

# Reader's digest



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# Reader's digest



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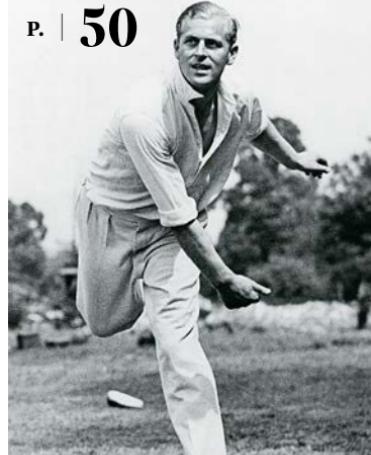
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# Letters

READERS' COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

## Thank You for Bringing Us Together

My 13-year-old son and I usually respond with "Yay!" when the next issue of Reader's Digest comes in the mail ('How to Have a Happy Teenager', May). I don't know any other magazine that a mother and son can both love and share. It has given us great topics of conversation during this stage of his life. Having conversations with teens can be



challenging. I am so thankful we have RD to bring us closer, even though he usually reads the jokes first.

HEATHER HITCHCOCK

## Legacy of Love

'A Love Story' (March) reaffirms my belief that true love is selfless and seeks to fulfil your loved one's dream. Even when death loomed, Susan wanted Lorenzo to realise the desires of his heart. Their conversations by Lake Como were moments when her kindness, love and wisdom shone through. Those were the moments that Lorenzo could draw on during difficult days without Susan and remind him to be grateful for the profound love that they had shared. MARY EU

I was moved to tears by 'A Love Story'. It reminded me of my aunt who passed away after a brief battle with lung cancer. She loved to travel and I looked forward to receiving postcards from all the beautiful places she visited. She taught me to live my life fully and without regret. I guess she is my lake. She will stay with me forever.

ESTER MIETTINEN

## LET US KNOW

If you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 6 for how to join the discussion.

## Spread the Word

In just six months I have become a huge fan of Reader's Digest. Last year, my English language teacher

advised our class to read Reader's Digest to improve our language skills and help us in exams. He was right.

My vocabulary has improved and my knowledge of the world has been enhanced. My enthusiasm for Reader's Digest grows each time I finish reading an issue. **SAHIL KUMAR**

## Against the Odds

'Boy in the Stream' (March) is a dramatic and suspenseful story. It had the reader on the edge, hoping that Gardell would be saved against all the odds. I was hugely impressed by Dr Frank Maffei's tenacity and persistence.

**S. M. NAMI**

## The Great and the Small

Thank you, Reader's Digest, for another wonderful issue. This magazine is tiny but mighty. Every time I read it, I live through each and every story.

**ZAIRA AZHAR**

## WIN A PILOT CAPLESS FOUNTAIN PEN

The best letter published each month will win a Pilot Capless fountain pen, valued at over \$200. The Capless is the perfect combination of luxury and ingenious technology, featuring a one-of-a-kind retractable fountain pen nib, durable metal body, beautiful rhodium accents, and a 14K gold nib. Congratulations to this month's winner, Sahil Kumar.



## Cash Generation

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

Mum always votes Labor: as you see she leans to the left. **BARRY STEWART**

Come on, Mum, 500 times before we can eat ice-cream! **JENNIE TAM**

It isn't the position, it's how long you hold a plank that counts. **ARLENE ANG**

Please Mum, can't I sit on the naughty chair like other kids?

**LESLIE A. MARSHALL**

**Congratulations to this month's winner, Leslie A. Marshall**



## CAPTION CONTEST

*Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win \$100. To enter, see the details on page 6.*

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FOR DIGITAL EXTRAS AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFO, SEE PAGE 11.

### Anecdotes and jokes

Send in your real-life laugh for Life's Like That or All in a Day's Work. Got a joke? Send it in for Laughter is the Best Medicine!

### Smart Animals

Share antics of unique pets or wildlife in up to 300 words.

### Kindness of Strangers

Share your moments of generosity in 100–500 words.

### My Story

Do you have an inspiring or life-changing tale to tell?

Submissions must be true, unpublished, original and 800–1000 words – see website for more information.

### Letters to the editor, caption competition and other reader submissions

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Follow the "Contribute" link at the RD website in your region, or via:

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# Editor's Note

## Animal Magic

**IT'S NO SECRET THAT READER'S DIGEST** has a long history of sharing the very best animal stories out there. This month, I think we've outdone ourselves.

Our Bonus Read section features the story of Bärle the polar bear, who was rescued from a circus where she'd been severely mistreated. The story retraces her recovery to good health, a long journey that eventually saw her develop first trust towards other bears and then motherhood. For me, reading about Bärle was confronting – at times I felt intense anger towards the circus owners, sadness at Bärle's resistance to her rescue team, but then happiness when the writer, Else Poulsen, describes how carefully Bärle craddles her newborn cub.

And then, in Out and About (page 114) we have the story of the travelling eight-legged Australian, who found her way across the Tasman Sea and into the backyard of a Maupa family, in New Zealand's South Island. "Eight-legged?" I hear you ask. Yep, I've always admired spiders – and this huge golden orb showed incredible adaptability.

So, this month, join me in marvelling at these amazing animals' strength of spirit – and adventure.

Happy reading!

*Louise*

**LOUISE WATERSON**  
Managing Editor





# Seeking Henrietta

They say you never forget your first love. But in this case, she was a bright mustard yellow with shiny headlights

BY EDDIE DOGRAMACI

*Eddie Dogramaci lives in Sydney and has four daughters and two sons. He enjoys playing soccer and currently coaches an under-16 team.*

IN 1971, at the age of 24, I left my native Turkey to study textiles at the Bolton Institute of Technology in England. While studying, I worked as a waiter and then as the assistant manager in a large restaurant to support myself. In the holidays, I travelled to Ontario in Canada to work for a tobacco farmer as a tractor driver and then to New York to work as a hotel doorman. I did this over two summer holiday periods and earned enough money to pay for four years of college fees.

By 1973, life was beautiful for me. First and foremost because – with the help of a loan – I had bought a new, mustard yellow MGB GT sports car. I named her Henrietta. Thanks to my working holidays, I also had more money than most of my fellow students. Unfortunately, I spent most evenings in discotheques and dining out at the expense of my studies.

I tried to juggle study, work and Henrietta but found that I simply could not do it all. I failed my exams, changed courses and failed again. Bills started accumulating and eventually Henrietta was repossessed by the finance company and I had to say goodbye to my beloved sports car. Heartbroken and disappointed in myself, I concentrated on my studies, passed my exams and finally completed my course. But Henrietta was gone forever and, like a first love, I missed her and thought about her every day.



In 1979, my first wife, daughter and I moved to Australia to start a new life. We landed in Sydney with only \$500, knowing no-one and with no jobs to speak of. However, I quickly found work, put in long hours and focused on building a life for my family. My memories of England were left behind, except for Henrietta – she was always in my mind.

I thought about tracing Henrietta's whereabouts through the UK Department of Transport and then having her transported to Sydney but there were so many restrictions and so much paperwork involved. Finally, I settled on another classic car, a 1954

*Part of the family: Eddie Dogramaci with his two sons Alp (left) and Ali, and his beloved Henrietta*

Citroën Avant L-15 which I bought in 1991. And although the Citroën Avant was in mint condition, my heart remained true to Henrietta.

Driving around Sydney and further afield for work, I would occasionally see MGBs and MGB GTs on the roads and reminisce. With a deep sigh and moist eyes, I would firmly tell myself to get on with it.

Then, during a classic car parade in 2009 at the Domain in Sydney, I saw a similar MGB GT but it had

a V-8 engine whereas mine had been an 1800cc. My heart started pounding, and I had to touch the car. My second wife, Esma, knew all about Henrietta and strongly encouraged me to go ahead and look for another MGB GT.

With her blessing, I started my search, scouring capital cities, regional centres and country towns throughout Australia. But all the MGs I found turned out to be 1968-1969 models, and most were the soft tops known as MGBs.

Just as I was burying my dreams, a friend, who is not a car enthusiast, told me in April 2009 that there was a GT for sale in Brisbane. I contacted the owner and was on a flight to Brisbane the next day. As soon as I saw the car, I knew in my heart it was her – it was my Henrietta. I sat inside her and immediately the drives we went on together and the adventures we shared flashed before my eyes.

In 1973 MGB GTs had only standard antennas. However, I had installed an electrical antenna, an eight-track car stereo and a cut-off switch under the dash not long after I bought her. Without telling the current owner any of this, I fiddled under the dashboard to locate the cut-off switch, then noticed a gap where the electrical antenna had been removed – it was

the physical proof I needed to be absolutely sure it really was Henrietta. I bought her on the spot and had her shipped to Sydney where she arrived the following day. After 35 years of separation, we had been reunited.

I introduced my four-wheeled darling to my family, and Esma encouraged me to take her to a specialised workshop and have her stripped back and rebuilt. Six months later, all the parts – cables, seats, windscreen, wipers, dials and lights – had been imported and refitted from an MG car supply company in England. It's

just her colour that differs today as the original mustard yellow has been discontinued and she is now a bright yellow. I even managed to successfully trace the chassis number to be sure of the match.

I drive Henrietta once or twice a week and reminisce about the golden days we spent together in 1973. While driving alone, I often find myself crying and cannot tell if it's because I found my first love again or remember the happy times we spent together.

**Do you have a tale to tell?  
We'll pay cash for any original and  
unpublished story we print. See page  
6 for details on how to contribute.**

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## We give away cash and prizes

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## First look at future issues

Get a sneak peek at upcoming stories and covers



## We give great advice

Get regular home, health and food tips from The Digest



**“Stress is caused by being ‘here’ but wanting to be ‘there’.”**

ECKHART TOLLE



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# Journey Home

Stranded far from home with a family emergency underway, a couple found totally unexpected help

BY S.N. DUBEY

MY WIFE AND I were in Dharamshala, Northern India in 2010, attending a ten-day meditation course, when we got some very bad news one night. My son's father-in-law, who was only about 60, had died of a heart attack. The next day, we packed our bags and headed for Jaipur.

At the nearest railway station, Chakki Bank (now Pathankot Cantt), I learnt that the next train to Jaipur, leaving around 8pm, had no reserved seats left. So I bought two general compartment tickets, knowing full well that the 14-hour overnight trip in an overcrowded coach would be a hard one for us (I was 72, my wife 63). I met the stationmaster, hoping he'd help, but he said he couldn't.

Later, I made one last effort to get reserved seats with a travelling ticket examiner (TTE). Still no luck. Then, as we waited for the train, a man in

his late 40s approached me. "Why is she looking so upset?" he asked, pointing at my wife. "Can I help you?"

I soon learned his name was Daljeet Singh Thakur, a timber merchant. He was extremely friendly. I explained our situation. "Don't worry," he said. "I'll help you get a reservation. I've come here to drop off my daughter. She is leaving for Lucknow."

Thakur's son and daughter were standing just a few metres away. Just then he called out to his son and told him to run home and fetch some tea. Soon we were chatting like old friends with Thakur and his daughter. We even exchanged phone numbers. The boy soon returned with some glasses and a thermos containing aromatic ginger tea, which we sipped. After that, Thakur sent his daughter off. "I'm going home now," he said. "But don't worry. I'll be back soon."



Once again, we were left alone – until Thakur returned with dinner for us, wrapped in foil. He made enquiries with the stationmaster and a few porters. At about 8pm, our train pulled into the station. We looked anxious, but Thakur told us to stay calm.

One of the porters took me to the TTE of a sleepover coach. “Two seats for 1000 rupees,” the TTE said. Just then Thakur called out to me as he spoke to another TTE, from an adjacent AC compartment.

“He’s agreed to give you two seats,” Thakur told me. He then helped with our luggage and guided us to our seats. He gave us a bottle of water before we said our thank-yous.

“Just take care of yourself,” Thakur said as he left. “We’ll stay in touch.”

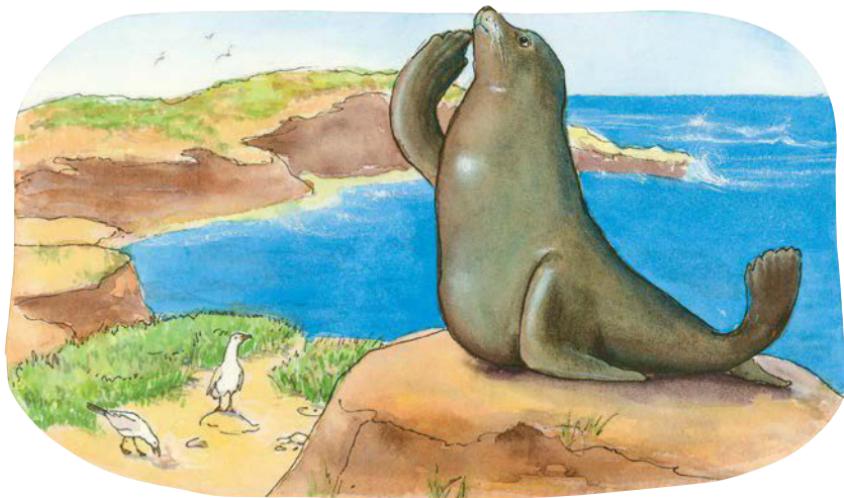
After the train pulled out, the TTE came and collected just the additional charges for AC compartment seats. I couldn’t understand what charm Thakur had worked on him. By now we were so hungry, we began devouring the dinner packed for us – tasty parathas with mango pickle and potato curry. Five years on, we still talk on the phone to Daljeet Singh Thakur, who has been inviting us to visit his farm and meet his family.

**Share your story about a small act of kindness that made a huge impact. Turn to page 6 for details on how to contribute and earn cash.**



# Smart Animals

For these creatures, the world is a fascinating place



## Saluting Seal

JULIE KING

Every so often, I take myself for a relaxing drive just to get out of my four walls. On this particular morning I had driven to Eagle Bay, near Busselton in Western Australia. I was sitting in the warmth and comfort of my car sipping a much-appreciated coffee on a cold, blustery winter day and watching the ocean.

The rugged coastline was spectacular with white foamy waves crashing into the rocks. Suddenly, the most majestic fur seal appeared from nowhere. I almost had to close

and re-open my eyes to realise what it was that I was witnessing.

The black, shiny, blubbery mammal playfully clambered up the rocks until he reached the highest point right in front of me. There he stretched his nose high in the air, saluting to the skies. It was as if he was bestowing gratitude to the universe for his wonderful life of freedom. I thought to capture the image on my phone, but I was transfixed and couldn't take my eyes from him. I was utterly connected to him in those precious moments, where nothing else mattered or even

existed apart from the two of us. I could feel my whole self soften and felt warmed, uplifted and free all at once, because of him.

The next thing my beautiful friend slid down from his position and back into the ocean as if enjoying the thrill of a waterslide. I think he knew very well I was watching him. The memory will stay with me forever.

## Squirrel Takes a Stand

DILINI PUNSARA  
PANAPITIYA

We have a small wooden board suspended on a guava tree in our back garden to feed some of the parrots and squirrels that populate our neighbourhood. They visit in the morning and evening to see if we have put out any leftover rice or fruit, and loud screeches can be heard if the board is empty.

The squirrels are usually the most unassuming of the creatures that visit, while the parrots are the bossiest. Sometimes, one of the squirrels will hide in a flowerpot that hangs from the tree. He looks adorable standing on his hind legs, holding up a lump of rice as big as himself and eating it, his mouth working at great speed. The parrots, however, never let the poor squirrel eat to his heart's content, often pecking at him and chasing him away.



One day in July last year, something quite unusual happened. A parrot went for the usual attack, but the squirrel, instead of backing away, thrust his head towards the parrot in defence. The parrot surrendered immediately, quickly moving to the opposite end of the board before the two of them went on with the feast. The little squirrel proved that nobody can mess with him and to this day he continues to stand up to those bossy parrots.

## Come Rain or Shine

MRS E. CLARK

My husband Sidney and I travelled to England in 1980 to see his sick mother and stayed for six months. My in-laws had a black and white collie named Tassie that I would take for walks along the bridle path every day.

One day, however, it was pouring with rain. Nevertheless, the dog sat eagerly at the door waiting for me to take him out for his usual walk.

I looked at him and said, "I'm not going out in this weather." He trotted off down the hallway and came back with one of my Wellington boots, which he dropped on my foot. Did I go for the walk? Of course I did!

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 6 for details on how to contribute.

