sins and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mark 1:15). You have to repent of your sins, which means to turn from them, and believe that Jesus died for your sins, was buried and rose again on the third day. By the profession of your faith believing this you will go to Heaven when you die.

We find that there are numerous references of death and the afterlife in the Bible. One story in particular; Jesus is asked to come to save Lazarus by his sisters Mary and Martha. Lazarus is sick and getting ready to die and the sisters believe that if Jesus arrived before their brother died that Jesus could heal him. However, Jesus delays His arrival for four days and refers to Lazarus as sleeping. Lazarus dies. Out of anguish when Jesus arrived, the sisters told Jesus how they felt about Him being late. Jesus is moved within

and wept. Lazarus is raised so that God would be glorified. (John 11). He goes on to say: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die..."(verse 25).

Then there's the story of Jesus' crucifixion. Hanging on the cross with Jesus are two thieves on either side of Him. One blasphemes Jesus, but the other asks Jesus to "Remember me when you come into your Kingdom." Jesus replies "Today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:42-43).

Then there is the text that most of us have quoted (mostly out of context) when we are referring to a loss of a loved one. It's in 2 Corinthians 5:6-7 "... to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." Here Paul is speaking of the Temporal and the Eternal. What Paul is saying here is that he is confident in his eternal destiny and longs for the day when he can be "absent from the body" and be present with the Lord he loves and serves. To be "absent" from one's body simply means to die, because at death, the spirit is separated from the body and moves into its eternal abode - either heaven with the Lord or hell separate from God for eternity. In the same way, we as Christians should always have this assurance.

So the question remains, "when a Christian dies do they immediately go to Heaven"? The Message bible states it

this way, when Christians die "The body is put back in the same ground it came from. The spirit returns to God who first breathed it." (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Yes, at death, Believers go directly in spirit to Heaven. The body however, will not be raised until the Last day. When Christ returns, there will be a reunion of our resurrected body and the glorified spirit. Then we shall be with Christ forever. As Christians we walk by faith and not by sight and we are confident and pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord, because by faith as born again Christians we believe that when we die our spirit goes immediately into the presence of the Lord.

As you prayerfully consider our response to your question, please know that personally as Christian believers we are confident that your mother is present with the Lord in spirit and as a Christians that her spirit immediately went to be with our Lord and Savior Jesus and when Christ returns her resurrected body and glorified spirit shall be united and be with Christ forever. We hope that you find comfort in what the bible teaches as related to your question.

SUBMITTED BY: DEACONS
 CLAUDIA MASON, KATHY HUNT,
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**A SEASON OF STORIES ABOUT
 STRONG WOMEN**

Wine in the Wilderness

Written by Alice Childress

March 12-15, 2015

Written in 1969, Wine in the Wilderness is set amid a Harlem race riot. In a tenement just above the chaos, an artist is creating a triptych about black womanhood. As he finds a muse to complete the final panel with his idea of the ideal African woman, his muse deconstructs his notions of the black woman in a discussion about race and women that ultimately changes his work.



Wine in Wilderness image
 © Joy Richardson
 www.joyrichardson.info

You Wouldn't Expect

Written by Marilyn Barner Anselmi

September 17-20, 2015

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This section is designed to answer questions that you may have about the Bible or Christianity. In the church, Deacons function as servants, ministering to the church body in practical ways, including, but not limited to: discipleship, assisting with baptism, prayer and visitation to the sick. If you have a question that you would like one of our Deacons to answer, please submit your question to: mountmagazine@mt-ararat.org



SPIRITUAL "SELFIES" NEW GROWTH. NEW BRAND.

BY REVEREND SHARON DENNARD

FROM THE HIGHEST RANKS

of this world's system we consistently hear the following selfish remarks made or see them acted out in deed: "I am power, I can do whatever I please;" "I am perfect, I judge those who do not meet my standards;" "I am truth, whatever I think is correct;" "I am right, if others don't agree it's their problem." These "me word" perspectives neither leave room for a God-ward focus nor an other-ward consideration. Flesh-stroking attitudes like these take us off the hook for our spiritual-based New Year resolutions, made just weeks ago. In order to avoid buying into such self-centered propaganda we must believe the Scripture that states, "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but be a new and different person with a fresh newness in all you do and think." (Romans 12: 2 NLT)

As spring approaches with its promise of growth and renewal, let us reclaim our interest in the believers'

transformed life. The Apostle Paul writes for our reassurance, "There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears" (Philippians 1:6 MSG). Only heavenly authority underwrites this bold guarantee. Even a world strewn with the ever deepening and disastrous sinkholes of violence, indifference and corruption cannot negate it. The Bible is God's blueprint to follow (Psalm 19:7-11). Our individual and collective catalogues of apparent disqualifying choices are corrected by this same guarantee.

The one true and Living God has not only authored the story of our initial conversion but, by the functioning of the Holy Spirit, He continually and personally works to affect our transformation. His protection is overarching. His provision is overabundant. Excuse, compromise, and any accompanying defensiveness evaporate in the heat of His divine intentions.

Instead, we gather strength and new resolve from the faith implanted, the truth imparted and the hope inspired—especially as we are being positioned on the growing edge. In accordance with every Godly ideal that lingers in our minds and hearts, we are maturing into new and different people regardless of age.

We commit to upgrade our character. Driven by a positive dissatisfaction with the status quo, we welcome the lessons and experiences that prove us capable of more depth, breadth and reach. Pushing upward and outward past the borders of self-interest, we become more fully productive for the benefit of others. With firm determination, we lay aside all forms of maliciousness which includes but is not limited to: anger's lethal passion; revenge's ugly desire; bitterness' poisonous corrosion; self-righteousness' dogmatic judgment; greed's voracious craving; prejudice's false assessment and willfulness' foolish insolence. With equal tenacity, we take up the practice of counteracting virtues. A few of these virtues include showing compassion to the forlorn; forgiveness to the undeserving; kindness to the cold-hearted; hospitality to the lonely and attentiveness to the forgotten. These are the characteristic, beliefs and behaviors which classify those whom we call saints.

It is for Christ alone that any of us would submit ourselves to such a drastic and ambitious brand change. When circumstances become severe He leads by example (I Peter 2:21). His grace is overwhelming. His mercy is overflowing. Our hesitancy melts in the realization of His goodwill toward us. He is supremely worthy of our most robust effort.

Still, you may ask "How can mere humans do this?" We are not alone. God—the Holy Spirit—is our sure Guide and trusted Counselor (John 14:26). His presence is overtaking. His power is overcoming. He certifies us 'redeemed and ready' with a godly purpose and a certain eternal destiny. To that end, He energizes the written Word of God as it is read or preached or taught. He also sensitizes our intellect to discern and fortifies our will to act, as God requires. With His help, we obey our way through life. In time our spiritual "selfies" will more and more resemble the image of Christ our Lord.

Rev. Sharon Dennard is the Minister of Biblical Literacy at Mount Ararat Baptist Church. If you have questions regarding this article, call 412-441-1800.



HEART HEALTHY FAIR

Mount Ararat's Health & Wellness Ministry hosted a "Healthy Heart Fair," Sunday, February 8 in recognition of American Heart Month. The event provided attendees the opportunity to ask health questions, monitor their cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose and learn about healthier food options. In recognition of World Kidney Day, the ministry will host a health screening event on Thursday, March 12 in the Fellowship Hall. For more information and to register, call 412-261-4115, Ext. 12.

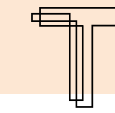


AWESOME GOD, MAKE ME WHOLE

BY MICHELLE D. JACKSON

Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make.

-Jeremiah 18:3-4



Here is a spiritual lesson in the making of a patchwork quilt. An early American pastime, the art of quilting used the imaginative designs crafted by women gathered in a quilting bee. Patchwork blocks made from fabric scraps and salvaged material accumulated from memorable events and treasured possessions are stitched and sewn into individual designs then aggregated into useful pieces. Colorful and oddly shaped fabric is cut, assembled and attached to

God has taken the jagged edges of my faith and cut away the doubt and uncertainty. He took the rough and uneven ends of my spirit and smoothed away the unmanageable parts. God attacks the obscurity of sin that seeps into my mind and leaves me with the courage, through His salvation, to stay strong and to move forward with confidence. I am His work of art. Tattered, bruised and weak, I am made strong through the love of an omnipotent God. Even in my brokenness, he can craft me into something whole. His

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.

-2 Corinthians 4:7

create a complete work of art with three layers - the patchwork, the insulation and the backing - which is mended into a quilting masterpiece that is often passed down from generation to generation.

When I think of God's masterful work to make me whole, I see my life as a patchwork quilt. Scraps and salvaged parts of a life well-lived but often hard-fought cut, paired, and mended together by the hands of a loving God. Each patch exemplifies my faith, my character and my capacity to love. Each layer is insulated by the Word and the strength of my salvation. God is my Potter, my Maker, my Restorer and my Redeemer. Through His craftsmanship, He has turned this spoiled vessel into something new. And He has transformed the tattered pieces of my life and restored me into a purposeful and enduring believer.

Word insulates my life and reminds me that the real work to living out my destiny is done inside and not on the peripheral of my flesh. My backing, or my foundation, is God's love - a sweet, but firm fortress of strength that keeps me humble and strong.