# THE DIGEST

HEALTH

## Secrets and Myths of Hair and Nails

From Rapunzel's flowing locks to eating crusts for curls, our hair and also nails are the subjects of many popular tales, beliefs and sayings. We nail down the truth

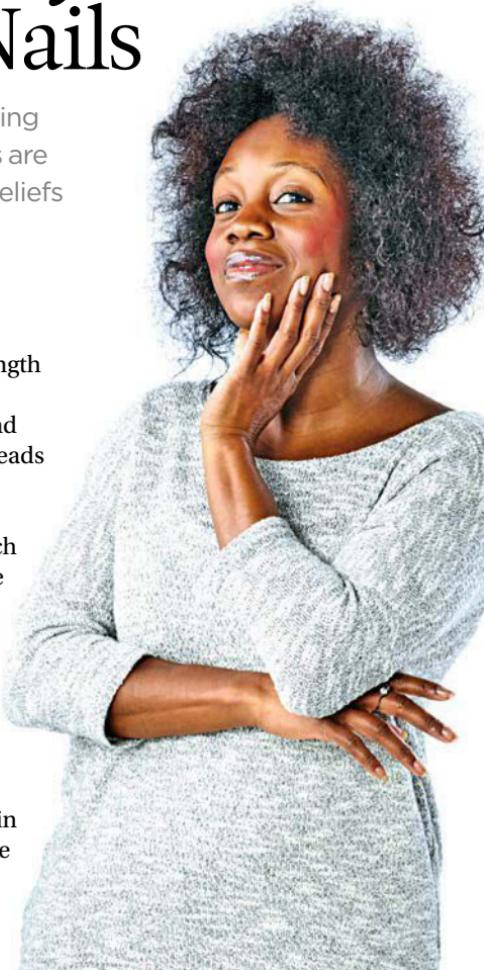
### **BLACK HAIR IS THE STRONGEST FALSE**

While Asian (the strongest) and Caucasian black hair usually have a higher tensile strength than blonde hair, African black hair is often more delicate and Indigenous Australian and Islander hair can be, as well. Tight braids, beads and heat can damage all hair types.

**SCARE BRINGS GREY HAIR TRUE** Research suggests that the stress hormone adrenaline may damage DNA in the genes responsible for the production of melanin, the pigment that gives hair its colour.

### **HAIR GROWS FASTER IN SUMMER**

**FALSE** There's nothing intrinsic to summer that speeds up hair growth. However, many people do receive a boost from diets richer in fruit, vegetables and proteins rather than the





carbohydrate-rich foods we love in winter.

#### ... AS DO NAILS TRUE

Nails grow faster in warm climates, so they benefit from summer's better weather, as well as taking advantage of the same dietary changes as hair.

Men's nails generally grow more quickly than women's and fingernails tend to grow faster on your dominant hand. The nail on the middle finger grows fastest; the thumbnail slowest. And fingernails grow faster than toenails.

#### HAIR CAN TURN WHITE FROM FRIGHT FALSE

Dermatologist

Dr David Orentreich says no. You can't lose pigment in your hair because hair is dead when it leaves your scalp. But a severe shock may trigger alopecia areata, an autoimmune condition that causes bald spots. In very rare cases it can cause only pigmented hair (black, brown, red or blonde) to drop out, leaving grey and white hair behind.

#### WHITE FLECKS ON NAILS MEAN

LACK OF CALCIUM FALSE This myth may arise from the fact that calcium is white. While calcium is vital for

#### STUDY YOUR HAIRBRUSH

You can lose 50-100 hairs a day – even more when you wash your hair. But if you're losing an excessive amount, ask your doctor to check your levels of blood ferritin, an indication of how much iron your body is storing. Low levels may be related to hair loss. Thyroid disease is another common cause, while conditions such as lupus and diabetes can also make your hair fall out. A severe emotional shock or physical trauma (such as surgery) can also cause a thinning thatch.

forming strong bones and teeth, nails, like skin and hair, are made of the fibrous protein keratin, which contains only a small amount of calcium. White spots are usually symptoms of minor injuries to the nail bed.

#### CUT TOENAILS STRAIGHT ACROSS

TRUE If you cut into the sides of a big toenail, the skin around the nail may swell up at the nail's edge, leading to an ingrown nail. Cutting straight across is the best way to prevent this.

#### CUTTING HAIR BY THE MOON SPEEDS ITS GROWTH FALSE

One Brazilian myth is that hair cut between a full and quarter moon grows more strongly, while in other cultures it's said that cutting hair under a waxing moon promotes growth. Neither one is true. Hair does not grow back more strongly after it's cut – at any time.

#### FENUGREEK STRENGTHENS HAIR

FALSE Fenugreek (methi) is used as a hair tonic in India but, while it keeps hair soft and shining and can help treat dandruff, there is no evidence for strengthening or regrowth.

NEWS FROM THE

# World of Medicine

## Early Signs of Heart Trouble

There may be telltale symptoms the month before a sudden cardiac arrest. In a new *Annals of Internal Medicine* study, researchers tracked 839 patients who experienced cardiac arrest (a deadly electrical malfunction of the heart). Half of the men and 53% of the women experienced warning signs, such as chest pain and shortness of breath, in the weeks before. More than 90% of patients reported symptoms resurfacing 24 hours before the cardiac arrest – but only 19% called an ambulance with the onset of symptoms – an act that improved survival odds five-fold.

## Midday Naps Reduce Blood Pressure

A Greek study of 386 middle-aged patients with hypertension found that those who grabbed a midday nap had lower blood pressure than those who didn't. After adjusting for other factors, the 24-hour ambulatory BP (measure of blood pressure as you move about)

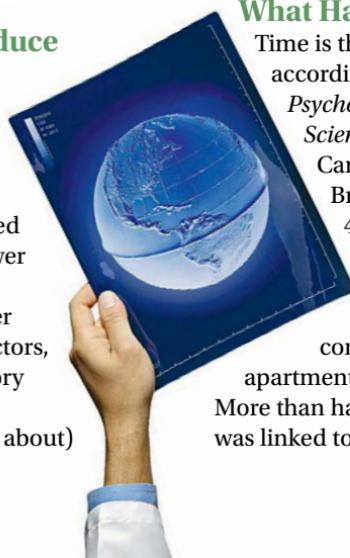
was 5% lower in people who took a 60-minute nap. This reduction is big enough to decrease the risk of heart attacks and potentially lower medication needs.

## Sugar-Free Drinks Hurt Teeth

Both sugary and sugar-free drinks can damage your pearly whites. Scientists at the University of Melbourne tested 23 types of drink on healthy extracted human molars. Most softened dental enamel by 30-50%. Any drink with a low pH can cause harm. Check for acidic additives, especially citric acid and phosphoric acid.

## What Happy People Value

Time is the secret to contentment, according to a report in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*. Researchers at Canada's University of British Columbia asked 4690 workers questions such as whether they'd prefer an expensive apartment with a short commute or a less pricey apartment with a long commute. More than half prioritised time, which was linked to greater happiness.



# Six Important Facts to Know About Psoriasis

Relief is possible for sufferers of scaly skin

- It's an immune response gone wrong. A type of white blood cell that normally fights foreign invaders starts attacking healthy skin cells.
- The condition isn't caused by poor hygiene, nor is it contagious.
- Certain triggers can cause a flare-up. These include stress, an injury, drinking too much, smoking, menopause and some medicines.
- There are different types of psoriasis. While most people get scaly patches on their knees, elbows or torso, it can also affect fingernails, scalp and even genitals.
- Psoriasis has no cure, but many treatments can bring partial or complete symptom relief (see box, right).
- A new drug is being touted as a 'miracle' treatment. Trials of ixekizumab found that it brought improvement in 90% of cases.

## EASING DISCOMFORT

**There are various ways to minimise symptoms and boost skin healing. Try these steps.**

**Avoid harsh soap** Try to do without soap altogether, and wash most areas simply with warm – never hot – water.

**Choose fabrics with care** Natural fibres such as cotton and silk allow your skin to breathe. Avoid wool, which can scratch and irritate. Use detergents that are non-biological and unperfumed when washing clothes, towels and bed linen.

**Seek expert advice** Ask your GP to refer you to a dermatologist, who may prescribe a topical medication for the skin (such as salicylic acid) or phototherapy (therapy using light).



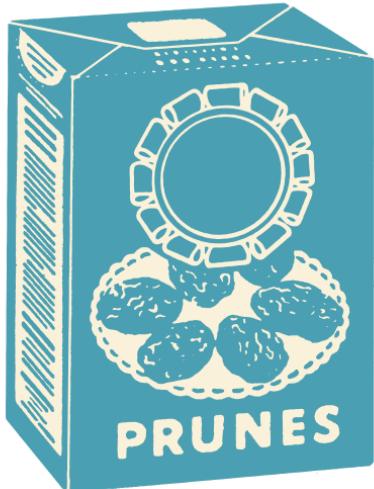
# Controlling Constipation

**Although not** usually a serious risk to health, constipation is very common, particularly among older, less active people and those whose diet does not contain sufficient fibre.

The normal frequency of bowel movements ranges from three times a day to three times a week. Some people may think they have constipation when they don't. As well as infrequent bowel movements, constipation means having hard stools that are difficult to pass, leading to straining during bowel movements and the feeling that you have not emptied your bowel completely.

Fortunately, constipation is often temporary – caused by medication, lack of toilet access, pregnancy or a change in routine. There are many simple ways to tackle the problem.

It's important to eat more fibre than usual. This indigestible, fibrous part of plants adds bulk to your stools, both softening them and stimulating the urge to go to the toilet. Aim to eat seven to nine portions of fruits, vegetables and beans daily and choose wholegrain bread, pasta and



rice. If you can't manage this, take a supplement that contains ispaghula husk (psyllium).

Try to drink more water. Aim for at least six to eight glasses of fluids a day. Most constipation sufferers find their bowel habits improve by following these simple dietary measures.

## BEST FIBRE FOOD SOURCES

Medical experts recommend we get at least 25 grams of fibre a day, but most of us average only five to ten grams a day. Here are some easy suggestions for foods that are high in fibre and will help you bump up your everyday intake:

- Wholegrain breads (rye, bulgur, pumpernickel)
- Fresh fruit (avocado, berries)
- Legumes (lentils, lima beans)
- High-fibre cereals (bran, oats)
- Vegetables (artichokes, spinach, cauliflower, carrots, broccoli)

# HOT PRICE!



**Reader's digest**

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**Tip**

Waxy potatoes will hold their shape during cooking.

**CASSEROLE**

# Fish and Potato Hotpot

**Preparation** 15 minutes

**Cooking** 25 minutes

**Serves** 4

**You will need:**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 leek, white part only, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 carrot, diced
- 700 g boiling (waxy) potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks
- 100 g button mushrooms, trimmed
- 2 cups (500 ml) fish stock
- 250 g skinless white fish fillet, cut into bite-sized chunks
- 250 g skinless salmon fillet, cut into bite-sized chunks
- 1 baguette, sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- Yoghurt to serve

**PER SERVING**

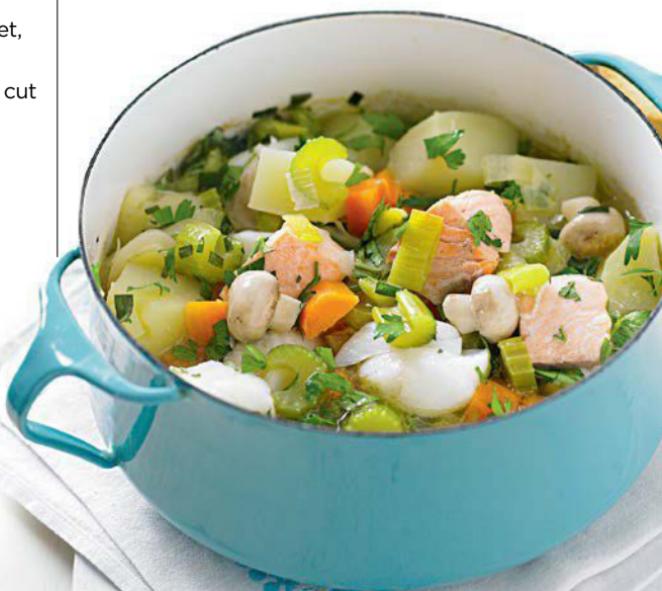
2642 kJ, 631 kcal, 40 g protein,  
22 g fat (4 g saturated fat),  
68 carbohydrate (8 g sugars),  
8 g fibre, 695 mg sodium

**1** Heat oil in a large saucepan over high heat. Add the leek, celery and carrot. Reduce heat to medium, stir well, then cover and cook for 3 minutes.

**2** Add potatoes and mushrooms and stir in the fish stock. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 10 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Gently stir in all the fish and bring back to a simmer. Cover and simmer for a further 5 minutes, or until the fish is just cooked.

**3** Meanwhile, toast the baguette slices until golden brown.

**4** Just before serving, stir the tarragon and parsley into the hotpot. Serve with yoghurt and toasted baguette slices.



# Which pot?



**It is important for dishes that need to cook for a long time, that your pot or pan has a good-quality heavy base to distribute the heat evenly.**

**SAUCEPANS** are good for stovetop stews. The larger pots have two small handles, one at either side, which makes them easier to move when they are full, compared to regular saucepans with one long handle.

**STAINLESS STEEL SAUCEPANS** are durable and easy to clean. A heavy reinforced base (often with a layer of copper) is ideal, as steel on its own is not a good heat conductor.

**CASSEROLE DISHES** are made from metal, glass, ceramic or earthenware. In northern Africa, the tajine is a good example. Another type is the Dutch oven, which is a heavy, round cast-iron, lidded pot. The heavy enamelled cast-iron casserole dishes favoured by the French are very versatile and perfect for one-pot cooking. They are flameproof and ovenproof; you can brown meat on the stove, then add other ingredients, put the lid on and finish cooking in the oven.

**SLOW COOKERS** simmer food at a very low temperature over a long period of time. Simply put all the ingredients in the slow cooker, follow cooker instructions, turn it on, and return to a ready-cooked meal.

## SAVE TIME

Casseroles and stews are ideal for cooking in bulk and freezing in portion-sized quantities.

## In the Pot

Here are some fabulous flavour combinations to get you started.

### BEEF

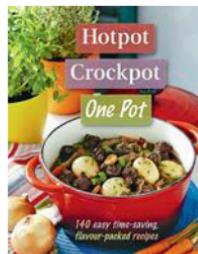
- Red wine, thyme and rosemary
- Tomatoes, onions and black pepper
- Bacon, French shallots, garlic and mushrooms
- Paprika, cumin, coriander and cayenne pepper

### LAMB

- Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste, onions
- Garlic, coriander, cumin and ginger
- Red wine, thyme and garlic
- Olives, prunes, preserved lemon, ginger, cumin and turmeric

### CHICKEN

- Green curry paste and coconut cream
- Olives, white wine and paprika
- Mushrooms, bay leaf and tarragon.



For more delicious recipes that are a treat to eat and so easy to clean up after, see **Hotpot, Crockpot, One Pot**, ISBN 978-1-922083-31-9, from Reader's Digest.

# Eight Things to Do in Brazil

Beyond the 2016 Olympic Games in August, Brazil is filled with unmissable destinations, festivals and events

BY ELIANNA LEV

## Get Moving at Samba School

Music and dancing might be the only things on par with Brazil's passion for soccer. Rio de Janeiro is home to several samba schools, which house groups who perform in Carnival.

## Hit the Beaches in Florianópolis

There are 42 beaches in the city of Florianópolis, each with unique features that will appeal to you based on what you're looking for – whether it's seclusion and tranquility or a place to party in your bathing suit. Most popular is Praia Mole, which is surrounded by lush hills and rocky mountains, while Lagoinha do Leste is more secluded, bordered by a rocky coastline, sandbanks and dunes.

## Sail at Regata da Jangadas

Brazil is renowned for its white sands and warm waters. But there are also plenty of adventures to be had on the ocean – among them the huge Regata da Jangadas sailing festival. Crowds gather along the shores of Fortaleza



in northeastern Brazil for the annual event in July. If you're looking for an optimal view, you can organise a ride on one of the non-racing jangadas – a type of traditional Brazilian fishing boat.

## Feel the Mist at Iguazu Falls

Brazil's version of Niagara Falls spans 2.7 kilometres, which makes it the widest waterfall in the world. While Brazil shares the falls with Argentina, the Brazilian side gives you a better view of this natural wonder. >>



*Stunning landscapes at Iguazu Falls (above); the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue (right)*



**>>Visit Cristo Redentor** Also known as Christ the Redeemer, this is one of the most iconic landmarks in Brazil. The 30 metre statue perches atop Corcovado, a mountain that overlooks Rio de Janeiro. Be sure to visit on a clear day for the best views.