A Christian's life is a work in progress. There is no day that passes that God isn't cutting, pairing and mending our broken parts to make us whole again. He is the Creator of all things good. Resting in His arms guarantee us that we will be equipped and restored, beautifully packaged and secured through His love.

Michelle D. Jackson is author of The Heart of a Man, a Christian novel and Founder of The Charity Supper Club, a program designed to raise money to benefit local charities and families in need.

But now, O' Lord,
You are our Father,
We are the clay,
and You our potter;
And all of us are
the work of Your hand.

-Isaiah 64:8



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Take a Chance
BREAK FREE

From these 10 Things,
 to make 2015 Your Best Year Yet

BY TIFFANY HUFF

Tiffany Huff is a Spiritual & Empowerment Coach, Speaker and Writer at The Best You. The Best You is a community of women committed to breaking free and accepting their divine calling to live purposefully and change the world. Tiffany is passionate about empowering women to find their own truth, and share their stories to change the world for the better because she spent many years imprisoned to who she was expected and obligated to be until she found the courage to break free and live the life God created her to live. You can learn more about Tiffany and her work at www.Tiffany-Huff.com.

This article is full of love... That kind of love you would rather not have too much of when you are enjoying the type of party hardly anyone wants to attend - the pity party. Yes, this article is loaded with tough love (it's love nonetheless). If you are anything like I used to be, you spend time looking at people around you who are "living the life." You see them on Facebook, Instagram, at work, on TV and you wonder, "why not me?" or "What is she doing that I am not?" You pray, write in your journal about your aspirations, and what you would do "IF" and then you go to sleep and wake up the next day and wonder why nothing has changed. You're stumped.

Sound familiar? No? OK. Well, keep reading anyway. Maybe it will help a friend of yours.

One day I decided I was ready to stop watching other people live their lives on purpose. I decided it was time for me to break free from myself, and the prison I had been a willing inmate in for so long, so that I could start living purposely myself.

I was excited! I started making lists, and writing plans and reading "how to" books. And then... Nothing. Just as soon as the excitement had stirred-up, it fizzled and I was back to being a "watcher."

The woman I was called to be was still locked up in that prison. My purpose was passing me by. Is your purpose passing you by? If you are ready to break free, you have to be honest with yourself. Being willing to confront your excuses and live in your truth are important steps to take on your journey to live whole and free, accept your calling, and live purposefully. Here are 10 things I had to find the courage to face and break free from in order to begin living in my purpose:

Fear

I was "punking" myself. The list of things I feared was never ending. I feared trying and succeeding more than I feared failing. I feared what people would say or think, I feared losing friends, and the added responsibility of being who I was called to be. I was just, scared.

Stinginess

Yes, I was being stingy with myself. I made excuses for why I did not have the money to invest in myself. I had opportunities to attend workshops, networking events and take classes but I wanted to do other things with my money. Stinginess was earning, my true calling and purpose, a life sentence of imprisonment.

Running

I knew I was created to soar, to fly above living at ground level, but I was running instead. I was running with women who did not have similar aspirations. My fear had imprisoned thoughts to believe that those who were soaring would not think I was good enough to fly with them. So I continued running around in circles with those going nowhere fast. Flying was just not a priority.

"Yessing"

I had to learn that when I said yes to people, to going places, and to doing things that no longer served me, I was saying "no" to myself. Yessing was like second nature to me. I said yes out of obligation, out of expectation, out of fear, and out of a mindset of lack. Yessing was my attempt to appease and keep those around me happy, but it was suffocating my authenticity. I had to break free from it if I wanted to live. I had to learn that saying "No" was saying "Yes" to me.

Laziness

When my purpose called, I didn't pick up. When I was presented with opportunities to break free, I would turn my head and pretend I didn't see them. There is work involved in breaking free, and I didn't feel like doing it. I didn't feel like living purposefully. It was so much easier to just be who I was, than to do the work to be who I was purposed to be. I voluntarily opted to be less than.

Self-Doubt

I doubted that I could actually achieve some of the things I knew I was created to be and do. I was paralyzed by limiting thoughts and decided that not taking action was worse than a wasted or failed attempt. The stars would continually align and opportunities would show themselves blatantly but I didn't believe I was equipped. Doubt continued to defeat me until I found the courage to break free.

Waiting

I was setting indefinite deadlines to get started. Any reason I could come up with not to take action, I used it. I had to wait for payday, after the holidays, for my tax refund, for the weather to break, for when I lost the weight. I had to wait until the kids got a little older, wait for my relationship to get better, wait for my friends to support me. I was a prisoner of the perfect time that would never come.

Shame

I disguised it as wanting people to "mind their business," but the truth was that I was not very comfortable with removing the band aids from my wounds, and telling my story openly. My purpose was born from sharing my story, my pain,

and how God brought me through. I was dragging around so much shame about my past, and the life that I had lived. The shame was weighing me down, so I continued to keep my story to myself, which meant my purpose continue to pass me by.

Busyness

I told myself I didn't have time. I was living in a place where every second of every day and much of the next day was accounted for. I had to take an honest inventory of how I was spending my time. What I found was that I was busy doing everything, but actually doing nothing. Most of my days were being wasted; I was not being intentional about investing the time and attention into my purpose that I needed to. I was so busy doing nothing that I was stuck. Admitting this to myself was pivotal to breaking free.

Control

Last, but certainly not least. The need for control was ruining my life. It had to be done by me because it had to be my way or it was wrong, or imperfect. I would pray and then try to make it happen myself anyway. I was constantly in my own way because I refused to ask for help. If I didn't start taking my hands off of things I was never going to be free.

I believe wholeheartedly that 2015 will be the best year ever for many of us. First, we have to have the courage to admit why the past years have not been, and then find the courage to break free from the things that have kept us stuck, and limited.

Consider this post your "get out of jail" free card. Go ahead, break free!





Homesafe Foreclosure Prevention Program

Are you behind in your mortgage payment or received an Act 91 Notice?

The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh may be able to assist you. There is NO CHARGE for this service and we are HUD certified Housing Counseling Agency

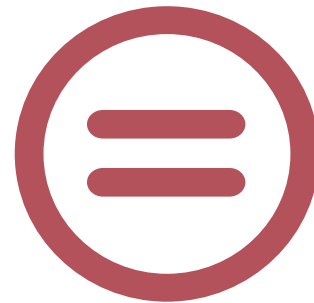
For more information and to obtain an appointment call (412) 227-4164

Operation Home

Do you have home buying questions? Urban League may be able to assist you with the process.

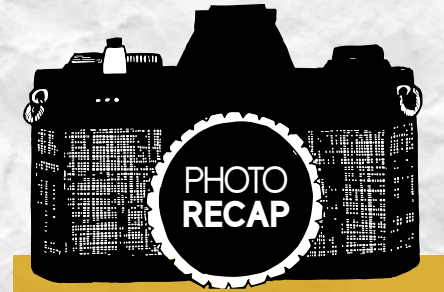
The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh will provide an intensive homeownership program consisting of one workshop and a follow up one-on-one credit counseling session. There is NO CHARGE for this service

For more details and information please call (412) 227-4164



Urban League Of Greater Pittsburgh

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SNAP-SHOTS!

There's always something happening at The Mount from worship services, Sunday school classes, Bible study groups, meetings, special events along with the people behind the scenes working to make everything happens! But, it's our priority to make sure that we gather to fellowship, connect with each other and make sure our visitors feel like that are a part of The Mount family! Plan to visit us soon and be a part of our many Mount Moments! (Mt-Ararat.org or call 412-441-1800)



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: WEAVING THE STORIES OF WOMEN'S LIVES

BY SUSAN FRAZIER DELANEY

During the 1980's, various proclamations were made designating a week in March as Women's History Week. It later became National Women's History Month in fourteen or more states. The National Women's History Project is an organization dedicated to writing women back into the fabric of this country's history by promoting and recognizing women's contributions individually and collectively. The exceptionally strong role models highlighted, encourage girls and young women to expand their vision and dream bigger. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Women's History Movement and the National Women's History Project. The theme for 2015 celebrates women's stories from all cultures that have helped shape our history. Although the names and accomplishments of these women are far too numerous to mention in an article, I will mention three women who have impacted my life through the years.

When I was in the third grade, our teacher asked each student to research and to write about an individual in history whose first name was the same as our own. From an extensive list of names, I chose Susan B. Anthony. Born in the 1800's and brought up in a Quaker family, Anthony dedicated her life to activism and specifically women's suffrage. The term suffrage refers to the right to vote, especially in political elections. Anthony is responsible for paving the way for the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, giving women the right to vote. She was so passionate about her cause that she voted illegally in the 1872 presiden-

tial election. It resulted in her being both arrested and fined. Despite challenges, she continued giving speeches around the country gaining support for women's voting rights. Unfortunately, Anthony died in 1906, fourteen years before the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. Perhaps it was the perseverance of Susan B. Anthony that inspired me to work with the Election Board and later on with the Judge of Election in my community; a position I have held for over twenty-five years. Susan B. Anthony once said, "Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation...can never effect a reform."

Another notable suffragist and early leader in the civil rights movement was an African-American journalist by the name of Ida B. Wells. Born in Mississippi in 1862, Wells was deeply affected by the injustices, brutal killings and lynching of African-Americans during that time. In the 1890's, she led an anti-lynching crusade in the United States. She wrote and spoke about these wrongful deaths, taking her campaign all the way to the White House. Wells' social and political activism resulted in a Washington D.C. protest, which encouraged President William McKinley to make reforms. Despite death threats, she continued her fight against prejudice by writing articles, lecturing and seeking support for her cause from both blacks and reform-minded whites. Wells was not only a founding member of the NAACP, she also established the National Association of Colored Women. She spent the last years of her life in Chicago. A public housing development was named in her honor; preserving Ida

B. Wells' legacy as a champion for social and political change. "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them." (Ida B. Wells)

My last example comes from the pages of scripture. Although many women of the Bible were often unnamed or identified as being a wife to, sister of, daughter of various well-known Biblical male characters; this anonymity does not limit or diminish the courage, faith and tenacity these godly women possessed. Among the female heroines of Scripture, Abigail, wife of Nabal stands out because of her wisdom and strength. In 1 Samuel 25:1-42, we are introduced to Abigail through her rich husband, Nabal. In return for having offered protection to Nabal's shepherds, David requested certain customary courtesies. Instead, he and his men received rude insults. David is immediately offended as and he prepares his men to attack Nabal and his household. These plans are overheard by a young man who warns Abigail of David's intentions. Not only is Abigail beautiful, she is wise and takes matters into her own hands. She carries loaves, wine skins, sheep and other gifts to David in an effort to abort his attack on her household. She showed David great respect as a man of God.

"Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation...can never effect a reform."

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

After reasoning with David and using godly wisdom, David repents and even thanks Abigail for reminding him that this battle was not his, but God's. The next day when Abigail tells her husband as to what had transpired, his heart fails and he dies within ten days later. When David hears of Nabal's death, he rejoices in God's vindication and for His keeping him from doing wrong. Abigail having earned David's respect, and was brought to him to be his wife. Abigail models

for us how to receive God's goodness and grace even in a bad situation. Abigail's words should resonate with us because her humility and wisdom enabled her to be blessed. "And when the Lord your God has brought my lord success, remember your servant." (1

Samuel 25:31)

Whether you celebrate women in history from centuries past or from your own generation, honor them by telling their stories. "She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue." (Proverbs 31:26)



AFRICAN AMERICAN FLAPPERS TAKING IN A COLLEGE FOOTBALL GAME, WASHINGTON, DC. CIRCA 1920'S. ADDISON SCURLOCK COLLECTION, ARCHIVES CENTER, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.



THANK EDWARD FOR THAT CAR... WELBURN NAMED BLACK ENGINEER OF THE YEAR

BY KHARI ARNOLD, HOWARD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON – If you love the sexy, sleekness of the Chevrolet Corvette, the elegance and luxury of the Cadillac Escalade, the cool truck/SUV look of the Chevrolet Avalanche or the pure brawn of the Hummer H2, you can thank Edward Welburn Jr.

Welburn is not exactly a household name, but for more than 20 years the Howard University graduate and one of the top executives for General Motors, has been overseeing the design of many of the world's top cars and winning awards and accolades, including from President Barack Obama.

For that work, Welburn, vice president for General Motors Global Design, was honored as the Engi-

neer of the Year by engineers from the automobile, space, science and technology industries at the 29th annual BEYA STEM Conference in Washington.

The conference is dedicated to building diversity in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields, an issue Welburn has led on during his 43-years in the automotive industry.

Welburn said while he has received many honors, BEYA's was truly special.

"It's still sinking in," he said. "To be recognized for something you love to do, and have fun doing, it's kind of cool. It's real cool."

To honor his alma mater and to aid increased diversity and curriculum development in the STEM field, Welburn

General Motors Vice President Global Design Ed Welburn (left) receives the 2015 Black Engineer of the Year award from GM Board of Directors member Errol Davis (center) and GM Executive Vice President Global Product Development Mark Reuss at the BEYA Conference Black Engineer of the Year Gala, Saturday, February 7, 2015 in Washington, DC. (Photo by Tony Powell for General Motors)

"It's still sinking in," he said. "To be recognized for something you love to do, and have fun doing, it's kind of cool. It's real cool."

presented a \$110,000 check to Howard University on behalf of General Motors.

"In achieving my goals, one of the defining chapters in my life was the time I spent at Howard University," Welburn said. "There is hardly a day that goes by that I don't think about the instructors and professors and the guidance that I received from them and what I learned."

LaWanda Peace, the assistant dean of Howard's College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Sciences, said Welburn's contribution by example and his donation can point more Howard students to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"It's really important to get our young black people into the STEM area," Peace said. "STEM is where it is now. It really is."

"Back in 1972, when we first started trying to get young black people into engineering, it probably wasn't even 3 percent of the workforce that was black at that time."

When Welburn was 11, he wrote General Motors asking for information on how to become a car designer. Eleven years later, he joined General Motors as an associate designer in the Advanced Design Studios.

Welburn, who also interned at the company the summer before he graduated, would go on to become the first African-American designer at General Motors. In Welburn's current position, every car that General Motors develops globally is created under his design direction.

Welburn, the highest-ranked African-American in the automotive industry, said he wants to see more African-Americans and other people of color to follow on his path.

"I just want to see black folks do well," Welburn said. "I want to see them succeed. Car design was what I wanted, and I know there are people out there who have the same dreams, whether it's car design or whatever it is that they're interested in. We need to do everything we can to open doors and help them realize their dreams."

"There are so many creative young people that are looking for an outlet, and I want to help them realize their dreams. I know from my many years designing automobiles for General Motors is that having a diverse workforce has huge benefits in developing a design for a car."

Special to NNPA from Howard University News Service

"EMPIRE" BREAKS 23-YEAR RATINGS RECORD!

BY JILLIAN BOWE

Once again Lucious (Terrence Howard), Cookie (Taraji P. Henson), and the other scene-stealers at "Empire" are making history. The freshman Lee Daniels drama has smashed a 23-year old record! *Entertainment Weekly* is

reporting the Fox show has become the only scripted series since 1991 to continuously gain with total viewers with each of its five episodes.

In "Empire's" first two weeks, after the DVR total viewers calculated, the show has snared a whopping 14 million viewers and snagged 5.6 rating in the coveted 18-49 adult demo. Now that is something to celebrate. Here's hoping those big wigs over at Fox along with other network executives realize diversity can bring eyeballs to television if they would just allow it.



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HEINZ LAUNCHES KETCHUP FLAVORED WITH THAI HOT SAUCE SRIRACHA

NEW YORK (AP) – H.J. Heinz said Monday it is launching a new ketchup flavor that includes the popular red Thai hot sauce Sriracha.

The Pittsburgh-based company said it will start selling a ketchup blended with Sriracha flavor this month. Sriracha's ingredients include chili pepper pasta, garlic, and vinegar. The sauce is named for and patterned after flavors from eastern Thailand.

In recent months Taco Bell and Pizza Hut have announced plans to try dishes that include Sriracha flavoring.

H.J. Heinz Co. is owned by 3G Capital and Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. In recent years the company has started selling ketchups blended with jalapeno pepper flavoring and Tabasco sauce. It also sells mustard, relish,



THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET AND ITS IMPACT ON BLACK AMERICANS

BY NNPA NEWS SERVICE

barbecue sauce, and other condiments. WASHINGTON – The future of the Internet is a hot topic these days, and the key term concerning its future is “net neutrality.” Simply put, it's the idea that Internet service providers (ISPs) should treat all data on the Internet the same, regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites. That means that companies like AT&T, Comcast, Charter Communications, Verizon, and others from which consumers buy Internet access can't and won't block such access based on how the Internet is used politically, socially, or any other way.

Many people believe that the net neutrality concept is responsible for

making the Internet an open source for worldwide information. There's controversy, however, as to whether the Internet should be regulated and if so, how.

RACIAL DIVIDE

The issue has heated up, partially as a consequence of a racial “digital divide” that continues to persist.

According to Pew Research information, “African-Americans have long been less likely than Whites to use the Internet and to have high-speed broadband access at home, and that continues to be the case.”

Pew concludes that Black Americans trail Whites by seven percentage points when it comes to overall Internet use (80

percent vs. 87 percent for Whites). Seventy-four percent of Whites and 62 percent of Blacks have some sort of broadband connection at home. Home Internet access impacts kids' availability to do homework online as well as an adult's ability to complete job applications. At the same time, “Blacks and Whites are on more equal footing when it comes to other types of access, especially on mobile platforms,” according to Pew.

MULTIPLE APPROACHES

For the past year, policymakers from the White House to Congress have been debating four approaches to giving the concept of net neutrality the force of law:

(1) Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure that broadband service is available to “all Americans;”

(2) Title II of the 1934 Communications Act, which would reclassify broadband as a public utility;

(3) no regulation; or
(4) a hybrid approach that would classify Internet ISPs as public utilities, but maintain their services under Section 706.

Civil rights and a host of labor organizations that include the Multicultural Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC), an advocacy group with decades of experience in complex FCC issues; the National Urban League; the NAACP; Rainbow/PUSH; and others have urged the FCC to take the hybrid approach.

“Section 706 offers the best opportunity for innovation, investment, and universal broadband adoption,” according to MMTC. “This approach provides oversight in a manner that would encourage investment, job creation, deployment, and adoption of broadband.”

MMTC and the civil rights organizations say that the goal should be regulations that will provide consumer protections and an open Internet, while not killing broadband deployment and jobs.