**Watch the Sunset in Arpoador** Located in the southern part of Rio, Arpoador is known as a walker's paradise but it is the rare (most of the coast faces east) view of midsummer sunsets over the water that draws large crowds. For the romantics, visit on June 12, Dia dos Namorados – Brazil's version of Valentine's Day.

**Ride Up Sugarloaf Mountain** This is among Rio de Janeiro's most famous sites, rising 396 metres straight from the water's edge.

The site is accessible by a cable car that was opened in 1912 and most recently rebuilt in 2008 with glass-sided cars to give passengers a panoramic view. With 60 climbing trails, Sugarloaf is a popular spot for climbers. The mountain consists of granite stone and little vegetation.

**Visit a Famous Church** Dedicated in 1970, the Santuário Dom Bosco (Sanctuary of Dom Bosco) honours the 19th century Italian saint who dreamed of a utopian city and partly inspired the foundation of Brasilia, Brazil's capital city. Notable for its interior, the church is made of 80 concrete columns that support a huge golden chandelier made of 7400 pieces of Murano glass. Stained glass windows in 12 shades of blue cast everything in a mystical glow.

# Useful Travel Apps

BY CATHERINE COLE  
AND SNIGDHA HASAN

## TRIPADVISOR

Every hotel, restaurant or tourist spot you wish to know about has likely been reviewed and rated here. These numerous, and at times very detailed, travellers' experiences offer handy tips and help avoid common mistakes. Lists like "Top Things to Do In ..." ensure that you don't come back with any regrets.

IOS, ANDROID, WINDOWS

## KAYAK

A comprehensive travel planner, this app lets you search for and book flight tickets, hotels and cars, and even assists in packing. Its pre-departure to-do lists, tailored for general, business or romantic travel, ensure that all you need is your bag.

IOS, ANDROID, WINDOWS, KINDLE

## TRIPIT

If you're forever searching for all the confirmation emails for your



## LOUNGBUDY

This app advises on the facilities and entry policies for airport lounges across the world, so in one click you can get away from the crowds.

IOS, ANDROID, WINDOWS

trips, download this app, which merges all your travel details into one itinerary. You can access it from several devices, and it syncs with your phone calendar, too.

IOS, ANDROID, WINDOWS

## TRAVEL DIARY

Similar to sending postcards to yourself, this app lets you make diary entries with text and images. You can also export all your entries to a word document: raw material for the travelogue in the making.

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# Reader's digest



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# Linen Cupboard Cleanout

## Keep This, Toss That

### KEEP SHEET SETS THAT

- Are for mattress sizes you currently own.
- Have deep pockets to fit your mattress well.
- Match your current décor.
- Are wrinkle-free.
- Are a comfortable fabric, such as flannel for the winter and cotton for the summer.

### TOSS SHEET SETS THAT

- Are scratchy or irritating to your skin.
- Have shrunk in the wash and no longer fit well.
- The colour rubs off or bleeds in the wash.
- Are pilling or have threadbare spots.
- Tear easily or that you need to tug to get it off the mattress.
- Pop off corners of the mattress.

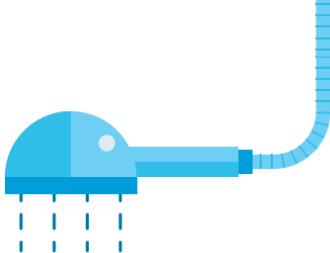


### HOW MANY DO YOU NEED?

Keep at least two sets of sheets per bed in the house (one on the bed and one in the wash or in the cupboard, ready to use). And if you are a parent of a child ten years old or younger, keep four fitted sheets per single bed for nighttime accidents or sick days when the sheets may need to be changed multiple times.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Your local pet shelter would be thrilled to receive your unwanted linens, no matter the condition. They are used to clean up, to dry animals and to line cold metal cages.



# Get to Know Your Hot-Water System

Follow our tips to keep your energy costs down

## INSTANTANEOUS HEATERS

**How they work** Turn on the hot-water tap of an instantaneous hot-water system and cold water flows straight into a small heating unit. The water is then heated by either an electric element or a gas burner, before flowing out the tap. These systems are considered more energy-efficient than storage systems that keep a tank of heated water on stand-by.

### Energy-saving tip

Insulating the pipes leading from the heating unit will help improve efficiency.

**Maintenance** All maintenance and repairs should be carried out by a licensed plumber.

## STORAGE WATER HEATERS

**How they work** Hot-water storage systems, whether electric- or gas-powered, keep large volumes of heated water on stand-by in a storage tank. Make sure your tank is the right size for your needs. An oversized tank will waste energy storing hot water you won't use.

**Energy-saving tip** If it's an older tank, wrap it in an insulation blanket to reduce heat-loss (modern tanks have built-in insulation).

**Maintenance** Check regularly to ensure impurities in the water don't cause the pressure relief valve to seize. To do so, lift the lever on the valve until water drains through the discharge pipe.

## SOLAR HOT WATER

**How it works** Solar hot-water systems use the Sun's energy to heat a tank of water. Most are attached to either an electric- or gas-powered booster that kicks in when the solar collectors don't collect enough energy to keep the water hot. Collectors made from evacuated glass tubes are highly efficient, but more expensive.

**Energy-saving tip** When you go on holiday, remember to turn the booster off.

**Maintenance** Check regularly for signs of scaling, corrosion and freezing in the unit. Contact a solar technician for all repairs.



# Kindness and a Curry

The taxi driver who turned a racist encounter into a mission to help the needy

BY VICTORIA POLZOT

**A**s Darwin slowly wakes from a Sunday sleep-in, Tejinder Singh has already been up hours preparing a delicious curry for the city's hungry. After a long, sticky 12-hour shift in his taxi, Tejinder returns to his three-bedroom home in Australia's hottest capital city around 7am and then rolls up his sleeves.

Using a two-ring gas burner in his backyard, Tejinder spends the next five hours carefully preparing and cooking rice and a chickpea curry in large industrial-sized pots. The act of giving,

he says, gives him the energy to power through what is going to be a long day.

It's a ritual Tejinder has undertaken, with the help of his 15-year-old son, Navdeep, for the past four years. The slightly built 44-year-old father of two, who also works as an air-conditioning engineer, dedicates the last Sunday of each month to helping the needy of Darwin by providing them a much-needed hot, home-cooked lunch.

As part of his faith - Tejinder is a devout Sikh - he also donates 10% of his taxi-driving income to the needy, as well as setting aside \$1 every day to



help fund the monthly meal his family generously dispenses.

The idea for the food van was prompted by an encounter Tejinder had with a passenger who reacted to his black turban and long beard. "I had a person in my cab who asked me which Darwin school my children went to," he explains. "When I told them, they said that they'd be sending their kids to the same school as I wouldn't be likely to bomb one that my own children attended."

Realising his appearance stood out in the largely white and Indigenous

*Tejinder Singh and his teenage son, Navdeep, cook free meals for the needy*

city, he decided he needed to break down cultural stereotypes and use his uniqueness to spread good. And so, in 2012, he launched his food van.

"I didn't want people to be afraid of the turban," Tejinder says. He hopes that by helping in his community, he's also breaking down the prejudice and fear associated with the turban and beard worn by Sikhs.

Tejinder and his family moved to Australia from Sohana in the Punjab

district of northern India in 2006, in search of a better future. The family first settled in Adelaide before moving to Darwin eight years ago.

## The food run begins

It's a gruelling day for the sleep-deprived Tejinder. "He works all night and doesn't sleep at all," says his wife Gurpreet. "It's amazing how he does it. He drives for 12 hours in the night and then spends five hours cooking on a gas stove."

As he works up a sweat in the back-yard, Tejinder's modest white van awaits its spicy cargo in the driveway. The van is decorated with a banner that he brought back from India, which reads: "Free vegetarian food for hungry and needy people. Provided by Sikh family".

At noon, Tejinder and Navdeep load up the mobile kitchen with 30 kilograms of vegetarian chickpea curry, fluffy white rice and 45 litres of icy cordial in blue plastic coolers with tight-fitting lids. Then they set off in search of homeless or hungry locals. The route varies from month to month, but generally sees the pair visiting local parks in and around Darwin's northern suburbs of Leanyer and Casuarina, as well as the beach areas of Rapid Creek, Parap and Fannie Bay.

The vegetarian curries are particularly popular with the 'long-grassers', indigenous people who live rough in the parks in and around Darwin. Other visitors to the van include the



“

**"IF YOU WANT TO DO SOMETHING FOR SOCIETY – YOU NEED TO WORK HARD"**



non-Indigenous homeless and backpackers. One thing unites most of his diners – their lives are mired in extreme poverty. There are different faces every month. "In Darwin there's always a lot of coming and going of people back to their communities," explains Tejinder. "So often we don't see the same people twice."

Religious beliefs or race are not a barrier to receiving one of Tejinder's

curries – everybody is welcomed. “I want to help all people, no matter if they are black or white, no matter their religion, or none. If they’re hungry, I will give them food. I want to do something for homeless people, so they get more energy, so they’re happier.”

When he spots a group, Tejinder stops the van, flings open the double doors at the back and lifts the lids off the coolers, releasing steamy, aromatic wafts that draw people over. Large portions are served in plastic takeaway containers, with plastic cutlery. And since not everyone eats meat, Tejinder always serves vegetarian fare. Typically he’ll feed up to 100 people, though on Christmas Day in 2014 he served a special meal of paneer, a fresh Indian cheese, to 125 locals.

Navdeep stands proudly at his father’s side, handing out cups of cordial, a welcome thirst-quencher in Darwin’s infamous sticky heat.

Some diners flop down on the grass nearby, while others find a picnic table or wander off with their hot containers, which they set aside to eat later in the day when it’s a little cooler.

The meals are free, with no strings attached and no prying questions asked. “I don’t ask about their story,” he says. “I don’t want to interfere with anyone’s life – my only duty is to give food to hungry people.”

If he is offered payment, Tejinder politely declines, insisting that he has everything he needs and “doesn’t want to be greedy”. The gratitude he

receives is payment enough: some diners thank him, others express their gratitude with a hug or a slap on the back. Many utter a “God bless you” before heading off. One man said of Tejinder’s altruism, “He loves people, he loves Aboriginal people. He gives them food and love, like God.”

It is this generosity of spirit that earned him the CommBank title ‘Australian of the Day’ in August last year. The campaign recognises the day-to-day contributions made by ordinary Australians to their communities. And while Tejinder is appreciative of the recognition, he really doesn’t see what all the fuss is about.

## Heading home

By 5pm and after five hours on the road and serving lunch, the van makes its way home. Gurpreet helps Tejinder clean the van and the coolers before he turns in for a well-deserved early night, leaving his family, including two-year-old daughter Kaur, to relax in front of the TV or play games.

Tejinder’s advice for those inspired by his acts of service: “I have no sleep, it can be hard. But if you want to do something for society – you need to work hard.”

Since the beginning of this year Tejinder has inspired three other groups to come forward and mirror his example – and he’ll be lending them his van and equipment to get the job done. “So now we have all the Sundays covered,” he says cheerfully. R

# CAN WE SURVIVE ON **MARS?**





If you believe the news, a human mission to Mars is no longer a sci-fi fantasy. But what problems would we need to overcome? And should we even try?

BY JO CARLOWE

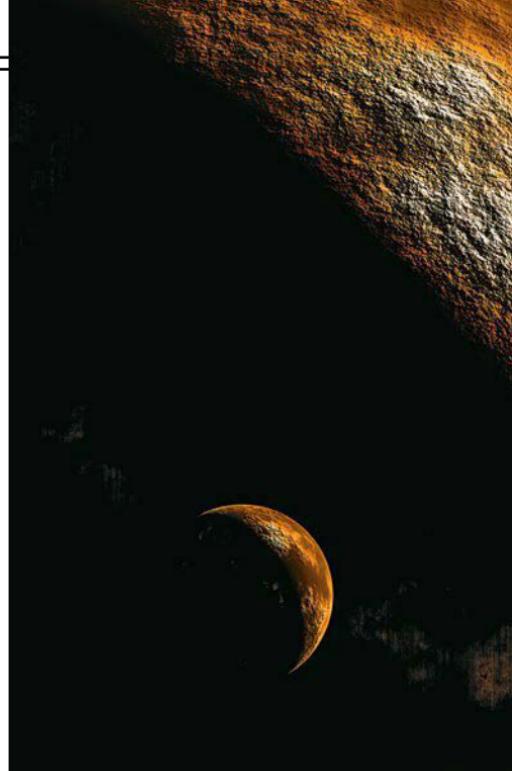


In July last year, NASA's *New Horizons* interplanetary space probe made its closest approach to the dwarf planet Pluto, having completed an eye-watering nine-year voyage of 4.8 billion kilometres. Pluto is so distant that it lies in the Kuiper Belt, a region of the Solar System beyond the eight major planets. This raises the possibility that space travel might one day be boundless.

For now, though, all eyes are on Mars, a 180-day journey away at best estimates and a possible target for a future human colony. And it isn't merely science fiction – this space race has already begun.

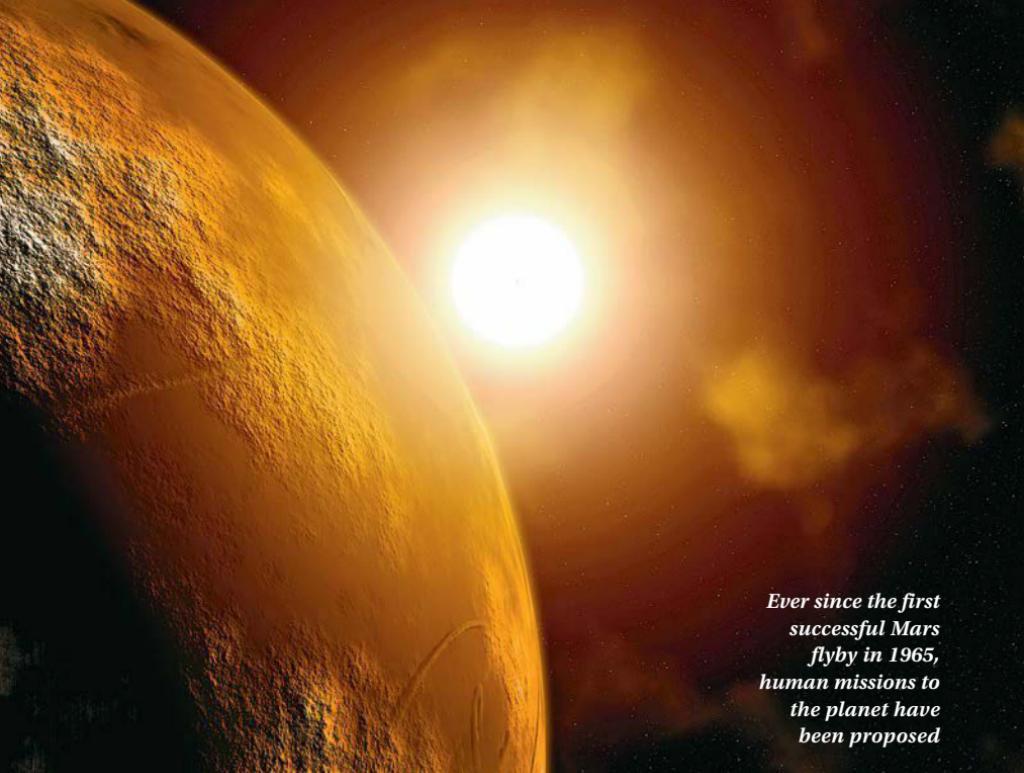
**ONE EXAMPLE** is Dutch company Mars One, which plans to launch a one-way-trip with four astronauts to Mars, landing in 2027. Additional crews will join them every two years to form a colony. Sceptics largely dismiss Mars One as a stunt, but a more viable proposition is NASA's *Orion* spacecraft, the first mission since Apollo designed to take humans into deep space. A return trip to Mars is planned for the 2030s.

In preparation for this, NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) are studying Mars with a host of spacecraft, in an attempt to solve the



mystery of how Mars lost most of its atmosphere. NASA's Mars 2020 Rover will test an experimental weather station on Mars and MOXIE – a device to convert carbon dioxide into oxygen.

Much has been discovered already. Two of the most exciting finds this year concern water, one of the vital ingredients for life as we know it. Using powerful infrared telescopes, NASA scientists have confirmed that Mars once had more water than the Arctic Ocean, and some of this remains locked up in Martian polar caps. The Hubble Space Telescope, meanwhile, discovered yet more



*Ever since the first successful Mars flyby in 1965, human missions to the planet have been proposed*

water beneath the surface of Jupiter's largest moon Ganymede – another future space destination.