NET ‘EQUALITY’

“MMTC wants Internet neutrality, but more than that, we want Internet equality,” the organization wrote in a joint letter to the FCC with the other groups. MMTC asked the FCC to facilitate “full and complete high-quality broadband deployment to communities of color” without “[r]edlining and exclusion of any sort[.]” The organizations also urged the FCC to adopt a “strong focus ... to ensure that all minority businesses, entrepreneurs, and workers are given meaningful opportunities to participate in the build out of high-speed networks and the innovation of the Internet economy.”

MMTC also advocates adding “consumer-friendly protections” to regulations that would allow consumers to file complaints and receive a response from the FCC.

MMTC's approach runs contrary to what's called the “netroots community,” including bloggers and online activist organizations like Color of Change.org. They want strong regulations and for the FCC to treat ISPs like utility companies.

PUSHING BACK

“Net neutrality is important to low-income communities, and in particular communities of color,” according to James Rucker, co-founder of Color of Change.org.

“Over the course of history, each new medium to arrive has had the potential to enable everyday people to push back on power, to produce and distribute authentic messages coming from our communities, undisturbed by a corporate filter. And each has repeatedly been killed.

“For each medium – radio, television, and print – there was the promise of people-controlled media. Yet through media consolidation and barriers-to-entry created by larger corporations to prevent new players from entering, the promise was undone.

“The Internet, thus far, has escaped the fate of these other media, largely because of net neutrality, which has governed the way content on the Internet is managed. Changing this is in the financial interest of the biggest ISPs (like Comcast, AT&T, and Verizon), but it offers no benefit to consumers.”

Rucker and others stay that without strong regulation, ISPs will establish “slow lanes for content and application providers without a lot of money, and fast lanes for those with deep pockets who can afford to pay.”

OBAMA AGREES

On Nov. 10, President Obama surprised observers by advocating for stronger regulations.

“Net neutrality' has been built into the fabric of the Internet since its creation – but it is also a principle that we cannot take for granted. We cannot allow Internet service providers to restrict the best access or to pick winners and losers in the online marketplace for services and ideas,” Obama said, calling for the FCC “to answer the call of almost 4 million public comments, and implement the strongest possible rules to protect net neutrality.”

Citing what he called “bright line rules,” Obama said new regulations should include the following:

- No blocking. “If a consumer requests access to a website or service, and the content is legal, your ISP should not

be permitted to block it. That way, every player...gets a fair shot at your business.”

- No throttling. ISPs should not be able to intentionally slow down some content or speed up others through a process often called “throttling.”

- Increased transparency. The FCC should make full use of the transparency rules that prevent special treatment.

- No paid prioritization. No Internet service user should be stuck in a “slow lane” because it does not pay a fee.

Obama asked for an explicit ban on paid prioritization and any other restriction that has a similar effect.

Obama's proposal pleases Democrats, public interest groups, netroots groups and Internet companies such as Amazon.com.

Internet service providers such as AT&T, Comcast, Time Warner Cable, Charter Communications, and Verizon are dead-set against it. Most Republicans oppose the approach, arguing that heavy-handed government oversight could squelch investment in expanded broadband networks.



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FCC WILL MOVE

Two weeks ago, FCC Chairman Thomas E. Wheeler, who was appointed by Obama, strongly hinted he planned to propose to enforce net neutrality restrictions by subjecting ISPs to utility-like regulation.

Wheeler plans to release his proposal on Feb. 5 in preparation for a commission vote three weeks later.

APPROACH 'HEAVY-HANDED'

Last week, two leading congressional Republicans unveiled legislation to protect net neutrality by prohibiting Internet service providers from charging companies for faster delivery of their content. Most notably, the draft legislation would not subject Internet service providers to utility-like regulation.

"By turning the FCC away from a heavy-handed and messy approach to regulating the Internet, this draft protects both consumers who rely on Internet services and innovators who create jobs," said Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune, R-S.D.

Thune took over the powerful chairmanship this month when Republicans gained control of the Senate. He is teaming on the bill with Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Those committees oversee the FCC.

RESISTED REGULATIONS

Republicans have resisted net neutrality legislation in the past, arguing it was a solution in search of a problem because there

was no evidence Internet service providers were discriminating against content on their networks.

But congressional Republicans are concerned the FCC is planning to take aggressive steps to enact new net neutrality regulations. Thune and Upton want to short-circuit that process by moving forward with legislation that would supersede FCC action.

"By clearly outlining the appropriate rules of the road and leaving 20th-century utility regulation behind, we can be sure that innovators continue full throttle in bringing remarkable new technologies to all Americans," Upton said.

REVERSED BY COURTS

A key reason net neutrality advocates have pushed for the tougher approach is because federal courts twice have thrown out FCC rules, arguing the agency did not have authority to enact the regulations under another provision of the telecommunication law. The new legislation would specifically grant the FCC that authority.

Thune and Upton said the legislation would avoid long court battles and they hope to get bipartisan support. They labeled the bill a draft, which implies they are open to changes. Both committees will hold hearings on the bill next week.

But it's unclear how many Democrats would back it. And any bill would have to be signed by Obama.

Jim Puzanghera of the Los Angeles Times / TNS contributed to this report. Special to the NNPA from The Florida Courier

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- ▶ Blurred vision

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DID YOU KNOW?

Stress can raise your blood sugar. Learn ways to lower your stress. Try deep breathing, gardening, taking a walk, meditating, working on your hobby, or listening to your favorite music.

Choose water to drink instead of sweetened fruit drinks and soda. Find a water bottle you really like from your church, community organization, or favorite sports team and drink water from it wherever and whenever you can. Drink a glass of water 10 minutes before your meal to take the edge off your hunger.

Catch some ZZZs. When you're sleep-deprived, you tend to eat more, and you can put on weight, which leads to health problems. People with diabetes who get enough sleep often have healthier eating habits and improved blood sugar levels.



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S.W.A.T.

Twelfth Grade Positioning For College Admission Special Ways And Tactics

BY ANTHONY R. JOHNSON, M.S.

Hello all you high school seniors and seniors to be this fall of 2015, I want to let you in on some insider information. Getting into college or the college of your choice is not by accident. Like all things worth accomplishing you need to have a plan of action and a strategy for achieving success. Sometimes it requires guerilla warfare or S.W.A.T. (Special Ways And Tactics).

In this article you will be exposed to a season by season approach to accomplishing your desired end for meeting your goal of achieving successful college access.

Reminder:” If you Fail to Plan then you Plan to Fail.”

Anthony R. Johnson, M.S., is Senior Partner at Johnson-Walker- Holland Education Group. He is a recognized National College Access Advisor helping students and parents overcome the challenges associated with college access. An expert in the fields of Financial Aid, Career Assessments, SAT/ACT Prep, College Selection, Admissions and Mentoring are just a sample of the many skill-sets and services offered at Johnson-Walker-Holland Education Group. To contact Anthony directly email at anthonyrjohnson1@comcast.net.

TWELFTH GRADE CHECKLIST

FALL

- Continue to take a full course load of college-prep courses.
- Keep working on your grades. Make sure you have taken the courses necessary to graduate in the spring.
- Continue to participate in extracurricular and volunteer activities. Demonstrate initiative, creativity, commitment, and leadership in each.
- To male students: you must register for selective service on your eighteenth birthday to be eligible for federal and state financial aid.
- Talk to counselors, teachers, and parents about your final college choices.
- Make a calendar showing application deadlines for admission, financial aid, and scholarships.
- Check resource books, computer programs, and your guidance office for information on scholarships and grants. Ask colleges about scholarships for which you may qualify.
- Give recommendation forms to the teachers you have chosen, along with stamped, self-addressed envelopes so your teachers can send them directly to the colleges. Be sure to fill out your name, address, and school name on the top of the form. Talk to you recommendation writers about your goals and ambitions.
- Give School Report forms to your high school's guidance office. Fill in your name, address, and any other required information on top. Verify with your guidance counselor the schools to which transcripts, test scores, and letters are to be sent. Give your counselor any necessary forms at least two weeks before they are due or whenever your counselor's deadline is, whichever is earlier.
- Register for and take the ACT Assessment, SAT I, or SAT II Subject Tests, if necessary.
- Be sure you have requested (either by mail or online) that your test scores be sent to the colleges of your choice.
- Mail or send electronically any college applications for early-decision admission by November 1.
- If possible, visit colleges while classes are in session.
- If you plan to apply for an ROTC scholarship, remember that your application is due by December 1.
- Print extra copies or make photocopies of every application you send.

WINTER

- Attend whatever college-preparatory nights are held at your school or by local organizations.
- Send midyear grade reports to colleges. Continue to focus on your schoolwork!
- Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) -these forms can be obtained from your guidance counselor or at fafsa.ed.gov . You can download the forms or file electronically. These forms may not be processed before January 1st, so don't send them before then.
- Mail or send electronically any remaining applications and financial aid forms before winter break. Make sure you apply to at least one college that you know you can afford and where you know you will be accepted.
- Follow up to make sure that the colleges have received all application information, including recommendations and test scores.
- Meet with your counselor to verify that all applicable forms are in order and have been sent out to colleges.