#### **HOW DO WE GET TO MARS?**

The furthest we have sent astronauts is to the Moon, about 384,000 km away. This is small fry compared to the 55,000,000 km to Mars. Reaching the Red Planet will require serious hardware. NASA will use its new heavy-lift rocket, the Space Launch System (SLS), to propel *Orion* – its new generation spacecraft – into space. The SLS is more powerful than any previous rocket, with over 4 million kilograms of thrust at

liftoff – more than 31 times the thrust of a Boeing 747. The computers running the software on *Orion* can process 480 million instructions per second.

There's been speculation that astronauts will be put into 'hyper-sleep' (a therapeutic coma) during the journey to Mars and kept alive intravenously, to conserve resources. Although a favourite trope of sci-fi films, experts think this unlikely.

#### **HOW WILL WE LIVE?**

Humans will need self-sustaining water, food and oxygen to survive on Mars – and, ideally, on the voyage there

as well. Farming in space isn't easy. In microgravity, loose soil and water will fly around and "foul the interior of the spacecraft", warns Dr Anna-Lisa Paul, expert in molecular and cellular biology at the University of Florida.

"Plants can be grown in space, but all require the management of gases, water and a growing substrate," says Paul, who's been studying the use of *Arabidopsis thaliana* (thale or mouse-ear cress) on the International Space Station (ISS). The crop is perfect for Mars missions, able to grow on a 10 cm petri dish and closely related to vegetables such as broccoli and radish. It matures quickly and scientists already know its complete genetic code.

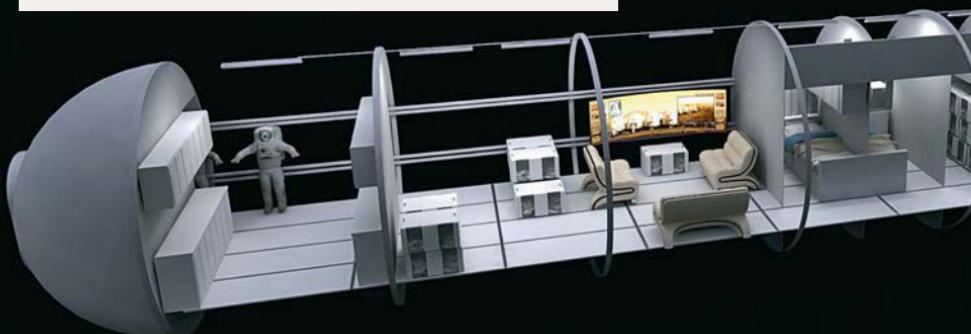
Special growing systems will be required, such as the Vegetable Production System project, a microwave-sized chamber in which plants receive carbon dioxide and controlled-release fertiliser, and fans stir the air (heavy gases sink and light ones rise on Earth, but in space this doesn't happen).



FARMING IN SPACE ISN'T EASY. LOOSE SOIL AND WATER WILL FLY AROUND AND "FOUL THE INTERIOR OF THE SPACECRAFT"

On Mars itself, the challenges will be different but equally complex. Extracting water locked up in ice will be crucial. NASA is developing an excavator device called RASSOR (Regolith Advanced Surface Systems Operations Robot), designed to mine water, ice and fuel from planetary soil. Mars One also plans to send a water extractor to heat the soil until the water evaporates. Mars One claims its astronauts will have 50 litres of recyclable water each per day. Then there is poor soil fertility, lack of beneficial bacteria and the weaker gravity – just 38% of Earth's – that will make plant growth difficult.

***How the Mars One habitats could be arranged, including living quarters, storage and a greenhouse to grow fresh food***



**Mars One proposes grids of solar panels to generate power, and inflatable habitats buried under Martian soil (at rear) to protect astronauts from solar radiation**

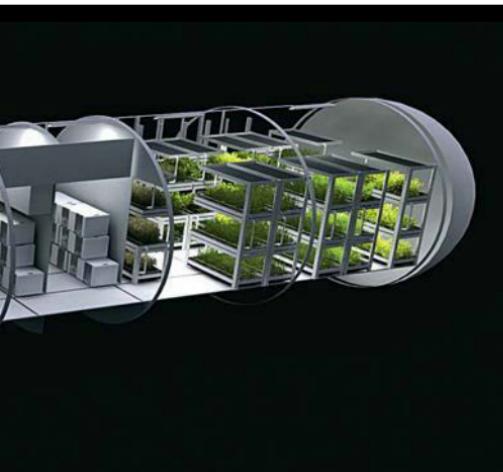


While agriculture is being refined, food could be 'printed'. NASA is working with Systems & Material Research Corporation (SMRC) to develop a 3D printer to mould protein, starch and fat into shapes and microjet in flavours and nutrients. Dr David J. Irvin, director of SMRC, predicts that there will be 25 to 50 basic food items, including bread and pastries. "We're not trying

for out-of-this world designs," he says. "The food shape will be practical to guarantee even cooking and efficient processing times. So pizza will look like pizza and biscuits like biscuits. We're not planning for Michelin-star food – just healthy and nutritious meals."

At Mars One, meanwhile, it's been suggested the colonists might recycle human waste to provide nutrients for their crops and their diet might include insects and algae.

Plants might be used to produce oxygen as well. Paul claims a bank of photosynthetic organisms (such as green algae) could be used for this task. NASA also plans to convert the carbon dioxide that dominates the thin Martian air into oxygen using MOXIE – a scaled-up model from the 2020 Rover version that will produce 22 kg of oxygen an hour for human respiration, as well as for rocket fuel.



## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL IMPACTS

Space travel comes with a health warning. Using the ISS as a test bed, element scientist Professor Peter Norsk of NASA's Human Research programme has been investigating some of the many physical challenges facing astronauts.

Our bodies work differently in space – even the way our blood flows. On Earth, gravity drags bodily fluids downwards, but in space this doesn't happen, so the heart has to work harder and more fluids accumulate in the head, putting extra pressure on the eyes, which can lead to changes in vision that are often permanent. Russian cosmonauts place their bodies in low-pressure boxes to draw blood into the legs and wear bracelets around their thighs and upper arms so blood accumulates in the veins of the limbs. NASA is currently testing this.

Astronauts on the ISS do an average of two hours of daily aerobic, resistance and treadmill exercises to stave off the effects of weightlessness, which causes rapid bone and muscle wastage. Norsk says similar countermeasures will be used on Mars. The use of the osteoporosis drug bisphosphonate to prevent bone-mass loss is another option, and artificial gravity is being tested using a centrifuge spinning device.

Diet will be important, and scientists are looking at foods that protect bone health and are rich in antioxidants to boost immunity. Space plays havoc with the immune system



“

ASTRONAUTS ON THE ISS DO AN AVERAGE OF TWO HOURS OF DAILY EXERCISES TO STAVE OFF THE EFFECTS OF WEIGHTLESSNESS



*Engineers and technicians test the spacesuits the astronauts will wear in the Orion spacecraft*

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT): NASA/BILL STAFFORD; US NAVY; NASA/JIM GROSSMAN



*NASA's Orion spacecraft safely splashing down in the Pacific Ocean after its test flight in December 2014; investigating the Orion's data after its successful test*

- blood-plasma samples taken from astronauts before and after a voyage show that some cells fail to kick in when needed, awakening latent viruses such as chicken pox, while others are over-active and cause allergy symptoms.

As well as physical challenges, the isolation, confinement and loss of privacy associated with long-duration space travel can provoke mental-health problems such as depression. American astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko underwent a host of psychological tests to see how they coped mentally during their 'One-Year Mission' on ISS, which ended in March this year. NASA is also testing interactive, multi-media programmes to manage psychosocial problems, such as calming virtual-reality headsets and self-administered treatment programmes.

#### **TECHNICAL CHALLENGES**

The technical trials of inhabiting Mars are immense, but perhaps the greatest challenge is the threat posed by radiation. Astronauts who travel beyond low-Earth orbit are outside the protective shield of Earth's atmosphere and magnetic field, exposing them to galactic cosmic rays that damage DNA and increase cancer risk.

NASA prohibits its astronauts from increasing their probability of dying from cancer by more than 3%, but at least one expert has estimated that exposure to radiation on Mars could cut 15 to 24 years off an astronaut's life.

A 2008 NASA report admits there's "insufficient knowledge of the health effects of radiation, the space radiation environment and counter-measure efficacy" to recommend crew-exposure limits for extended space missions.

The plan so far is to shield space vehicles and habitats to protect the humans inside. *Orion* has radiation sensors, and will use the mass already on board (such as equipment and supplies) to maximise the amount of material that can be placed between the crew and the outside environment.

The Mars One living quarters will be covered with 5 m of soil to shield the inhabitants from cosmic rays. This will provide the same protection as the Earth's atmosphere, according to Mars One's scientists.

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Decades of funding will be needed if we are to reach Mars. Such a programme will cost hundreds of billions. Can the expense be justified?

"No single rationale justifies a human spaceflight programme," says Jonathan Lunine, professor of planetary science at Cornell University. "It's the aggregate. Human spaceflight provides a broad set of benefits that, when taken together, makes a compelling case for such a programme."

Experts divide these benefits into practical and aspirational. Practical benefits are economic, educational and political. Space travel stimulates industry and entices people into careers in science and engineering. And while space exploration is collaborative between countries, leading the financial and technical aspects of a space programme raises a country's standing on the world stage.

Aspirational rationales, meanwhile, are described as "a shared human destiny and urge to explore". And, ultimately, landing on the surface of Mars might be more aspirational than practical. While a human landing might happen in 35 to 50 years' time, an entire self-sustaining colony

could take centuries.

"You can't really quantify the value," says Lunine. "But people are moved by aspirational rationales. If that wasn't the case, everyone would study business and we'd have no philosophers or arts graduates to give colour and texture to existence." R

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### HUMAN SPACEFLIGHT PROVIDES A BROAD SET OF BENEFITS THAT, WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER, MAKES A COMPELLING CASE

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### TYPOS OF BIBLICAL PROPORTIONS

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your owl husbands.

1944 EDITION OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE



# Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE

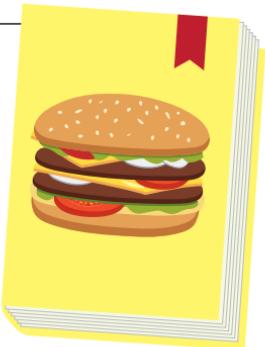
## READY TO ORDER?

A man in a library walks up to the librarian and says, "I'll have a cheeseburger and fries, please."

The librarian responds, "Sir, you do know this is a library?"

The man says, "Oh, sorry." And then leans in to add, in a whisper, "I'll have a cheeseburger and fries, please."

Source: buzzfeed.com



## NONE SO BLIND

Q: What has six eyes but cannot see?

A: Three men in a house with dirty dishes in the sink, laundry that needs folding and kids that need a bath.

SUBMITTED BY DARREN BAKER

**Red sky at night,  
shepherd's delight.  
Blue sky at night, day.**

HUMORIST TOM PARRY

## SPELLCHECK

We can teach kids there's no *i* in *team*, but it's way more important to teach them there's no *a* in *definitely*.

HUMORIST AARON FULLERTON

## THE SILENT STAGE

A boy runs in from school. "Dad!" he calls out. "I got a part in the school play - I'm playing a man who's been married for 25 years!"

"Oh, bad luck, son," his father commiserates. "Don't worry. Maybe next time you'll get a speaking part."

Seen online



## HE ALWAYS WAS

This week I was asked to do a very important after-dinner speech. I said, "Do you want me to be funny?" They said, "No, just be yourself."

THE LATE, GREAT RONNIE CORBETT

**Q:** What kind of exercise do lazy people do?  
**A:** Diddly-squats.

SUBMITTED BY VALERIE LUNT

How couples  
can improve  
their listening  
skills

# I HEAR YOU

BY LISA FIELDS

**FOUR YEARS AGO**, Catherine and Bernard Faidix met with a relationship mediator to improve their communication issues.

"I was complaining that I wasn't being heard, and my husband was complaining that I was being aggressive," says Catherine, now 58. "I thought the best thing to do was have a third person listening and helping." ➤

RELATIONSHIPS



Their sessions taught them to react more calmly, listen more openly and understand each other better. It helped bring them closer as they worked on communication with and without the mediator.

"I would be more patient because there was a third person, and my husband felt more confident to open up and say what was in his heart," Catherine says. "It's a long process: a lot of practising, sharing and wanting things to get better. But things can get better, even if you've been together 40 years."

When you've got something to say, you want your partner to hang on your every word. But often, it can feel like you're being tuned out, especially if you've shared decades' worth of mundane exchanges. And as much as you'd like to believe that you're an ideal listener, you're probably just as guilty of neglecting your partner.

"I think there's a great hunger to be heard," says Helen Ralston, executive chair of the International Listening Association, who does her research near Oxford, UK. "We've got the equipment to do it; most of us have two ears, a mind and a heart. And if there's a great hunger to be heard, this suggests there's very little real listening going on. Instead of listening, we are more likely to be waiting to offer our own point of view."

The average person spends from 45-70% of the day listening to others. But within each 24-hour period, you have very little quality time with your

partner. Most couples converse meaningfully for an average of nine minutes each day. If you're too distracted, you'll miss more than today's gossip; you could miss subtle hints about how your partner is feeling, which could bring you closer. Sadly, many of us miss these opportunities to connect.

"Unlike reading, we usually don't get any proper education in listening reception, even though this is the kind of communication we use most frequently," says author Kent Adelmann, professor and listening researcher at Malmö University in Sweden.

You can learn to listen more intently and make your partner feel appreciated, not overlooked. Here's how:

## Focus on the moment

It's natural for your mind to wander during conversation, but if you're aware of this, it's easier to combat the tendency. Part of the problem is that people listen faster than they talk.

"The average person talks at a rate of about 125 to 180 words per minute, while we can listen at a rate of about 400 to 500 words per minute," Adelmann says. "The listener always has a superior position, as compared to the speaker. This explains why you can be thinking about work or cooking dinner and still understand the point from the speaker."

One important step that many people overlook: if you realise that you can't listen when your partner approaches you, be honest and schedule

time to speak later. Then turn off the TV, put down your smartphone and sit together. These simple actions show that you respect your partner and are devoted to hearing her.

"The partner, in adult life, is the most important attachment figure," says European Association for Psychotherapy spokesperson Annette Kreuz Smolinski, a clinical psychologist who conducts couples therapy in Valencia, Spain. "He or she should be a secure base, and that means we

"Interrupting is not helpful; it stems from impatience," points out family therapist Michael Nichols. "The problem is, we're not usually that interested in hearing them out. We're waiting to say what we want to say. We interrupt and say, 'Oh yes, I understand.' We respond by telling our story. Those are mistakes."

When your partner asks you to listen, be conscious of when you speak and what you say.

"Very often, people don't know



## *"The person asking the question needs to stop, pause and listen in silence to let the other think, then speak"*

have to make space and time to really listen to one another."

Over time, as couples gradually take each other for granted, conversation often suffers; the listening isn't intent, as it once was.

"What happens at the very start of the relationship is how it should go on," Smolinski says. "At first, we want to be sure of everything he says: what he likes and doesn't like. But in relationships, especially long-lasting ones, people think they already know what the partner will say."

### **Don't interrupt**

Have you ever finished your partner's sentence? Whether or not you've predicted correctly, you're tuning him out.

when they're interrupting," Ralston points out. "During my research, I record conversations. Afterwards, when people hear the recordings, they are horrified at how often they have interrupted – they didn't know that they were doing it."

Effort has helped Kimberly West refrain from interrupting her boyfriend, Lynn. West knows that Lynn gathers his thoughts before speaking, but she realised she was interrupting him too often – which was ironic, because she teaches people how to communicate.

"The person asking the question needs to stop, pause and listen in silence to let the other person think, then speak," says West. "I knew this logically – but this is very hard for me.

So I started being more aware of what he needed. Now my boyfriend tells me he feels more loved and respected."

## Just listen

When your partner shares something meaningful, listen. Don't give advice, share your opinion or recount anecdotes. "Most people listen with an intention to react, rather than understand," Nichols says. "The conversation starts to be like a ping-pong game. Instead of acknowledging or responding, they go back and forth, and neither

his or her attitude, needs and view of the situation are right and that one needs to convince the other," says Guy Bodenmann, professor of clinical psychology at the University of Zürich. "Relationship conflicts are important, like the salt in the soup. It's important that couples fight with each other, but in an appropriate, respectful way."

Discuss touchy issues when you've had time to calm down.

"If they are already very upset and highly physiologically excited when they engage in the conversation, a

*"Intense feelings tend to put each of us in a glass room, and we don't hear what the other says"*

one feels deeply understood."

Many people give advice, but refrain unless your partner specifically requests feedback.