SPRING

- Watch your mail between March 1 and April 1 for acceptance notifications from colleges.
- Watch your mail for notification of financial aid awards between April 1 and May 1.
- Compare the financial aid packages from the colleges and universities that have accepted you.
- Make your final choice, and notify all schools of your intent by May 1. If possible, do not decide without making at least one campus visit. Send your nonrefundable deposit to your chosen school by May 1 as well. Request that your guidance counselor send a final transcript to the college in June.
- Be sure that you have received a FAFSA acknowledgment.
- If you applied for a Pell Grant (on the FAFSA), you will receive the Student Aid Report (SAR) statement. Review this Pell notice, and forward it to the college you plan to attend. Make a copy for your record.
- Complete follow-up paperwork for the college of your choice (scheduling, orientation session, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms).

SUMMER

- Contact the school you will be attending to apply for student and/or parent loans.
- Receive the orientation schedule from your college.
- Get residence hall assignment from your college.
- Obtain course scheduling & cost information from your college.

Congratulations!

You are about to begin the greatest
adventure of your life. Good luck.



HOWARD UNIVERSITY ROTC CADETS

HOW TO PLAN FOR YOUR CHILD'S COLLEGE EDUCATION

Planning for life's major financial hurdles is critical and when it comes to college, a plan can have a dramatic influence on how families are able to finance a degree.

That said, only 38 percent of American families today have developed a plan to pay for college, according to the 2014 "How America Pays for College" report by Sallie Mae and Ipsos. What's more, only 40 percent of American families with college aspirations have a contingency plan in case of an unexpected event, which one-third of families typically encounter.

For many families, creating a financial plan or even starting to save for college can be daunting. But those who do strategize a plan statistically borrow less, making it especially critical for families who have, or will have, two or three kids attending college at the same time.

Luckily, many resources are available to help demystify the process, and they're free.

For instance, many high schools have a career center and guidance counselors who can offer information about specific schools and scholarship opportunities.

Online tools can also prove a valuable resource. For example, Sallie Mae has launched a suite of new, user-friendly tools, including a College Planning Calculator where families can create a customized plan to pay for college, as well as a scholarship database with more than \$18 billion in combined scholarships. These tools are on the company's new "plan for college" section of its website at Salliemae.com/planforcollege.

Mobile resources, such as the new app "College Ahead," are specifically designed to help college bound



students take the next step, providing an interactive roadmap for saving and planning for college.

Lastly, families should consider applying for federal student aid on an annual basis, no matter what their financial status. To fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), visit www.FAFSA.ed.gov.

It's never too early or too late to start saving or planning for college. With 98 percent of families agreeing that college is a worthy investment, as much planning as possible can set families on the path to success.

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HELP COLLEGE-AGE CHILDREN BETTER MANAGE THEIR FINANCES

Unfortunately, one of the most expensive times in one's life, is when he or she tend to be the least financially savvy -- college. But good money management during those years is the best way to keep a college career on path. Parents and guardians can help their children become more financially savvy. Families with college-age kids can help students improve their financial health.

As tuition costs continue to rise, it's more important than ever to understand your college funding options. Completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form is the first step toward obtaining financial aid. Also, explore private loans through banks and private lenders with competitive rates that don't require payments while you're still in school.

MANAGE DEBT

Paying student loans on time is important. Avoid late fees and mounting interest by sticking to your repayment schedule. Even though some loan payments are deferred until college is over, the earlier you can proactively plan for this the better.

Generally, if you aim to keep your loan payment to no more than 10-15 percent of your anticipated post-college income, you should be able to maintain a realistic repayment timeline, according to Wells Fargo, which provides discounts such as automatic payment enrollment and relationship discounts for students or cosigners who already have a student loan or qualifying consumer checking account with Wells Fargo.

ESTABLISH A BUDGET

Whether your child is working and making their own spending money, or living on an allowance you provide, help them take better control of that money so they don't create unplanned debt later on. Online tools, such as Wells Fargo's Cash Flow Worksheet, can help students document what they are spending. If there are extra funds at the end of the month, parents can encourage students to consider boosting savings to cover future college expenses, spring break vacation with friends, and life after school.

GOOD CREDIT

Good credit is a must-have for most major life purchases. Students can start to build a credit foundation while still in school. Consider a card with a low-introductory rate that offers cash back on gas, grocery, and drug store credit purchases to free up more money for other necessities like textbooks and emergency situations. Encourage your student to actively monitor the account by signing up for mobile banking alerts.

More resources for smart money management for college students and their families are available at blogs.WellsFargo.com/StudentLoanDown/.

A higher education and a financial education can go hand in hand. Help your child make smart financial decisions amidst the newfound freedom of college life.

(STATEPOINT)



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MIND-BODY CONNECTION FOR WEIGHT LOSS, PART II: THE STRESS ISSUE

IN LAST MONTH'S ARTICLE,

I explained how the mind has a direct effect on the stomach. A troubled GUT can send signals to the brain, just as a troubled brain can send signals to the GUT. Therefore, a person's GUT can be the cause or the product of anxiety, stress, or depression, which leads to overeating and inactivity, causing weight gain! In this article, I will explain how stress can lead to hormonal imbalance and how hormonal imbalance affects weight loss.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is your body's response to anything that disrupts your normal life and routines. Your body responds to stressful events with an instinctive "fight or flight" response. Due to the change in our society in comparison to our ancestors, we don't need to fight or flee from predators. The stress response still kicks in when we feel a threat. Today, causes of stress are relationships, work, finances, injury, exercise and GUT issues.

Stress is the leading cause of heart disease, stroke, blood pressure, cancer and many other chronic diseases.

STRESS AND CORTISOL

When our body is stressed it releases a hormone called cortisol. Cortisol's job is to replenish our body after stress has passed causing an increase in hunger, primarily for carbs. Back in the days, when we were hunting for our food or running from wild animals, increase in hunger was relevant. Stress can cause hunger to increase and people usually turn to emotionally eating high caloric, high sugar processed foods, causing more GUT issues; thus, causing more stress and the release of more cortisol, leading to a vicious cycle. Not to mention, the extra calorie intake causes fat storage.

STRESS AND INSULIN

High cortisol levels, causes blood sugar levels to decrease. The only way to decrease cortisol levels and increase blood sugar levels is by eating carbohydrates. Insulin's job is to convert carbohydrates into its simplest forms glycogen (sugar), and deliver to bloodstream to increase blood sugar levels. Highly processed, sugar foods aren't digested efficiently and if you have GUT issues, then the nutrients from

your food isn't absorbed, therefore blood sugar levels never increase and the body continues to release more insulin over working the pancreas, which leads to the body's inability to use insulin correctly, causing insulin resistance and worst case diabetes.

STRESS AND ALDOSTERONE

Those who are on blood sugar medication should be use to the term aldosterone. Aldosterone is a hormone that modulates the balance of minerals in the cells, especially sodium and potassium. Therefore regulating blood pressure and the fluid in the body. Stress increases the release of aldosterone, causing sodium retention (and the loss of potassium and magnesium). Too much sodium leads to water retention, which increases weight and causes high blood pressure. Loss of potassium leads to muscle cramping and loss of magnesium leads to pathological conditions such as cardiac arrhythmias.

HOW TO DECREASE STRESS?

- Sleep
- Get at least 7.5 hours of sleep per night.
- Lack of sleep affects our ability to lose weight due to our nightly hormones Ghrelin and Leptin.
- Ghrelin tells you when to eat, and when you are sleep-deprived, you have more ghrelin.
- Leptin is the hormone that tells you to stop eating, and when you are sleep deprived, you have less leptin.
- Eat Low Glycemic Foods
- Low glycemic foods will slow the rate of insulin; therefore, not causing an increase in cortisol.
- Heal your GUT
- Through probiotics and eating non processed foods.
- Exercise/ Increase Physical Activity
- Make sure to choose something you like, take it slow and steady. Walking 30minutes in the morning or at lunch is enough to give you that feel good mood. Or take dance lessons.
- Meditation/Pray/ Yoga
- Relax and recover your mental being.



Camille Clarke is an IFBB Figure Pro, Fitness Model, Nutritionist and owner of Camille's Fitness Inc. Camille holds an MS in Exercise Physiology and is currently certified through ISSA, ACSM and NASM. Camille's experience as an obese adolescent weighing in at 283lbs gives her a firsthand understanding of those who struggle with weight loss. Camille's quest to change her health and appearance has pushed her to motivate, inspire and educate others to do the same!

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HOW TO KEEP FIT & HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

Even the most disciplined exercisers face fitness hurdles when traveling: from varied schedules to unhealthy foods to the lack of fitness equipment. Nonetheless, experts say that maintaining a healthy lifestyle is absolutely possible while traveling.

"The key to successfully traveling and maintaining the familiarities of home is recognizing potholes and working to avoid them. Whether a consistent is upholding a conservative bedtime, writing, reading, fitness or healthy eating, you can actually return from your next trip with more discipline than when you left," says Tom Seddon, chief marketing officer of Extended Stay America. No matter where your travel leads -- you can stay healthy with these savvy tips.

PLAN AHEAD: Set the foundation for fitness success by packing workout essentials like lightweight sneakers. Many hotels now provide laundry facilities for guests. Use this to your advantage and cut down on packing active wear. Download or bring favorite workout podcasts or DVDs. Designate ideal workout times and create reminders on your mobile device.

GET FRESH AIR: Try booking a hotel near a park or recreational area. A brisk walk or run is great way get pumped for the day's activities or help unwind from a busy day. Download your favorite running app to keep track of your route and distance.

GET ZEN: Yoga is a quiet and relaxing way to unwind, stay flexible and gain strength. If you don't have room for a yoga mat in your suitcase, use a towel. Practice your favorite yoga and Pilates poses and moves in the comfort of your room.

FILL THE FRIDGE: If you're going to be away for a longer period of time, consider staying at an extended stay-style hotel or an accommodation with a kitchen or small fridge. Stop by the grocery store before checking in. Having your own food can cut down on excess calories. Stock up healthy snacks and non-perishables or

pick up supermarket shortcuts to prepare nutritious meals in the room.

PACK RIGHT Accept the challenge of weight resistance while skipping the need for dumbbells with feather-light equipment such as jump ropes, resistance bands and ankle weights. These full-body workout additions take up less space in your suitcase than a hairdryer.

PACK LIGHT When you use your own body weight, no equipment is required to get your heart rate up and work your muscles. Start with a short warm-up of jogging in place, high knees, burpees or jumping jacks. Depending on your fitness level, complete 10 to 50 reps of push-ups, alternating lunges, dips, squats and sit-ups or crunches. Repeat the circuit two or three times, trying variations of each exercise and incorporating plyometric movements to keep the circuits fresh.

Re-initiating a lapsed fitness routine is harder than maintaining one all-along. The next time you leave town, bring your healthy lifestyle with you.

To learn more about amenities offered in an extended stay-style hotel, which can make maintaining your fitness goals easier, visit www.ExtendedStayAmerica.com.

(STATEPOINT)





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JOHN KNIGHT

A Man on a Mission to Strengthen Families & Relationships

John Knight is known for his genuine care and concern for the community and the strengthening of the family unit. His dynamic oratory gifts and the compassion that he has for others have made him one of the most sought out relationship counselors both locally and nationally.

It all began when John volunteered to help couples in crisis over a decade ago through Family Guidance's Marriage Works program; he had no idea he would eventually lead the largest healthy relationship initiative in the history of the region!

As volunteer facilitators for the Marriage Works project, John and his wife, Tammy, co-facilitated enrichment seminars for couples in the community. As a result of the success of the Marriage Works project, Family Guidance was awarded a five year

\$8 million dollar grant and the organization offered John the position of Director of Marriage Enrichment for a new project called TWOgether Pittsburgh.

TWOgether Pittsburgh (TGP) is a \$1.2 million a year federally funded grant that provides relationship education throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area. Through the hard work of eight in-house full time staff and over 30 part-time coordinators and facilitators, TWOgether Pittsburgh has been able to partner with over 150 non-profits and serve more than 12,000 individuals within the past eight years. The program is now the largest healthy relationship initiative in the history of the region.



John served as the Director of Marriage Enrichment for six years. His expertise in family dynamics and community engagement enabled John to soar in his position as he created the curriculum, trained participating non-profits on the development of relationship education programs, and helped generate more than 50% of all of TGP participants.

In 2013, Family Guidance promoted John to serve as Project Director of TWOgether Pittsburgh. Under his leadership, the team has flown to higher heights. After revamping the marketing campaign and successfully restructuring operations for effectiveness, the program expanded its reach by the mobile optimization of TGP networks, pushed healthy relationship education into underserved communities, and served on average over 2,000 participants per year.

Locally, the name TWOgether Pittsburgh is synonymous with relationship education. Nationally, the organization

has been recognized for its ability to create community partnerships. John, along with TGP's Deputy Director Ken Macleod, has been invited to present community engagement strategies at several federal roundtable discussions across the country.

What started out as a small relationship class at the Center for Urban Biblical Ministry, has now matriculated into a nationally recognized project. Many faces have changed throughout Family Guidance's rich history of relationship education, but John is still serving the area with the heart of a volunteer. His position has changed while his passion for his own family and the future of all relationships has grown fonder.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TWOGETHER PITTSBURGH, VISIT WWW.TWOGETHERPGH.ORG OR CALL 412-741-8550 EXT. 120

FOCUSED FASHION

SPRING STYLE 2015

BY LAKISHA PATTON

PRETTY FLORAL PRINTS

Move out the way! Floral prints are making a comeback and taking over the Fashion scene. No more traditional colors, but now expect to see this print in bright hues as well. Add a touch of floral to your wardrobe with a printed heel or purse.



WHITE HOT

Want a look where you'll always look timeless and elegant? Wearing white will help you to achieve that. With this crisp clean color, From a dress to slacks, you'll be sure to be chic.

SHE'S SO LACEY

Lace adds feminine detail and class to any look. From jeans, leather, to a pencil skirt lace will put a classy touch to any outfit. Layer this look with another print to elevate your style.



FOCUSED TIP:

Don't be afraid to mix prints. The key is making sure the color is in the same family or complementary. Example: blue & orange, yellow & violet.



GINGHAM STYLE

This print is making huge waves in men and women's wardrobes this year. This print can be dressy or casual. Color blocking and mixing prints will keep you focused for sure. Women: pair this with pencil skirt or jeans. Men: get playful with your shirt & tie combo.

MEN: ADD A POP OF COLOR WITH A TIE, BLAZER OR SWEATER.



WOMEN: FROM A SULTRY LIPSTICK TO A STANDOUT DRESS THIS COLOR WILL MAKE YOU STAND OUT LIKE THE JEWEL YOU ARE.

MARSALA: PANTONE COLOR OF THE YEAR

This color is rich, bold, and works well with almost any color. Add this color to your wardrobe for instant glam.



HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE HYPERLOOP?

BY PETER DIAMANDIS

It's the concept described as "a cross between a Concorde, a railgun and a bullet train."

Think: Los Angeles to Vegas in 20 minutes... or LA to San Francisco in 35 minutes... A new company called Hyperloop Technologies, Inc. was announced on the Cover of FORBES this week, and they are taking on a BOLD new mission.

I'm proud to be a founding director of the company, and very excited about the supercredible team that has come together to make Hyperloop happen. I sit on the Board of the company along with Shervin Pishevar (major early investor in Uber, Sherpa Ventures), Joe Lonsdale (Founder Palantir & Formation 8), Jim Messina (Pres. Obama's Reelection Campaign Manager), David Sacks (Paypal, Yammer), and Brogan BamBrogan (Former SpaceX Engineer, and acting CEO).

WHAT IS HYPERLOOP?

In 2013, Elon Musk and a group of engineers from Tesla and SpaceX published a speculative design document for a concept they called "The Hyperloop".

Born out of frustration with California's plan for a bullet train between Los Angeles and San Francisco (the slowest and most expensive per mile bullet train around, with an est. cost of \$70 billion), the Hyperloop was to be a high-speed transportation system that could take travelers from San Francisco to LA in 35 minutes for a fraction of the cost. In other words, it's a "vacuum tube transportation network" that will be able to travel at around 760 mph - on land and under water.

The team led is by Brogan BamBrogan, who did the design work on the second-stage engine of SpaceX's Falcon 1 and was the lead architect for the heat shield of the Dragon capsule. Hyperloop did a seed round of \$8.5 million, and is rapidly lining up an A-Round of \$80 million later this year. This team is going big and bold, and they're doing it the right way.

HOW THE HYPERLOOP WORKS

Chapter 5 of my most recent book BOLD is called "The Secret of Going Big"... I'd like to point out three of the lessons from that chapter that Hyperloop is doing perfectly.

1) LAUNCHING ABOVE THE LINE OF SUPER-CREDIBILITY. In each of our minds we have a line of credibility. When you first hear a new idea, you place it above or below this line. If you place it below, you dismiss it immediately, often as ridiculous. If you place it above, you're willing to give it the benefit of the doubt, follow it over time, and continue to make serial judgments.

But we also have a line of "supercredibility." When a new idea shows up above this line, you accept it immediately and say, "Wow, that's fantastic! How can I get involved?"

HOW THE HYPERLOOP WORKS

Elon Musk said that if the Concorde, a railgun and an air-hockey table had a three-way, the hyperloop would be the love child. Here's a look inside Hyperloop Tech's high-speed cargo pod.

COMPRESSOR Pumping a giant compressor fan on the front of the capsule is what makes the hyperloop possible, transferring huge volumes of air away from the nose. Without it, the pod would be sucking all the air in front of it, like a syringe, or you'd have to spend big bucks on a bigger tube. Respect the Kármán-Vietz limit—the top speed allowable given a tube-to-pod-area ratio.

VACUUM TUBE Capsules will travel in a near-vacuum to reduce drag significantly. Valves and pumps will keep internal air pressure at about 100 Pascals, or one-thousandth the air pressure at sea level. A little nitrogen may be injected into the tube as a desiccant.



AIR BEARINGS The capsule will ride on a cushion of air pumped from the bottom of lunch-tray-size slots. Landing gear may need to be deployed as it comes to a stop.

PROPULSION The Hyperloop capsule speeds along a "magnetic river" propelled by linear induction motors stacked along the tube or installed as a continuous slip. Linear induction, used on maglev trains and the low-Cost Line in Tokyo's subway, has no moving parts and low maintenance costs.

PLOTTING THE LINE OF SUPER-CREDIBILITY

The idea is so convincing that your mind accepts it as fact and your focus shifts from possibilities to implications.

Supercredibility starts with passion --> Then a BOLD mission --> Then, a tireless effort to assemble the greatest team of experts, backers, and entrepreneurs in the world. This is how ISU, XPRIZE, Singularity University, Planetary Resources, and Human Longevity Inc. all launched. And now, Hyperloop Technologies.