"We sometimes assume that other people want advice when, actually, they want someone to listen," Ralston says. "Often, when we have the opportunity to talk to someone who listens, we find that the best listener enables us to listen to ourselves."

## Argue fairly

It's hard to have a meaningful relationship without occasionally arguing, but listening during arguments is challenging for most people.

"Each partner has the opinion that

constructive conversation will not be possible," Bodenmann says.

Seventy-six-year-old Anna Russell has learned from 57 years of marriage that she and her husband, Gene, don't communicate when they're angry.

"Intense feelings tend to put each of us in a glass room, and we don't hear what the other says," Anna says. "After I calm down and Gene is detached from the hot topic, we can speak."

What if you always argue that one of you doesn't listen? A surprising reason could be to blame.

"What's underneath those moments is often a feeling of not feeling emotionally connected to your partner," says clinical psychologist Jette Simon,

director of the Emotionally Focused Therapy Institute in Copenhagen.

Talking about your feelings may help you both listen more intently.

"That is often new for the couples: that under anger and frustration is a lot of vulnerability, because they haven't experienced a vulnerable partner," Simon says. "When they get it, it's interesting to watch how much easier they can de-escalate and regulate themselves so they can listen better."

## Show empathy

If you're sharing exciting news or expressing disgust and you're met with indifference, it can make you feel like you don't matter. When the tables are turned, put yourself in your partner's shoes and listen fully so you can give an appropriate reaction.

"The more the speaker is talking about his or her inner world (why something is difficult and painful for him or her), the easier it is to engage in empathy," Bodenmann says.

Your nonverbal reaction can be just as important as anything that you say.

"It is never enough to tell somebody about your intellectual understanding, but you also have to show your

emotional understanding," Adelmann says. "A tear in your eye or your hand on my shoulder express often more than words."

## Check your ego at the door

Want to be a better listener? Ask for help. "If you ask your partner what you should do differently," Smolinski says, "he will tell you. 'The one thing I hate is when you say this,' or 'You don't sit across the table and look at me.'"

If you're very talkative, your partner may have trouble getting a word in. Encourage him to talk more, and really listen.

"Let him or her know what you think they're trying to say and let them elaborate," Nichols says. "A lot of people say, 'Oh, you're trying to say this,' and they punctuate it with a period, like, 'Oh, I've got it.' You want to invite them to talk more."

You may be surprised at the positive reaction you get.

"When you're stuck in a way of functioning and somebody shows you that it's stuck, it's helpful," says Catherine. "It's changing the way I'm seeing things... and my husband is willing to change, too."

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## ENTERPRISING JOB APPLICANT

Interviewer: "What are your career goals?"

Me: "Live long and prosper."

Interviewer: "Well, that explains the Dr Spock costume." @D\_RICKY

**BY THE NUMBERS****1956**

Philip creates the Duke of Edinburgh's Award to challenge young people and recognise their achievements

**140**

Number of countries in which the Award is run. It has more than one million participants annually.

# Prince Philip

BY HAZEL FLYNN

**TELL ME MORE**

'Philippos' was sixth in line to the Greek throne, son of Andrea (often called Andrew), the brother of ruler King Constantine. A failed war against Turkey saw Constantine abdicate and his brother receive a death sentence. King George V sent a Royal Navy ship to evacuate his second cousin Prince Andrea, his wife Princess Alice, their four older daughters and, in a cot made from an orange box, 18-month-old Philip. They fled with little more than the clothes they were wearing and were eventually taken in by another brother in Paris.



**EARLY LIFE** Philip's family lived in a small lodge outside Paris and scraped to get by. He was not yet ten when his mother was committed to a psychiatric clinic for a time. His father drifted aimlessly on the French Riviera, while Philip was sent to boarding school in the UK and effectively raised by Alice's British relatives, including her brother Lord Louis Mountbatten.

Mountbatten was devoted to his nephew, a close bond that lasted until Lord Louis' tragic death in a 1972 IRA bombing. But Philip was 16 before he next heard from his mother. "It's simply what happened," he said matter-of-factly. "The family broke up. My mother was ill, my sisters were married, my father was in the south of France. I just had to get on with it. You do. One does."



**HANDSOME AND SUSPECT** In 1939, 13-year-old Princess Elizabeth met her third cousin Prince Philip, 18, an officer cadet in the British Navy. He was tall, handsome and funny; she was smitten. By the time she was 17 the feeling was mutual. In 1947, Philip gave up his Greek royal title, gained British citizenship, taking the surname Mountbatten. Elizabeth's father, George VI, bestowed titles including Duke of Edinburgh upon him and decreed he be addressed as 'His Royal Highness'. The couple married in November 1947 despite the opposition of some courtiers to the 'penniless foreigner'.

## ANGUISH OVER A NAME

In 1952, the death of George VI made Elizabeth the new monarch, making Philip's surname a problem. Her mother, grandmother and Prime Minister Winston Churchill were adamant it should be Windsor and she acceded. Prince Philip and Lord Louis Mountbatten were furious. "I am the only man in the country not allowed to give his name to his children," he is famously said to have told friends.

**Lord Louis Mountbatten**



## KEEN SPORTSMAN

Prince Philip is an enthusiastic sportsman, taking part in charity cricket matches and learning to fly. He took up competitive carriage driving in 1971 when he officially retired from playing polo - believing it was the perfect sport for someone in 'middle age'. Over the intervening years, he has represented the UK at several world events and still drives today, as well as judging at the Windsor Horse Show.





# Royal Wisdom (and Gaffes)

**“You have mosquitoes.  
I have the Press.”**

During a conversation with a hospital matron while on tour in the Caribbean in 1966

**“Tolerance is the one  
essential ingredient.  
You can take it from me  
that the Queen has the  
quality of tolerance in  
abundance.”**

Giving advice for a successful marriage in 1997



**“You managed not to get  
eaten then?”**

To a British student who had trekked in Papua New Guinea, during an official visit in 1998

**“The man who invented  
the red carpet needed his  
head examined.”**

Said as he was about to disembark on a state visit to Brazil in 1966

**“We don’t come here for  
our health. We can think  
of other ways of enjoying  
ourselves.”**

During an official visit to Canada in 1976

**“If you like, I’ll walk  
with you.”**

Said to Princes William and Harry following the death of their mother, Princess Diana, in August 1997 when neither of the boys wanted to walk behind her coffin. As their grandfather, he was concerned they would regret it later

**“They’re not mating,  
are they?”**

Indulging his fancy for mischievous humour when watching robots colliding, Science Museum, 2000



# That's Outrageous!

UNDERSTATEMENTS OF THE YEAR

**"THERE ARE TIMES WHEN WE MISPLACE A BAG, AND THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE TIMES"**

is how a spokesman for Alaska Airlines summed up matters after it was revealed that the airline had lost the luggage of its CEO, Brad Tilden.

Source: nbcnews.com



**"HE OBVIOUSLY WANTED TO MAKE SURE HE DIDN'T FAIL TO APPEAR."**

This was a California district attorney attempting to

make heads or tails out of why an accused car thief would arrive at the courthouse for his hearing in another stolen car.

Source: huffingtonpost.com

**"I HAVE TO CUT OUT EATING BREAKFAST AT HOME."** That's the conclusion an American teacher reached after he was suspended for being late to work at his school 111 times over the past two years.

Source: newser.com

**"WE'RE HAPPY TO REPORT THAT DANIEL WILL BE GETTING THE NEW PHOTO HE REQUESTED."**

An Australian on the run for drug and traffic offences reacted to his mug shot the police posted on Facebook by responding, "Can you use a better photo? This is a horrible mug shot." The cops granted Daniel his wish, planting him in front of a police photographer soon after he was arrested.

Source: abc.net.au

**"MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THEY'VE RESCINDED THE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT,"** said a police officer, after a job seeker, having landed a coveted position at an American company, texted a naked photo of himself to a human resources manager. Police said the man who sent the pictures told them the nude selfies were sent accidentally. Call it a selfie destructive moment.

Source: Chicago Tribune

**"THE IRONY IS NOT LOST ON US."**

So said the director of Montana's Department of Environmental Quality. She was referring to the fact that employees were placed on paid leave and their office building shut down while it was tested for lead poisoning.

Source: Helena Independent Record



# Life's Like That

SEEING THE FUNNY SIDE

JUNE  
1964



## From the Archives

*For a rich vein of humour that could not be mined today, check out this 52-year-old letter from June 1964.*

A friend of ours is a strong advocate of seatbelts. He buckles himself in every time he drives a car, no matter how short the distance.

Recently, while his own car was being serviced, he was driving a borrowed car which did not have seatbelts.

Forgetting this, he parked in front of the bank building, unbuckled his belt, stepped out of the car - and made a desperate grab for his trousers.

SUBMITTED BY ROBERT W. PASKINS



### WEDDING 3.0

I went to a colleague's wedding recently. When it came to the part of the service where the couple had both said, "I do," they handed their mobile phones to each other to update their Facebook relationship status.

That was a first for me!

SUBMITTED BY  
AMELIA BARNES



### HEAR NO EVIL

It was a typically noisy dinner at my parents' home, and Dad was having trouble following the multiple conversations. He kept jumping in with off-topic comments and asking for things to be repeated. I finally told him he needed to get a hearing aid.

Looking at me as if I were crazy, he said, "What would I do with a hand grenade?"

SUBMITTED BY PAT TORNATORE

PHOTOS: iSTOCK



## WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

After painting the bedroom walls, my husband prepared to put back the pictures.

"How should I hang them?" he asked. "Too high or too low?" **SUBMITTED BY NANCY SETTER**

## OVER AND OUT

When her six-year-old daughter and four-year-old son ran outside to play with their new toy, my sister sat back to enjoy a cup of coffee and a rare moment of quiet. The peace was shattered when her son ran back into the house, crying.

"What's wrong?" my sister asked.

"She won't stop calling me Roger," he sobbed, and threw down his new walkie-talkie.

**SUBMITTED BY MELISSA JOHNSON**



## GOT THE CALL-BACK

"How was your first day of school?" I asked my daughter, after she began kindergarten.

"Fine," she said. "They want me to come back tomorrow."

**SUBMITTED BY SHIRLEY SPRAGUE**

## The Great Tweet-off: Viewer Edition

Movies and TV shows make perfect fodder for armchair critics. And on Twitter, that's EVERYONE.

*The Revenant* (2015). An epic tale of one man's desperate journey to do whatever it takes to finally win an Oscar. **@BADBANANA (TIM SEIDELL)**

Watch *The Walking Dead* with someone who's super into it so every time a zombie appears, you can pull the old, "Wait, who's this now?" **@KARINKILGARIFF**

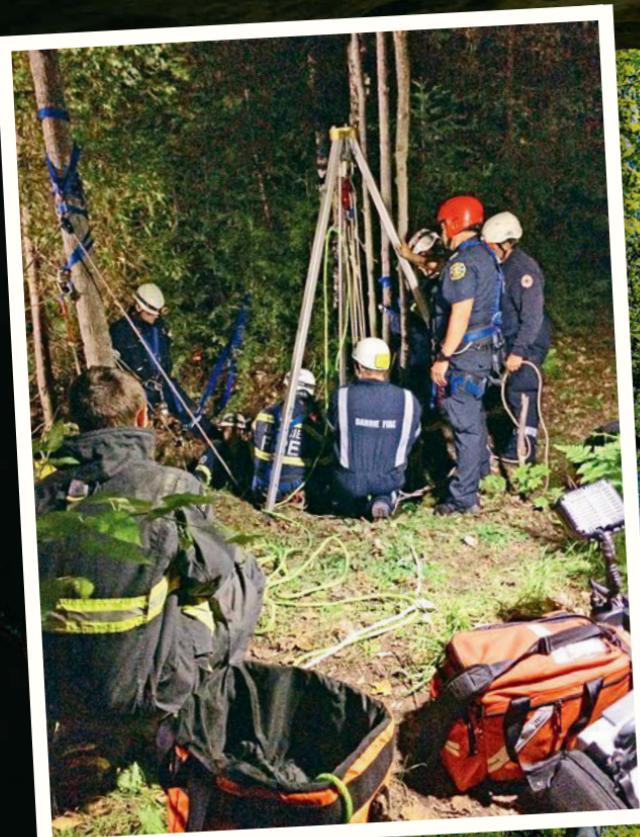
Every *Scooby-Doo* episode would literally last two minutes long if the gang went to the mask store and asked a few questions. **@SCBCHBUM (ERICA)**



If growing up in the '80s taught me one thing, it's that my friends and I should have found a treasure map by now. **@LIZHACKETT**

"The end." – Quentin Tarantino starting a bedtime story. **@SAMGRITTNER**

Luke Skywalker is my favourite hero who looks 100 per cent prepared to figure skate at all times. **@THENATEWOLF (NATHAN USHER)**



*Above: The rescue team and the complex rig and pulleys they erected in a bid to save Seth Rowe*



# CRUSHED IN A CREVICE

It was just a quick climb,  
but one slip trapped him  
20 metres underground

BY LISA FITTERMAN

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL BYERS

**THE CREVICE IS LITTLE** more than a crack in the rough terrain, barely 50 cm wide. Curious, Seth Rowe stands at its edge, poised to go in. It is just before noon on June 20, 2015. The sun peeks out but it is still chilly in the Nottawasaga Bluffs, a rugged area in a snow belt about 140 km northeast of Toronto, Canada.

Seth knows the temperature inside the crevice will hover around -2°C. But he loves the challenge of exploring caves and crevices and he believes that his jeans, T-shirt and the sturdy jacket he carries should be protection enough. *I won't be in long*, he thinks.

At heart Seth, now 31, is still a dare-devil kid – an avid hiker, charming and sometimes irresponsible. He knows that after a night of partying with his buddies, he should be at home. But his wife, Jamie, also understands that he has to get away every once in a while. It is as much a part of him as his love for her and their two children.

"You're a bad boy," Jamie, 25, always says. "It's part of why I love you."

*Then again, he thinks, maybe this time I went too far.* In his mind, he replays a conversation – OK, a fight – they had barely an hour earlier. "Where are you?" Jamie had asked on her mobile phone, her tone clipped and angry.

"In the forest," he said.

"Come home now! Remember we're all going to a movie later – and I need some help around here," she replied, a pointed reference to Joella, four, and 15-month-old Wyatt.

"OK, I'll be home in an hour." *But not while you're mad at me*, he thinks.

Now, bracing his arms on the edge of the crevice to control his descent, he breathes in deeply and exhales to relax his muscles and make his 1.83-m tall, 70 kg body as small as possible – a trick he learned in his early 20s caving around here. Down, down he goes, between the ice-covered walls while his feet, in sturdy hiking shoes, cast about for purchase.

It does not matter that he has neither a rope nor survival kit for he has done this countless times before, in and out with nary a problem. Coming to a stop on a ledge, he opens his phone and uses it to illuminate his surroundings. The crevice walls come into glittering focus and his breath hovers in front of him. The smell is a mix of mould and earth, damp, heavy and dark.

After a few minutes Seth realises that if he goes any further, he won't be able to climb out. He steps onto a rock ready to hoist himself up and out of the crevice. *OK. One, two... Oh God!* The rock gives way and Seth slides into the black void, through that tiny opening, like a finger donning a too-small ring.

There is no time to cry out.

There would be no-one to hear him if he did.

**ONCE HE COMES TO A STOP,** Seth takes a few minutes to catch his breath. The sheer force of the fall has left him wedged like a cork in a bottle, with the tip of his nose squashed against one jagged wall and his back flush and raw against the one behind him.

He has no idea where he is. *How long did I slide for?* It felt like forever. It wasn't a straight drop, either, for he knows that crevices follow the whim of nature and erosion. *Stay calm*, he tells himself. He looks up and sees a crack of light about 20 m above him. *Phone for help*, he thinks. But when he reaches for his phone he realises, with a chill, that there would be no service that far underground. He tries to move upwards but the crevice holds him fast: a prison – maybe even a tomb.

*Stop thinking like that!* he tells himself sharply.

One hour passes, then maybe two or three, but in the dark Seth loses track of time. He wonders what everyone at home is doing. Every once in a while, he calls out: "Help! Is anyone there?"

There is no answer.

*Jamie will find me. She'll find the truck and bring a rope.* It becomes his mantra. Even though he parked his truck in an unploughed field 500 m beyond where he usually leaves it, he has to believe that his wife will find it.

He notices his hands and feet are numb from the damp and the fact that he has not moved for hours. He wishes he could put on his jacket but there isn't room. His knees are killing him.

*So might the crevice.*

That is the moment when he begins to pray out loud. "Dear God, I got myself in here, I know. But could You help me out? Tomorrow is Father's Day. I want to spend it with my family."