It's hard to argue with the combination of the planet's top engineering talent and most respected businessmen and investors, plus, not to mention an announcement on the cover of Forbes. This is the team that's going to make it happen.

2) MOONSHOTS AND BEING BOLD. Moonshots, by their definition, are goals that live in that gray area between audacious projects and pure science fiction. Instead of mere 10 percent gains, they aim for 10x (meaning ten times) improvements—that's a 1000 percent increase in performance. The idea comes from Google and Astro Teller, the director of GoogleX.

While a 10x improvement is gargantuan, Teller has very specific reasons for aiming exactly that high: "You assume that going 10x bigger is going to be ten times harder, but often it's literally easier to go bigger."

Why should that be? It doesn't feel intuitively right. There are three reasons by going 10x bigger is much better than going 10% bigger:

When you try to do something radically hard, you approach the problem differently than when you try to make something incrementally better. When you attack a problem as though it were solvable, even if you don't know how to solve it, you'll be shocked with what you come up with. It's 100 times more worth it. It's never 100 times harder.

Hyperloop, is for sure, a 10x improvement over today's transportation system.

3) SECRETS OF SKUNK. Finally, once you set a BOLD goal, you can attract a team of the best and brightest to commit to seeing it through. Big goals require absolute commitment and alignment.

As psychologist Garry Latham says, "You have to believe in what you're doing. Big goals work best when there's an alignment between an individual's values and the desired outcome of the goal. When everything lines up, we're totally committed—meaning we're paying even more attention, are even more resilient, and are way more productive as a result."

Kelly Johnson of Lockheed Martin created the original skunkworks in the attempt to create a new warplane in an impossibly short amount of time. He went from a clean sheet of paper to America's first Jet in 143 days and he did it under budget. But the goal wasn't to build a new plane in record time—that was just one of many things that happened on the way to the main big goal: saving the world from Nazi peril. This is the kind of big goal everyone can get behind. It's why the engineers agreed to work horrific hours in a foul-smelling circus tent (thus the name "Skunk"). And most important, because this alignment between core values and desired outcomes jacked up performance and productivity and became one of the fundamental reasons that plane was delivered in record time.

WHAT WERE JOHNSON'S SECRETS TO SKUNK?

Small teams, authority and autonomy, trust between all players, simple plan with high flexibility to make changes on the fly, isolation from the outside, and early testing. This pretty much sums up the Hyperloop team.

NEXT STEPS FOR HYPERLOOP

While there are many technical and political challenges ahead, the team is working diligently. They plan to build a test track in downtown Los Angeles, and envision the first Hyperloop track to connect Los Angeles with Las Vegas. You can check out the website here: hyperlooptech.com.

I encourage you to take on your own BOLD missions. Anyone with passion and a good idea can change the world today. I've spent years developing my own ventures and interviewing world-changing entrepreneurs. All of this research is in BOLD. Grab a copy at PeterDiamandis.com, and tell me about your BOLD idea.



5 MINUTES & NO STOVE

Pair: white buttons, cremini or truffles

With: parsley, chives, tarragon or cilantro

Make: fresh salads or relishes

15 MINUTES & A STOVETOP

Pair: chanterelles, morels or oyster mushrooms

With: oregano, marjoram or sage

Make: sautéed mushrooms

30 MINUTES & A HOT OVEN

Pair: portobellos, porcinis or shiitakes

With: rosemary and thyme

Make: roasted mushrooms

MUSHROOMS MAKE FAST AND EASY SIDE DISHES

Whether you have only a few minutes to put together a meal or days to prepare, mushrooms are a great addition for marvelous flavor and minimal fuss.

The key is choosing the right mushrooms and herbs to suit your cooking method and available time. Here are some tips from the experts at Whole Foods Market, to create memorable combinations in minutes:

ONLY FIVE MINUTES AND NO STOVE? Pair such mushrooms as white buttons, cremini or truffles with herbs like parsley, chives, tarragon or cilantro, to create a fresh salad or a relish to top on crostini, soup or baked potatoes.

FIFTEEN MINUTES AND A STOVETOP? Try mixing fresh herbs like oregano, marjoram or sage with chanterelles, morels or oyster mushrooms with olive oil. Warm over a stove and in minutes you will have delicious sautéed mushrooms.

THIRTY AND A HOT OVEN? Make roasted mushrooms by pairing portobellos, porcinis or shiitakes with rosemary and thyme, and your guests will sure to be impressed.

With a little planning, enjoy a delicious, stress-free meal. More tips and recipes are available at wholefoodsmarket.com.

(STATEPOINT)

FIVE INTERESTING FOODS THAT SHOULD BE ON EVERYONE'S BUCKET LIST

Whether you live for culinary adventure or unfamiliar items on your plate make you nervous, trying new foods is a worthwhile endeavor. But even avid foodies don't have the time to try everything.

So how can you prioritize your food bucket list?

Enter, "1,000 Foods to Eat Before You Die," a new book that presents the globe's must-have foods into one master list of the best dishes, ingredients, restaurants, markets, books and movies, that everyone should experience.

To whet your appetite, author Mimi Sheraton, former New York Times restaurant critic and award-winning cookbook author, shares five food must-haves originating from five regions of the world:

WHITE ASPARAGUS (EUROPE)

Milder in flavor than the green variety, white asparagus is highly prized

in Europe, while in the U.S. it has only recently come into favor. A harbinger of spring, asparagus is celebrated in Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, where special asparagus menus are featured in restaurants.

For an Italian approach, serve cold with lemon juice and olive oil. If you prefer elaborate flavors, serve with a Hollandaise sauce of egg yolks, lemon juice, butter and nutmeg.

EGG CREAM (UNITED STATES)

A New York original, egg creams contain neither eggs nor cream. A once ubiquitous street treat, this beverage is a lot harder to come by now.

Make your own at home with a squirt of chocolate syrup, followed by a shot of seltzer and a quick stir, then add a trickle of whole milk and stir vigorously while blasting in vibrant shots of soda to create a frothy, creamy concoction.

TAGINE (NORTH AFRICAN)

Like the pans Americans call "casseroles," a tagine is both a cooking vessel and the stew cooked within. A tagine is a deep, wide terra-cotta bowl, with a high-peaked conical cover that directs and concentrates heat. Meats, poultry or fish are slow cooked with various vegetables over direct fire or charcoal, absorbing aromatic spices such as saffron, cinnamon and ginger.

To serve, tagines are fitted into colorfully woven baskets and passed around to guests, along with rice, couscous or fresh, hot bread.

[PICTURED BELOW.]

CONGEE (ASIA)

Like Westerners, the Chinese believe in starting the day with a hearty meal. Congee, a creamy rice porridge, is a favorite. Variations found throughout Asia are sold everywhere, from street stands to dim sum palaces. To prepare, cook short grain white rice until it approaches mush, then serve with a variety of toppings, such as spicy, pickled vegetables, dried fish, preserved eggs and tofu.

VEGEMITE (AUSTRALIA)

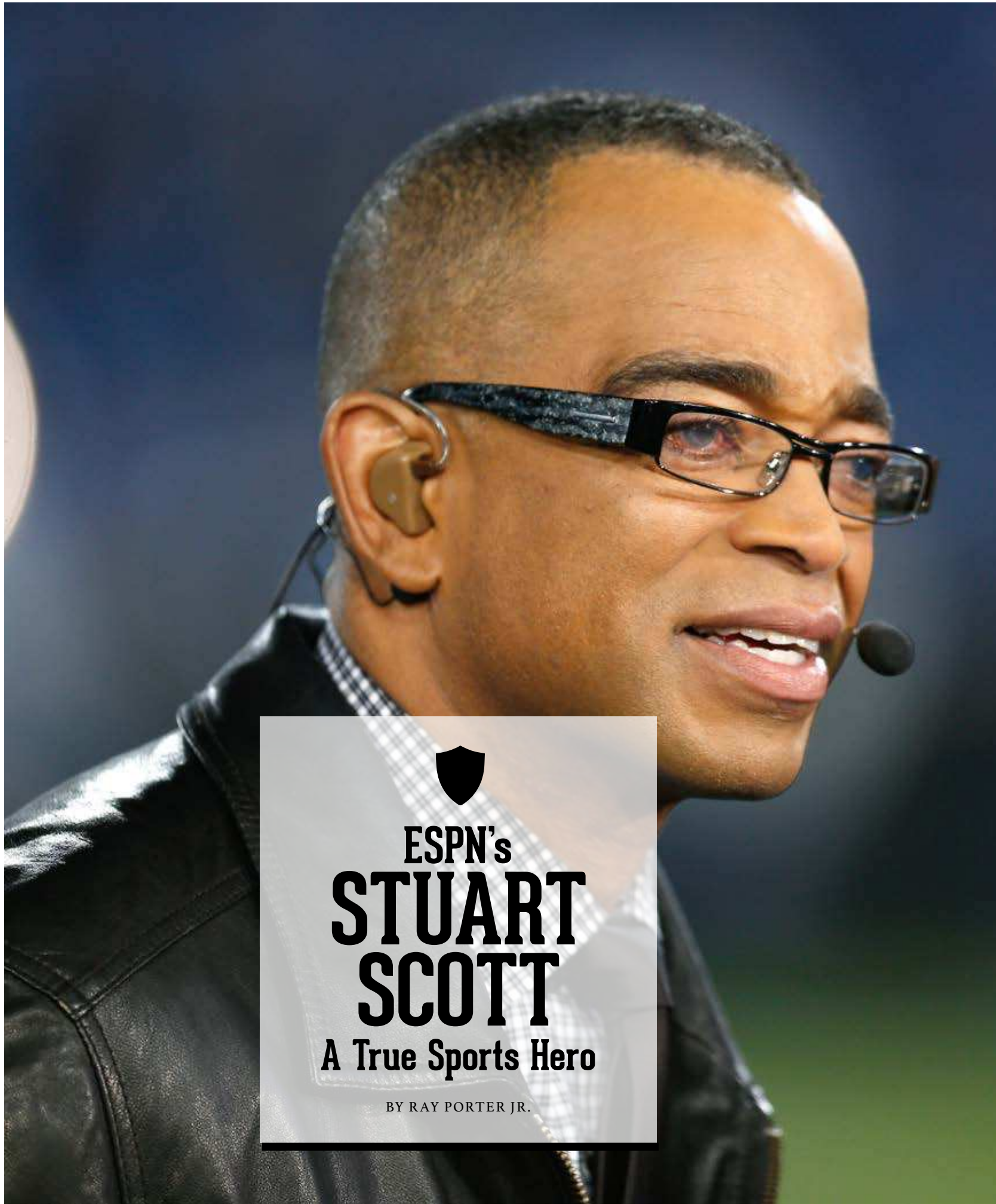
Australian children cry for this caramelized spread made of brewer's yeast and vegetables, as American tots do for peanut butter and jelly. Spread on buttered toast or bread as a snack or a sandwich, or on biscuits as a special treat at teatime, Vegemite may not be pretty, but it is one of the world's most iconic foods and definitely worth a try.