It's totally dark, and the close space feels as big as a cathedral. Then he hears snuffling and growls from above. *What is it?* There is a glint from a pair of eyes, golden and feral, staring



## "WHERE ARE YOU?" THE VOICE IS REAL: SETH'S ORDEAL WILL SOON BE OVER – OR SO HE THINKS

through the opening: it's a coyote, and Seth realises it can smell his blood.

Frightened, he cries out, "Please, someone, help me!" Then he hears a voice, or thinks he does: he's been calling out for hours. *I'm hallucinating.*

But the voice repeats the question: "Where are you?" It is real. Relief floods him. He has been found and his ordeal will soon be over – or so he thinks.

**AT 8.05PM JAMIE'S PHONE** goes off in the cinema in Collingwood, 23 km away. She was about to sit down with the kids, fuming at her husband's absence. She'd gone to look for him earlier but there was no sign of his truck – and he wasn't answering his phone.

As she listens to the hiker who found him, Jamie runs out of the cinema, somehow managing to hold Wyatt close while dragging a protesting Joella behind her.

It is about 45 minutes before Jamie gets to the field - a friend takes the kids. At the clearing where the hiker heard her husband, she kneels by the crevice and calls out: "Seth! I'm here. I love you. We want you to come home."

**FIRE CHIEF COLIN SHEWELL** and other members of the nearby Clearview Fire Department are already on the scene when firefighters from the city of Barrie, a city 59 km to the east, arrive. The team is prepared to rescue a man trapped in a crevice. It happens every year in this area. But Bill Boyes, then Barrie's deputy fire chief, soon realises this is going to be more difficult than originally thought. There is no obvious opening to get at Seth, and the team thinks he must have slid at an angle for at least 6 m from the entry point and gone down approximately 20 m. "We've got a call in to an off-duty guy on our force who is experienced in crevice-diving," Boyes continues. "Right now, he's our best hope."

By 10pm the site is lit up like an airport landing strip. David Dunt, the rescue expert, arrives. "Let me go down



*Above: The entrance to the crevice*

to get an overview," he says. Thinking he will be in the crevice for 20 minutes or so, Dunt, 1.78 m tall and 91 kg of muscle, puts a full-body harness on over his light clothing, claps on a hard hat with a lantern and headset. His colleagues lower him 8 m into the black.

Landing on a narrow shelf, he trains his lights downwards. The beams catch a tiny figure about

12 m below off at an angle more than 10 m away. In between the two men is the opening that Seth has been staring at for more than ten hours, no more than 20 cm across, barely enough room for skinny legs to pass through, never mind a full torso.

"Seth?" Dunt calls. "I'm here to get you out." Unspoken is the thought, *Dead or alive*. "Have you been into crevices before?"

"Yeah, lots of times," Seth replies, his voice thick and slow from cold and lack of food.

Although Seth is woefully under-equipped, Dunt is relieved to learn that he understands the principles of caving, such as muscle relaxation and diaphragm compression and how to use a seat harness. But Dunt knows he is also probably hypothermic.

"We're racing against him freezing to death," he reports urgently into his headset. "We have to get him food -

energy – and water. Because we can't get him out without his help."

The firefighter stays down, talking with Seth about his wife and kids – anything to keep the trapped man awake. At 10.37pm he threads a weighted rope more than 12 m into the dark, which Seth catches and somehow manages to secure. A rudimentary ferrying system ensures that at least Seth has water and energy bars and a thermal blanket.

Next, firefighters send in a rescue harness, which Dunt talks Seth through putting on. It takes half an hour, with each minute, each second, filled with scrapes, grunts and searing pain.

"I can't move my legs!" Seth cries.

"Yes, you *can*, Seth," Dunt says, his voice steady.

Finally, around 11.15pm, after nearly 12 hours in the crevice, Seth is on the move. Firefighters pull him up slowly, a millimetre at a time, but within minutes the screaming starts. It echoes through the crevice, wordless and panicked.

"Wait, wait, wait," Dunt yells into the headset. "Drop him back! Talk to me, Seth!" *Is his shoulder dislocated? His hip? If it is, we're finished.*

Although the screams stop, Seth, caught up in a haze of pain and fatigue, doesn't respond. The firefighters start again, reeling him in like a big fish, centimetres forward and then back again. One hour runs into two, then three and four. Finally, Seth is shifted over the 6 m so that now he is directly under Dunt and warming up a bit from a heater blasting into the crevice.

But he still needs to get through that impossibly small gap.

At that point Dunt hears rhythmic knocking, like a woodpecker. He realises it is his helmet hitting the wall behind him; he can't stop shivering. *I have to get out before I become useless*, he thinks. Hauled up, he is wrapped in thermal blankets. Another firefighter goes down to keep Seth talking.

Meanwhile, Boyes meets with Shewell again. It is nearing 3.30am. They need more expertise. Shewell calls the Ontario Provincial Emergency Operations Centre, which quickly dispatches the Toronto Fire Services to the scene.

At 5.30am firefighters from the city arrive. Dunt is happy to see his old friend Chris Rowland among them. A stocky rescue specialist with a loud, commanding voice, Rowland soon takes charge.

"Quiet!" he yells as he kneels at the edge of the crevice. By now, there are about 50 firefighters and paramedics on the site. Seth has been in the crevice for 17½ hours.

Rowland outlines a plan: first, the firefighters from Toronto chip away at the narrow entrance to open the crevice up. Then, three of them in hard hats and protective glasses get into harness and pivot themselves to upside-down positions so they can use electric chisels to further enlarge that tiny gap by about 8 cm.

"It should be enough for Seth to squeeze through," Rowland says.



*Having survived his ordeal, Seth is grateful to have the chance to be more present as a father and husband*

The last-ditch rescue operation begins at 6.14am. For nearly three hours the chisels whine and echo, punctuated by Seth's cries as shards of rock fall on his head. The upside-down firefighters take turns coming up for breaks.

As the clock ticks towards 9:30am, the opening is wide enough to use ropes to carefully haul the still harnessed Seth up from the depths. But first Dunt goes back into the crevice to give his lifeline to Seth.

At 9.41am – nearly 22 hours after Seth went in – he rises slowly out of the ground, dirty, with shredded clothes, a body scraped raw and red and a bleeding gash on his head. It is as if the earth is giving birth to him.

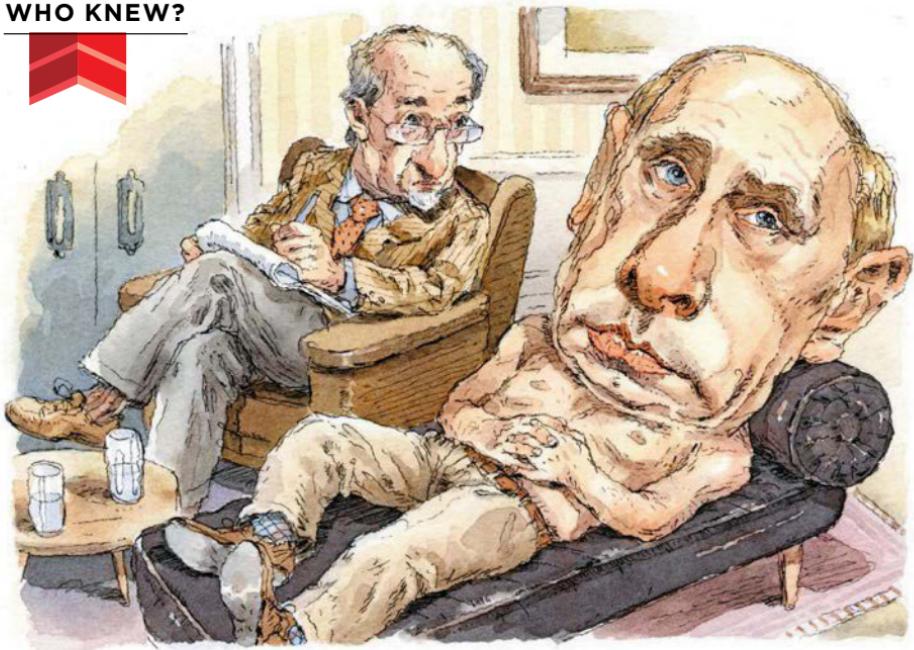
Jamie takes his hand. He wants to tell her something. "I want a Big Mac and fries." Laughing out loud, Jamie turns to the paramedics and says, "He's fine."

She's right, too. Miraculously, Seth spends only one night in hospital, where he is treated for hypothermia and abrasions to his chest and back.

**AT A CELEBRATION IN** Barrie on June 30 – Seth's birthday – the family showed their appreciation of the people who gave his story a happy ending. He spoke of how grateful he was for the chance to be more present as a father and husband. Now he and Jamie go out together as a couple, solid and loving.

"[It] would be absolutely horrendous to every year have Father's Day be the day your dad didn't come back," Seth said.

To highlight that sentiment, Joella, now five, presented a daisy to Chief Colin Shewell of the Clearview Fire Department. "Thank you," she said, "for saving my daddy." **R**



# Psychoanalysing Dictators

BY DAVE GILSON FROM MOTHER JONES

CIA psychologists dig into the mysterious minds of world leaders in these incredible secret reports

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN CUNEO

A SECRET US 2008 STUDY concluded that Russian President Vladimir Putin's defining characteristic is ... autism.

Scrutinising hours of Putin footage, the Department of Defense researchers found "that the Russian president carries a neurological abnormality ... identified by leading neuroscientists

as Asperger's syndrome, an autistic disorder that affects all of his decisions."

Putin's spokesman dismissed the claim as "stupidity not worthy of comment". But it's far from the first time the intelligence community has tried to diagnose foreign leaders from afar on behalf of politicians and diplomats.

The CIA has a long history of crafting psychological profiles of international figures, with varying degrees of accuracy. Enjoy this sampling of its attempts to get inside the heads of these famous figures.

## ADOLF HITLER

In 1943, the Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's predecessor, commissioned Henry A. Murray of the Harvard Psychological Clinic to evaluate Hitler's personality based on remote observations. Murray and his colleagues returned with an unsparring 240-page assessment.



**Possible finales for Hitler included going insane or committing suicide “at the last moment”**

**DIAGNOSIS** Hitler was an insecure, impotent, masochistic and suicidal neurotic narcissist.

### FROM THE REPORT

■ “There is little disagreement among psychologists that Hitler’s personality is an example of the counteractive type, marked by intense and stubborn efforts to overcome early disabilities, weaknesses and humiliations (wounds to self-esteem) and by efforts to revenge injuries and insults to pride.”

■ He suffered from “hysterical blindness” while he was a soldier in World War I. “This psychosomatic illness was concomitant with the final defeat of Mother Germany, and it was after hearing of her capitulation that he had his vision of his task as saviour. Suddenly his sight was restored.”

■ The dossier predicted eight possible finales for the Führer, including going insane, sacrificing himself in battle, contriving to be killed by a Jewish assassin and committing suicide: “Hitler has often vowed that he would commit suicide if his plans miscarried; but if he chooses this course, he will do it at the last moment and in the most dramatic possible manner ... For us it would be an undesirable outcome.”

## NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

The CIA profiled the Soviet premier before his 1961 meeting with President Kennedy in Vienna. Reading up on his adversary got JFK hooked on CIA personality profiles – particularly “salacious secrets about foreign leaders”. Meanwhile, the Soviets profiled Kennedy for Khrushchev, describing him as a “typical pragmatist” whose “liberalism’ is rather relative”.

**DIAGNOSIS** The CIA saw Khrushchev as “a crude peasant who liked to be unpredictable and two-faced”.

### FROM THE REPORT

■ “An uninhibited ham actor who sometimes illustrates his points with barnyard humour”, on occasion he also

has "considerable personal dignity".

■ "He is immoderately sensitive to slights - real or imagined - to himself, his political faith, or his nation, all of which he views more or less interchangeably."

■ "Capable of extraordinary frankness, and in his own eyes no doubt unusually honest, Khrushchev can also be expert in calculated bluffing. It is often hard to distinguish when he is voicing real conviction and when he is dissembling."

■ "It is difficult with Khrushchev to tell whether his anger is real or feigned ... He is less able to conceal his formidable temper when he is tired."

## FIDEL CASTRO

The CIA published a secret report on the Cuban leader in 1961.

**DIAGNOSIS** Fidel Castro is not technically "crazy", the CIA says, "but he is so highly neurotic and unstable a personality as to be quite vulnerable to certain kinds of psychological pressure."

### FROM THE REPORT

■ "The outstanding neurotic elements in his personality are his hunger for power and his need for the recognition



Muammar Qaddafi

and adulation of the masses."

■ "Whenever his self-concept is slightly disrupted by criticism, he becomes so emotionally unstable as to lose to some degree his contact with reality."

■ "Castro has a constant need to rebel, to find an adversary, and to extend his personal power by overthrowing existing authority."

■ "[His] egotism is his Achilles' heel."

## MUAMMAR QADDAFI

In the early 1980s, the CIA tried to explain the erratic Libyan strongman for the Reagan administration. Journalist

Bob Woodward quotes the study in his book *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA*.

**DIAGNOSIS** "Despite belief to the contrary, Qaddafi is not psychotic," the report said. He was, however, "judged to suffer from a severe personality disturbance - a 'borderline personality disorder'".

### FROM THE REPORT

■ "Under severe stress, he is subject to bizarre behaviour when his judgment may be faulty."

■ His behaviour could have been attributed to "an approaching or actual midlife crisis." R

\* \* \*

## A MOST DELICIOUS TYPO

One man was admitted to hospital suffering from buns. BRISTOL GAZETTE

PHOTO ESSAY



# Touch the Sky

... that's how you feel  
while standing on the  
world's most amazing  
viewing platforms

BY CORNELIA KUMFERT





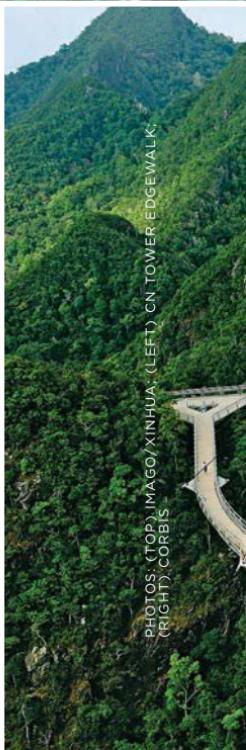


**Le Pas dans le Vide** – the step into the void – is the name of the 2.5 m glass cage (previous spread), situated off the uppermost terrace of the Aiguille du Midi mountain at an altitude of 3842 m in the French Alps. Those brave enough to step into the ‘void’ find themselves hovering over a rocky abyss more than 1000 m below them – the ultimate adrenaline rush.

**Visitors to the Grand Canyon Skywalk in Arizona** (above) are prevented from plunging 1200 m into the chasm below them only by a 13 cm layer of glass. The horseshoe-shaped bridge extends 21 m over probably the most famous canyon in the world. Since its construction in 2007, however, the Americans have had to relinquish the title of longest cantilever glass-bottomed bridge. Opened in 2015, the Longgang Skywalk in southwest China extends a further 6 m out into thin air.

**Probably one of the best ways** of seeing Sydney is to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge (right). But this is genuinely no walk in the park. In total, visitors conquer some 1500 m of winding around structural elements and climbing steep staircases to experience the apex of the steel colossus, which is itself a mere 134 m above sea level. Anyone fit enough to scale the 1439 steps is rewarded with a fantastic panorama of the iconic city skyline, Opera House and the harbour.





PHOTOS: (TOP) MAGO/XINHUA; (LEFT) CN TOWER EDGEWALK; (RIGHT) CORBIS



**Dubbed the 'walk of faith',** a glass walkway 1430 m above the ground (left) winds around Tianmen Mountain in China offering anyone with nerves of steel the chance to look down into a 1200 m deep chasm. The only catch? Visitors are required to first put cloth slippers over their shoes. Why? Apparently it's because they couldn't find anyone willing to work as a cleaner on the skywalk.

**A walk along the façade** of the CN Tower in Toronto (below left) is certainly record-breaking as the Canadian TV tower is home to the world's highest walkway on the outside of a building. Although everyone taking part in the 356-m-high walk is secured by special wires, it's definitely not one for the faint-hearted.

**A mast 82 m high** supports one of the longest, cable-stayed pedestrian bridges in the world. The 125-m-long Langkawi Sky Bridge (below) in Malaysia offers visitors a breathtaking overhead view of the rainforest. But it's not only the view that's spectacular. The curved bridge's construction was a challenge, too. Sections of it were flown by helicopter to the top of Mount Mat Cinchang, where they were assembled and put in place.

R





# The Morning Report

BY DONALD E. HUNTON  
FROM THE BOSTON GLOBE

Keeping tabs on our father has unexpected benefits

**W**hen my mother passed away a few years ago, my octogenarian father was left alone in the large house that they had shared for 50 years. Without her to watch out for him, he worried about who would help him if "something happened".

He has a wonderful circle of friends in town who phone and invite him out, and an emergency call button. But, as my sister and I live in other states, we hit on the idea that Dad could send us an email every morning when he awoke. Thus was born the Morning Report.

He's usually up by the crack of dawn, and his half a dozen or so sentences are waiting in my inbox when

I wake up, despite the two-hour time difference. If there's no email, I call him, or my sister does, to make sure everything is fine. (Sometimes he's having computer problems or decided to sleep in.) The reports have become more than a daily check, though: they're a diary of sorts, a planning tool, a catalyst for more extended conversations, and a source of insight into his life.

Through them, Dad tells us about his daily routines. He might be heading to the supermarket for bananas, going to his cardiac-rehab exercise class or having lunch with friends. I find the repetitive cycle of his activities - current-events discussion group on Tuesday nights, Rotary Club on



Wednesday afternoons and coffee with friends after church on Sunday morning – reassuring.

Sometimes he slips in cryptic teasers. For example, recently he told us, "I've climbed halfway up Mount Washington!" Given his age and distance from New Hampshire, such a hike was unlikely. I was befuddled for a day or two until he reminded me he was working on a hooked rug with a scene of the mountain.

Each email closes with "All my love, Dad." When my mother was

alive, that sentiment was normally reserved for her. Now that she is gone, he shares those feelings and his experiences with us. For me, what started as a simple security measure has spawned a deeper closeness.

I'm grateful my father is still able to manage his computer and the internet. I know the day will come when he'll no longer be able to write the reports, and we'll have to find other ways to keep tabs on one another. Until then, they are our way of knowing that another normal day has begun. R

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For me, what  
started as a  
simple security  
measure has  
spawned a  
deeper closeness

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FROM THE BOSTON GLOBE (MAY 24, 2015), © 2015 BY DONALD E. HUNTON.



I gave his mother all I could.  
Now it was his turn

# What Will Happen to Patty's Boy?

BY KAREN MOTT, AS TOLD TO MELODY WARNICK

A

S A NURSE AT A CANCER CARE CENTRE in Massachusetts, where I've worked for seven years, I'll do almost anything to make a patient feel better. I'm quick with blankets and juice and will gladly hold a hand for a prayer. But when I met Patricia McNulty in 2011, she didn't want my help.

She was a tiny 44-year-old single mother getting high doses of chemotherapy to battle an aggressive head and neck cancer. Unlike many of our other patients, Patty was alone during

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE MCGREGOR

*"This has been  
an amazing  
turn of events,"*  
says Karen Mott,  
here with  
Stephen

her treatment, but no matter what I tried, I couldn't get her to open up. She just buried herself in a book or pulled a blanket over her head to fend off conversation.

Eventually I hit on a reliable way to make Patty smile: mentioning her nine-year-old son, Stephen. She'd tell me how well he did in school, how he'd been selected to read a poem he wrote at a local bookstore. She insisted on scheduling her one-day chemo treatment over two days so she'd always be there to meet his school bus. In fact,

My first thought was, *What's going to happen to Stephen?*

The father of Patty's two older sons couldn't take Stephen, nor could any of her five siblings. I knew that Patty wanted to keep her son out of the foster-care system, but planning for her death proved so excruciating, she just didn't talk about it. She couldn't.

Because her cancer was terminal, Patty became a patient of our hospital's hospice programme. Suddenly my husband, Michael, who works as the hospice chaplain, started hear-

## **Stephen was the reason she was taking such an aggressive course of treatment in the first place. She desperately wanted to live for him**

Stephen was the reason she was taking such an aggressive course of treatment in the first place. She desperately wanted to live for him.

Everything about Patty's life seemed like a battle. The family was on welfare and lived in a subsidised apartment in a low-income neighbourhood. Her boyfriend, Stephen's father, had recently been hit by a car, and the resulting traumatic brain injury left him disabled. But Patty never complained. She just sucked it up. I think she'd been doing that her whole life.

In August 2012, after a year and a half of chemotherapy, Patty was told her cancer had spread, and I learned that she wouldn't live much longer.

ing about Patty and Stephen, too. The hospice nurses would share stories at their meetings about how bright and unusual the boy was, but no-one seemed to know how to resolve the issue of what would happen to him when his mother died.

Even though I hadn't known Patty that well, the situation gnawed at me. I could only imagine how sad and scared she felt. Something inside me was telling me that Michael and I could take the boy in.

But could that idea be any crazier? We'd never fostered children before or talked about adoption. At that point, we were practically empty nesters. We'd already launched our

two daughters, 21-year-old Kelsey and 19-year-old Morgan, into college and careers, and our 15-year-old son, Casey, had only three more years left of high school.

Michael, who at 63 is ten years older than I am, had actually started fixing up our four-bedroom house, thinking that we'd sell it and move into an active adult community in a few years. Now all of a sudden, I was contemplating bringing a young boy to live with us? And what about paying for another college education? We're not wealthy by any means.

**O**NE NIGHT in September, out of nowhere, Michael said, "I think we're supposed to take this kid."

I couldn't believe it. "I've been thinking the same thing," I replied.

"That's probably a sign, huh?" Michael laughed. We're both deeply religious, and Michael in particular knows what it feels like when God's telling you to do something. Seven years earlier, he'd sold a successful business and gone to divinity school for just that reason. This felt similar.

With our children's go-ahead, Michael and I sat down with Patty at her house a few days later. By the end of the day, it was agreed: Stephen would come to live with our family after Patty was gone.

All of this, we knew, was tough medicine for such a little boy. We were total strangers to him, and he to

us. To get to know one another better, we invited Patty and Stephen over for lunch. While Patty poked around what would become her son's new home, Stephen rattled off the names of all the US presidents in chronological order in 20 seconds. *Wow*, I thought. *This kid really is unusual.*

That, I realised, was only the tip of the iceberg. Stephen talked politics like a grown-up. He was a gifted reader and writer. But he was also as goofy and silly as any other fourth-grade boy.

I couldn't get over how resilient he seemed. For all the ways he'd had to grow up fast, because of his mother's illness, his dad's accident and his family's poverty, Stephen was still just a kid. Almost instantly he started cuddling up to Michael and me. I was bowled over at how naturally he fit with our family.

As Patty dwindled, Michael and I took over a lot of her care, stocking her fridge and arranging for a hospital bed to be delivered to her apartment.

One morning in October, after Stephen had left for school, Patty quietly slipped away. Michael and I picked Stephen up after school, drove him to a nearby park, and sat on a bench by a pond. I finally managed to say, "Stephen, we're sorry to have to tell you this, but your mother passed away this morning." The sound that came out of his mouth was like nothing I'd ever heard before. This skinny little guy sat between the two of us and just wailed and wailed. That was, I think,

the hardest thing we've ever done. It was as if his whole world was just destroyed. Finally, we took Stephen home with us.

For months, Stephen slept in Casey's room so he wouldn't have to be by himself. He saw a grief counsellor, and we created a meditation space with some of Patty's things where Stephen could go to feel close to her. When we finally moved him to his own bedroom, he woke up crying almost every night.

All we could do was love him and pull him into the thick of our busy family life. He joined a basketball team. He had play dates with my colleague Beth's children, where under Stephen's theatrical direction, they'd create skits. Some weekends we took road trips to neighbouring states, places he'd never seen because his family hadn't owned a car.

On Christmas Eve, I learned that Stephen had never met Santa Claus,



*Patty and Stephen in 2012*

so I called the local shopping mall to find an on-duty Santa Claus, shared a bit of our story, then rushed with my daughters to take Stephen to see him. Watching Santa hug Stephen close

and have a beautiful heart-to-heart with him about his mother was one of the most moving moments of my life. The expression of pure joy on his face made all of us weep.

Recently, the students in Stephen's class had to write a poem that started with "Home is ..." He was so sad because most of the other kids wrote poems that started with "Home is my mother doing ..." But he ended up writing this:

*Home is Karen listening to her inspirational meditation videos.*

*Home is Mike's delicious mac 'n' cheese.*

*Home is feeling cared for, loved, and protected.* R

\* \* \*

### BAR JOKES FOR GRAMMAR NERDS

A question mark walks into a bar?

Two quotation marks "walk into" a bar.

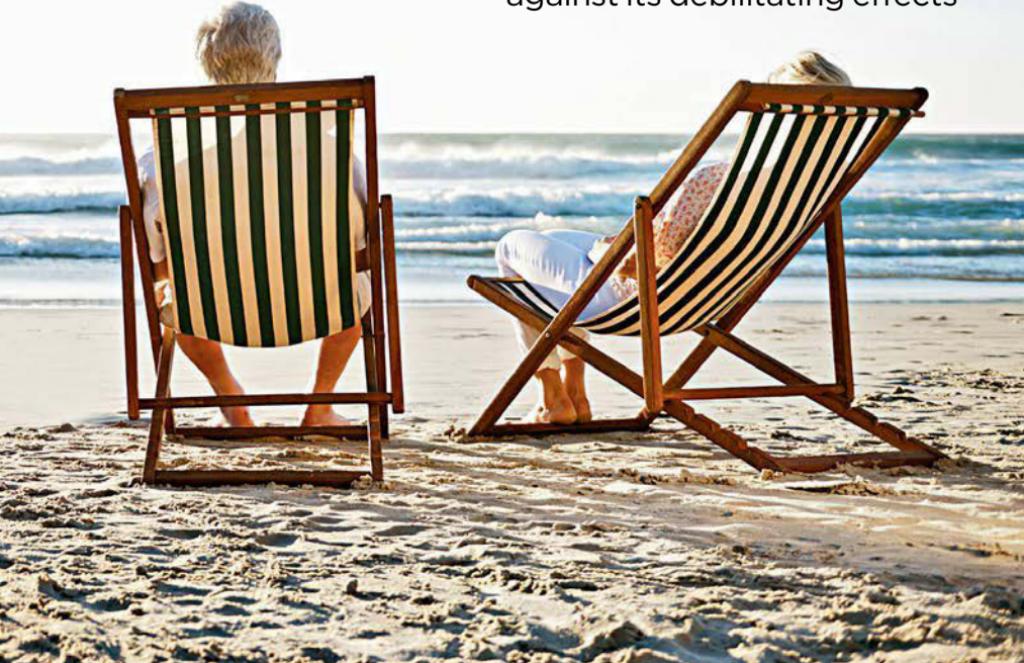
A gerund and an infinitive walk into a bar, drinking to drink.

The bar was walked into by the passive voice. ERIC K. AULD



# Learning to Relax

There's no avoiding it – stress is a fact of life. Learning to relax could be the strongest defence against its debilitating effects



We all experience some form of stress at some stage of our lives. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines stress as 'the reaction people may have when presented with demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.' In other words, when you are stressed, you are pushing yourself, or being pushed, beyond the limits of your resources.

While completely banishing stress from your life is an unattainable goal for most people, developing coping strategies will provide you with a sense of control over your life. Learning how to and being able to relax will help you manage both physical and emotional stress.

## Different Ways of Relaxing

Relaxation is as subjective an experience as stress. Just as there are many stressors that evoke different reactions, there are many ways to relax that, depending on your personal make-up, provide varying degrees of relaxation.

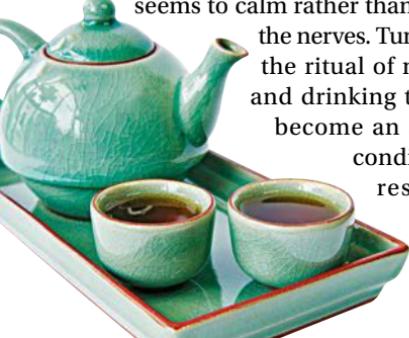
Some strategies are more effective than others, but anything that helps you to unwind can count as relaxation.

### Ways to Relax

#### PUT THE KETTLE ON

Keep calm and have a cuppa – but with a friend or two. Even though tea contains some jitter-causing caffeine,

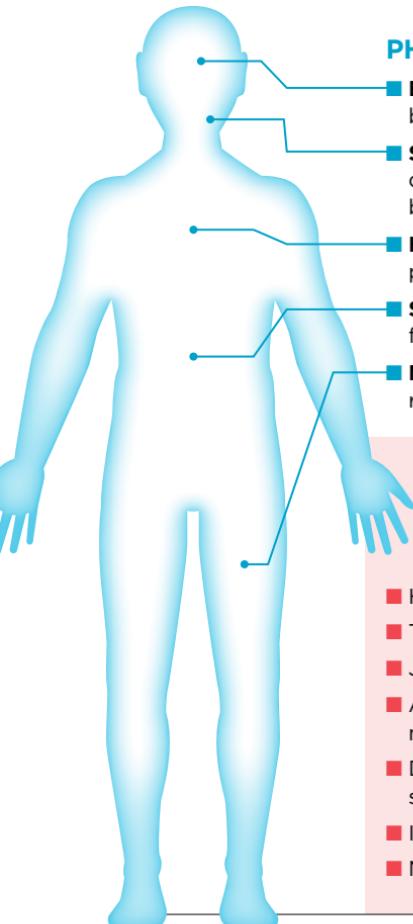
there are certainly times when it seems to calm rather than jangle the nerves. Turning to the ritual of making and drinking tea has become an almost conditioned response during



times of stress. And, according to researchers at City University London, it seems to work. But the calming effects may have nothing to do with chemistry. Researchers believe that it is the tea ritual itself, with its associated social aspects, that make a cup of tea a natural tranquilliser.

#### MAKE YOUR EXERCISE 'GREEN'

Research from the University of Essex suggests that exercising in nature is especially beneficial to mood and self-esteem. Benefits were found to be greatest after just five minutes of such 'green exercise', with light-intensity exercise having the biggest effect on self-esteem and light- and vigorous-intensity workouts the biggest effect on mood. Walking, jogging, cycling, boating, horse riding, gardening and swimming in the ocean, lakes and rivers are all good options for mood-enhancing outdoor exercises. Not only will they combat stress, they will also improve your physical fitness.



## PHYSICAL RESPONSES AS YOU RELAX

- **Brain wave patterns** change as the brain calms, bringing about a positive feeling of wellbeing.
- **Saliva production** increases, stimulating the digestive system, which had been suppressed by the 'flight, fight or freeze' response.
- **Heart rate** decreases, causing a drop in blood pressure.
- **Stomach** - the blood supply diverted away from the digestive system returns to normal.
- **Muscle tension** eases and skin temperature rises as the flow of blood returns to normal.

## PHYSICAL SIGNS OF STRESS

Stress can be the cause of a variety of physical complaints. Symptoms, which apply to both acute and chronic stress, include the following.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Headaches</li> <li>■ Teeth grinding</li> <li>■ Jaw clenching</li> <li>■ Aching shoulders, neck and back</li> <li>■ Dry mouth, problems swallowing</li> <li>■ Indigestion</li> <li>■ Nausea</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Diarrhoea or constipation</li> <li>■ Insomnia</li> <li>■ Shortness of breath</li> <li>■ Heart palpitations, rapid pulse</li> <li>■ Cold or sweaty hands and feet</li> <li>■ Skin problems (acne, eczema, psoriasis)</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

## INSTEAD OF WORRYING, SWAP IT

- Swap fretting about work or family problems with going for a swim, bike ride or brisk walk.
- Swap cooking a big dinner after a hard day with having takeaway barbecued chicken (skin removed) and salad.

- Swap stressing about everyday problems with doing a deep breathing exercise.
- Take a break from financial worries by listening to your favourite song.





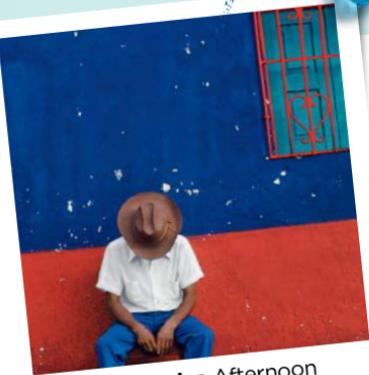
**Canada** Ice swimming



**Romania** Mud bath



**India** Kirtan



**South America** Afternoon  
siestas to recharge

## Global Stress Busters

Stress is universal. Different cultures have come up with a range of individual stress antidotes. Some are calming, long-standing traditions, others new, fun and active. All are intended to de-stress, recharge and beat burnout.

Traditional ways of dealing with the pressures of the world include Japan's Zen rock gardens, which are places of serenity designed to encourage contemplation, and kirtan, the Indian devotional call-and-response chanting. Or, in contrast, New Zealand invented zorbing – a heart-thumping adventure activity in which you roll about secured in a transparent ball.