More information about the book can be found at www.1000Foods.com.

By being a little more adventurous with what goes on your dinner plate, you can expand your horizons and explore the whole world.

(STATEPOINT)






**ESPN's
STUART
SCOTT**
A True Sports Hero
BY RAY PORTER JR.

The definition of a hero is: A man of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities.

Heroes come in all shapes and sizes, regardless of the profession. What makes them unique and special is the fact that they're not necessarily trying to be a hero. They're not trying to get the attention of others or be in the spotlight. They're just trying to accomplish what they've set in their heart to do, and in most cases, that will prompt a reaction from others, whether positive or negative.

The world of sports is a perfect example because there are tons of people in that profession who are looked upon as heroes. And it's not just the athletes, who receive attention because of what they do on and off the field, their stats and the trophies they are presented that have the potential to inspire millions of fans and prospective athletes.

R & B singer Mariah Carey wrote a song in 1993 called Hero, and it provides an excellent definition of such:

**"And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you."**

CREDIT: JESSICA HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Those powerful lyrics state that anyone can be a hero, and that it comes from within. One example of such is a former ESPN sportscaster who passed away January 4th of this year from cancer, and that person is Stuart Scott.

The fact that Scott fought with cancer immediately puts him in hero status, because he did so while continuing to work at ESPN. First diagnosed in 2007, he beat it as it went into remission before the disease returned in 2011 and 2013. But he never let it get the best of him as he kept working and even participated in activities like kickboxing. In July of 2014, he was presented the Jimmy V award that is presented to a sports personality who perseveres (in honor of former college basketball coach Jim Valvano, who lost his battle with cancer) for his fight with cancer.

But Scott's hero credentials go further than that. He was truly an innovator at the popular sports network and broadcasting everywhere when he joined ESPN in 1993 and even though there were already several African-American sportscasters, he was the first to provide a blending of hip hop with sports casting, which was unique for television at that time. He was also one of the few African-American personalities who was not a former professional athlete.

Scott's presence on ESPN was to attract and relate to the younger audiences, which proved to be a success, but when he was promoted to do SportsCenter news segments in 1998, he never

changed his style. His favorite catchphrases when an athlete would make a significant play were "Boo-Yah!" "Hal-lah", "As cool as the other side of the pillow," "He must be the bus driver cuz he was takin' him to school," "Holla at a playa when you see him in the street!" "Just call him butter 'cause he's on a roll," "They call him the Windex Man 'cause he's always cleaning the glass."

And while those catchphrases are pretty common in sports news these days, when Scott did spoke them in the late 90's they were unheard of and he took a lot of heat because of it. Scott and ESPN received a lot of hate mail from people who resented his color and his hip-hop style. But he never wavered from his style and his phrases became popular culture.

Scott also had a positive attitude and never carried himself like his status. He was respected by his co-workers and athletes alike. And when he began his fight with cancer, many people noticed and appreciated his endurance to the very end. When he passed in January, he received tributes and condolences from well-known athletes like LeBron James, Tiger Woods, Michael Jordan, and Shaquille O'Neal.

Even president Barack Obama left this statement about Scott "I will miss Stuart Scott. 20 years ago, Stu helped usher in a new way to talk about our favorite teams and the day's best plays. For much of those 20 years, public service and campaigns have kept me from my family, but wherever I went, I could flip on the TV and Stu and his colleagues on SportsCenter were there. Over the years, he entertained us, and in the end, he inspired us – with courage and love. Michelle and I offer our thoughts and prayers to his family, friends, and colleagues."

Scott's example is proof that how one lives his life no matter what he faces is what a hero is all about.



Ray Porter Jr. is a sportswriter for Urban Media Today (www.urbanmediatoday.com). You can follow him @urbanmediaRay on Twitter.

SUBMISSION VS. COMPRISE: FIFTY SHADES OF GREY

E.L. James' best selling novel, *Fifty Shades of Grey*, proactively comes to life in the movie's adaption, which was released worldwide Valentine's Day weekend. Dakota Johnson and Jaime Dornan star as the world's hottest fictional couple, Anastasia Steele and Christian Grey. Life gets a little complicated when Anastasia has to decide if she's willing to submit.

Starring as Mr. Grey, Dornan is immensely "dominant" the entire film. Even with early talks of other candidates to portray Christian Grey, Dornan has proven to be fully enamored into the character who is adored by many.

Fifty Shades of Grey is the first of a movie trilogy and it is important for Dornan to hit the ground running. Even with one little mistake, book nerds all over the world would have dissected the credibility of the movie. But, he effortlessly keeps his end of the bargain.

The movie was intense—no, like intense, intense. And you know it is serious when someone says the word twice.

This is definitely not a movie for the sexually awkward. The movie's overall idea circled around submission—about who or what you are willing to submit to.

A few times during the movie, I was thinking to myself, "I wish he would"—simply refusing to perform some of the items requested. But, with more thought, I can recall times when I submitted to some non-sexual acts far worse.

And after a while, submission slowly becomes the standard.

Like Christian Grey, men are widely praised as the protectors, breadwinners, and patriarch. While women are often times considered the inferior species, there's a thin line between submission and comprise in relation to gender-

specific roles.

Healthy submission comes with non-physical perks. It's called compromise. Submission means full compliance, while comprise means giving in for the common good.

What does the Bible tell us as Christians about sex and submission?

The 19 unlawful sexual relations laws briefly outlined in Leviticus Chapter 19 is always a good starting point. Sex, as a biblical term, was never meant as a tool of manipulation or common fashion. Yet, it was an act committed between a husband and wife and is the only form of sexual relations of which God approves.

Once you are married, Ephesians chapter 5 contains a quick guide on how to support and love your spouse. Specifically, verse 22 states "Wives, submit to your own husbands as you do the Lord." For husbands, in verse 25 it says "love your wives, just as Christ loved the church."

These commands are to be taken literal with God as the overall dominant force and command. These commands declare an understanding that physical abuse is not a part of His written plan. (Neither is non-martial sex, but that's a different movie, different review.)

Now, the only question is: Who are you willing to submit to?



4 STARS: With no reading prerequisites, *Fifty Shades of Grey* is thoroughly enjoyable.



MOVIE SCENE QUEEN

MERECEDES J. HOWZE

Mercedes J. Howze started Movie Scene Queen to share her thoughts about the latest movie happenings with fellow movie lovers. She's studied journalism at Clark Atlanta University and Duquesne University, while practicing the discipline for nearly a decade. The New Pittsburgh Courier named her one of their Fab 40, Under 40 recipients in 2013 for her vast volunteering endeavors, while being the single mother of two young children and maintaining her post as a project coordinator with the Pittsburgh Public Schools.



PHOTO CREDIT: BRIAN COOK

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Wine in the Wilderness takes place in 1964, during a race riot in Harlem, New York City. In a tenement just above the chaos, an artist is creating a triptych about black womanhood. As he finds a muse to complete the final panel, his muse deconstructs his notions of the black woman in a discussion about race and women that ultimately changes his work. This production is supported by The Heinz Endowments and is presented in collaboration with the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust's Community Engagement Department.

WRITTEN BY ALICE CHILDRESS
DIRECTED BY SHAUNDA MILES

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		Troas

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NEW TESTAMENT PEOPLE

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G T K Q M S A R U K L R A K J K Y C R H J R Q J O S E P H O
A Z Q Y E T I M O T H Y C R A Y E D A D U E L X M Z K B T V
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Andrew	John	Mary	Simon
Aquila	John the Baptist	Matthew	Stephen
Barnabas	Joseph	Matthias	Tabitha
Barsabas	Judas	Paul	Thaddaeus
Bartholomew	Lazarus	Peter	Thomas
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