China Tai chi



Japan Zen gardens



New Zealand Zorbing – an unusual (and fun) form of stress relief

## Practise Mindfulness

Living in the moment is a way of approaching life by consciously staying only in the present moment. It is our thoughts about the past and about the future that cause us the most distress. But you can't change the past and there may be nothing immediate you can do to affect the future. Letting go of this pattern of thinking can bring relief from anxiety and worry.

The technique is easy to use, and can be learnt in classes, both in person and online. It involves learning to open up and be intensely aware of everything that is happening around you right now, in this moment. When people practice mindfulness meditation regularly for about 30 minutes each day, stress levels have been shown to fall.

## Stress-Relief Toolbox

Use at least one tool every day, even if you are not feeling stressed.

- Hug your partner
- Work in your garden
- Spend time in nature
- Talk to a good friend
- Get a massage
- Play with a pet
- Listen to music
- Watch a funny movie
- Do some colouring-in
- Meditate



### Manage Your Stress

Hundreds of practical ways to cope with stress and help you reduce its harmful effects.

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# Homeward Bound

Growing up in a remote village, I thought happiness could be found at McDonald's. I didn't realise what really mattered was in my own backyard



BY ELISABETH FAIRFIELD STOKES FROM EATER.COM

**U**NTIL I WAS SIX, my family lived just above the Arctic Circle, in the remote village of Fort Yukon, Alaska. It is a community of about 600 people, predominantly Gwich'in Athabascan. My family is white – my parents were there as missionaries, my father a bush pilot and the priest-in-charge at the log church by the river.

We didn't have running water in Fort Yukon, but we had a TV, and *The Wizard of Oz* was broadcast once a year. >>

I was transfixed by Dorothy's ability to travel from her dull, rural home to a shining, magical kingdom filled with wonders. I had even once flown over a rainbow on the way into Fairbanks, 140 km to the south. To me, Oz perfectly illustrated the world beyond our tiny town, what it was, what it meant.

The other thing that taught me about the real world outside Fort Yukon was McDonald's. I'd nearly press my nose to the screen whenever a commercial for McDonald's came on. Even though our TV set was black and white, I could tell there were brilliant colours. I would scan it for every tiny detail about what life was like when you lived somewhere where there was a McDonald's: sunshine, happy music, food wrapped up like presents in special papers and boxes, houses with pavements and lawns. Nothing bad ever happened there. No-one was cold, no-one got hurt, no-one died. They had flush toilets and hot water, and they had McDonald's, and they were happy all the time because of it.

Whenever we went into Fairbanks, a visit to McDonald's was almost guaranteed. My standard order was a hamburger, fries and a strawberry shake. I almost never took more than a bite or two of the hamburger, and I couldn't eat all my fries before they got cold, but I always finished my shake, which tasted the way the strawberry in one of my scratch 'n sniff books smelled.

But the truth is, the food hardly even mattered. Being at McDonald's meant that I was in a city big enough to have

one, that I was in the world I saw on TV. That world looked nothing like what I saw in Fort Yukon: log cabins with dog teams tied out front, trails through the scrubby black spruce, the big river steadily flowing by. *But if I could fit in at McDonald's, I could fit into the bigger world*, I thought. It took leaving Fort Yukon for me to understand that none of this was true, that life is hard everywhere, that if you thought you weren't happy without McDonald's, you wouldn't be happy with it.

After my family moved to Fairbanks, we didn't go to McDonald's much any more. I don't remember minding. McDonald's, I soon learned, was convenient for people in Fairbanks more than it was special. People ate there if they couldn't go to nicer restaurants. I focused instead on the thrill of getting to eat things like yoghurt, drinking fresh milk instead of powdered, getting to go to Alaskaland, a playground and tourist trap.

Despite the newfound pleasures of Fairbanks, it didn't take long for homesickness to set in. I missed the woodsmoky way Fort Yukon smells, the way the light slants hard up on the Arctic Circle, the way everyone knows everyone else. I missed the way all my

friends lived within reach. I missed the village grandmas, who loved all children as if they were their own.

When I was 16, I went on a school trip to Juneau, the state capital. I was lying in a bunk bed in the youth hostel one night, when I heard paper rustling across the way. I looked over to see a girl from Sand Point, out on the Aleutian chain, unwrapping a McDonald's hamburger and eating it.

I knew she wasn't hungry: they'd been feeding us well on this trip. But I also understood why she was eating that hamburger, and the chicken nuggets and fries she had, too, and the shake. She couldn't get McDonald's where she lived.

It made me remember what it felt like to live in Fort Yukon, a time when I, too, would have found intense pleasure in just entering a McDonald's, tilting my head up to see the menu overhead, eyes wide at the way the various sandwiches slid down their metal chutes from behind the wall that separated the counter from the kitchen.

I also missed how excited I used to get at just the thought of going to McDonald's. It was gone, but nothing had really replaced it. I lived in Oz now, in the world McDonald's had symbolised for a kid from the bush. We lived in a

house with a lawn. We got all our food from a store. McDonald's didn't matter.

That's why, surreptitiously watching that girl from Sand Point as we lay in our hostel bunk beds, I was sad. She got to have the pleasure, the fun of what McDonald's promised. She got to go back home, back to Sand Point, a village not too different from

Fort Yukon. I couldn't go home, no matter how much I wanted to. Home was somewhere in the air between Fort Yukon and Fairbanks. I was white, but from an Alaska Native village. I had grown up formed by its values, its sense of community, and then I left.

*I knew she  
wasn't hungry.  
I also  
understood  
why she  
was eating that  
hamburger*

ald's, and I don't think they have anything in their lives that means, or meant, what McDonald's once meant to me. They've never lived without running water, without electricity. I took them back to Fort Yukon once, when they were very small. We walked along the dusty roads, we stood by the river, I pushed them on what might have been the very same swings that held me when I was five. They loved it; they were happy there, too. And on the way back to Fairbanks, we flew over a rainbow.

R



# 38 Secrets HOSPITALS Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH AND HELEN SIGNY

## Pick the Right Place

**1** For complex surgical procedures, you're generally better off at teaching hospitals, which usually stay at the forefront of health research. Medical students and residents ask questions, providing more eyes and ears to pay attention and prevent errors. Teaching hospitals have lower complication rates and better outcomes.

DR EVAN LEVINE, *cardiologist, author of What Your Doctor Won't (or Can't) Tell You*

**2** Private patients in public hospitals often assume they will get their own room. But rooms are allocated on medical need. Someone with an infectious disease will always get the single room.

KATE RYDER, *nurse, author of An Insider's Guide to Getting the Best Out of the Health System*

No-one looks forward to a health crisis, but our insights and tips will help you get better care, cut costs – and get out alive



**3** A good surgeon will tell you all the information you need to know, even the parts that you might not want to hear. That doesn't mean that a good surgeon will be rude. It means that they will tell you, in a respectful and professional manner, whether the results you want are realistically attainable and safe, the best procedure to achieve your desired result, the risks and possible complications involved in the procedure, whether you are a good candidate for surgery and what the costs will be.

**ANDREW IVES, plastic surgeon, Melbourne**

**4** People do themselves a disservice if they drive to a hospital based on its reputation rather than their local facility. Many illnesses are time critical. Also, a visit to hospital might be just the first of many; you might have to return several times for follow ups.

**DR STEPHEN PARNIS,**  
*senior emergency physician, Melbourne*

## The Dirt on Errors and Infection

**5** Superbugs live everywhere, and they can travel. Even if your doctor washed his hands, that sparkling white coat brushing against your bed can easily transfer a dangerous germ from someone else's room. Ask for bleach and alcohol wipes to clean bed rails, controls, doorknobs, phones, call buttons and toilet flush levers. Wash your hands before you eat.

**KAREN CURTISS, author of  
Safe & Sound in the Hospital**

**6** Don't interrupt the nurse when he's preparing your medication. Interruptions significantly increased medication error rate. Every time a nurse is interrupted, there's a 12.7% increase in clinical (dosage) errors and a 12.1% increase in procedural failures, such as failing to check a patient's ID with their medication chart.

*Archives of Internal Medicine, 2010*



**7** All those times people ask you the same questions throughout your hospital stay? It's a safety check and it's really important. If you have a severe allergy to medication, for example, you need to remind staff every step of the way.

**DR STEPHEN PARNIS**

**8** Hospitals are dangerous places ... and around 10% of us who enter public hospitals experience a preventable mistake or error in our care. Research shows a variety of reasons for non-reporting by health professionals. These include a culture or hierarchy of not reporting: "I don't do it as it isn't my job - it's a nursing role," a fear management will use reports against clinicians or that the reports will result in disciplinary action, a belief that mistakes are an acceptable part of overworked and underfunded health systems, and a view that reporting is unheard, dismissed or will not make any difference.

**DR BRIAN ROBINSON**, senior lecturer,  
*Victoria University of Wellington, NZ*

**9** Ask your nurses to do a "bedside shift change." This is when they share information in your presence instead of at the nurses' station. You can better correct any errors. [Studies show it also improves communication and care.]

**KAREN CURTISS**

## How the Money Flows

**10** The amount being charged by your surgeon bears no relation to his or her level of skill. The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) is one of several international organisations calling for surgeons to release more information on the rate of poor outcomes, as there's currently no way of gauging their performance. In fact, there are surgeons who are

outstanding and only charge the scheduled fee, while others may be less skilled yet charge exceptionally high fees, the RACS says. *RACS, 2015*

**11** Check your hospital bill against your clinical file (you may need to do this at the hospital concerned). If there are tests and scans on your bill that do not have a corresponding entry on your clinical file (check the dates as well as items), you can contest them.

**KATE RYDER**

## Some Ugly Truths

**12** Under-resourcing means nurses often have to make difficult decisions about what care is critical for patient survival and what can be left undone. 'Care rationing' in New Zealand has left some nurses skipping vital recordings and ignoring call bells, with nurses in flat-out rescue mode, a recent investigation found. It reported that some nurses are so busy helping doctors, organising medications and filing paperwork that they get to spend only about three hours of their shift with patients.

*press.co.nz, 2014*

**13** There is more violence than ever before. Nurses have been attacked, bitten, spat on and choked. In fact, I'm aware of only a handful of nurses who haven't been victims of some sort of verbal or physical attack. Staff are dealing with more intoxicated patients and people who are suffering methamphetamine-fuelled

psychosis. There is an increasing acting out from patients and sometimes it's relatives, too. **SUSANNE TRIM,**  
*New Zealand Nurses Organisation*

**14** For us the closest mental health unit is 45 minutes away (but they are always full), and the next and most frequently referred to is two hours away. We can wait over 24 hours for transport of a scheduled patient just to see a psychiatrist. This is obviously not safe, it blocks hospital beds [from physically ill patients] and is unacceptable. We have only one mental health room and at times have up to five patients needing acute care.

*Regional hospital nurse*

**15** Medical specialists are often uncomfortable with patients who are dying. ... As patients become even more ill, they are often admitted to intensive care. Up to 70% of people now die in acute hospitals surrounded by well-meaning strangers inflicting all that medicine has to offer, often resulting in a painful, distressing and degrading end to life.

*Vital Signs, by Professor Ken Hillman,  
University of NSW, Australia*

**16** A lot of the problems with patients occur because they are withdrawing from drugs or alcohol while in hospital. If you know you are going in, then do some preparation – get nicotine patches or reduce the amount you drink.

**KATE RYDER**

**17** *We see crazy things. I've had a patient run stark naked into the ED waiting room. A patient asked me out while I was holding a basin, catching his vomit.*

*Emergency nurse*



## Our Pet Peeves

**18** Most of us hate electronic medical records systems. We don't like that we have to click off boxes instead of focusing on the patient. The choices they give us to click on don't give the doctors a real understanding of what we're doing. A lot of things get missed.

**KAREN HIGGINS, nurse**

**19** As a junior hospital doctor, it was an almost daily occurrence that patients would mistake me for a nurse, student, or anything other than a doctor. You spend 45 minutes with a patient taking a history, performing an examination, taking bloods, explaining their diagnosis and management plan. Then they say "OK, when do I get to see the doctor?" Unfortunately, introducing yourself as a doctor, wearing an ID badge that says Doctor Such-and-Such, draping a stethoscope around

your neck and wearing a uniform that has DOCTOR on it does not prevent these assumptions from occurring.

*Rural locum doctor, Western Australia*

**20** The signage in hospitals can be terrible – we have had reports of people not even being able to find their way out.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MICHAEL GRECO,**  
*patientopinion.org.au*

## Enjoy Your Stay

**21** Bring a clear, printed list of exactly what medications you take at home and when you take them. Don't just say 'daily'. We need

to know if you take them at night with dinner or when you wake up.

**KEVIN B. JONES,** *surgeon, author of What Doctors Cannot Tell You*

**22** Nurses sometimes need reminders, so never be afraid to ask for something more than once. We can be juggling so much ... we haven't intentionally forgotten your request.

*Regional hospital nurse*

**23** Hospitals can be very noisy at night so bring ear plugs. There is no such thing as a dressing gown and slippers in hospital, so bring your own.

**KATE RYDER**

## HEALTH ADVICE: TRUE OR FALSE?

**24** **It's best to schedule surgery early in the week.** **True** On weekends and holidays, hospitals typically have lighter staffing and less experienced doctors and nurses. Some lab tests and other services may be unavailable. If you're having a major elective surgery, try to schedule it for early in the week so you won't be in the hospital over the weekend.

**DR ROY BENAROCH**

**25** **No food or liquids eight hours before surgery.** **False** Many hospitals say no drinking or eating after midnight the day before your surgery because it's more convenient for them. But that means patients may show up uncomfortable, dehydrated and starving, especially for afternoon surgery. The latest recommendations from the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists say that for healthy adults having an elective procedure, limited solid food may be taken up to six hours prior to anaesthesia and clear fluids totalling not more than 200 millilitres per hour may be taken up to two hours prior to anaesthesia.

**DR CYNTHIA WONG, anaesthesiologist**

**26** **Rest to get better.** **False** Get up and move. Walk the halls, walk to the café, go outside. It will help you avoid blood clots, and patients see psychological benefits. One study found that older patients who get out of bed and walk around reduce their stay by an average of 40 hours.

**DR ROY BENAROCH**

## What We're Getting Right

**27** Every day that I am at work patients are cared for, lives saved and lives lost. What is a constant in the hospital is the people that are employed. Always caring, always willing to go the extra mile to make someone comfortable.

*Regional hospital nurse*

**28** A generation ago, when I started in medicine, there was so much that was untreatable. Just the other day I saw a patient who used to be a severe diabetic with end stage renal failure. When I was at medical school he would have died, no doubt. Now he's been able to have a kidney and pancreas transplant and I was taken aback when he said he used to be a diabetic and on insulin but he's not any more.

**DR STEPHEN PARNIS**

**29** Sixty per cent of the patient feedback we get to our site is positive. We hear of hospitals who are willing to make changes based on what their patients want. We've had cases of a CEO putting up temporary signage himself, and another hospital creating a garden in their mental health area, all based on patient feedback.

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MICHAEL GRECO**

## Recover Quicker

**30** The sooner you can get out of hospital, the better. There are superbugs, it's unfamiliar and you are more likely to fall in hospital. You're

less mobile and more likely to be in bed and so you are at higher risk of things like infection and blood clots. You're more likely to recover more quickly in your own home – but we will not discharge you until we think it's safe.

**DR STEPHEN PARNIS**

**31** Don't assume the food is what you should be eating. Patient nutrition is often an afterthought, with doctors needing greater recognition of the nutrition needs of their patients. For elderly patients, particularly, malnourishment could be exacerbated during their hospital stay.

**PROFESSOR IAN CATERSON**, *Boden Professor of Human Nutrition at the University of Sydney, MJA Insight, 2014*

**32** Make sure you ask how to manage your condition when you leave hospital. An HCF health insurance fund survey found that 13% of patients weren't asked whether they would have the help they needed at home, and almost a third were not provided information in writing on symptoms or health problems to look out for when they were discharged.

*HCF Survey, 2013*

**33** Before you leave the hospital, demand that your follow-up appointment be already scheduled. I've found that is the single most effective strategy hospitals can use to reduce your chance of readmission, but it still rarely happens. Make sure

you've been connected to the next person [in the medical process] who will take care of you.

**ELIZABETH BRADLEY, professor of public health at Yale University**

**34** One study found that patients forget 40-80% of what doctors and nurses tell them, even if they're nodding their heads. Have someone with you to take notes or ask if you can record what the doctor says on a smartphone. The most critical time to record is at discharge, when you receive crucial information about medications and next steps. **KAREN CURTISS**

**35** Get copies of your lab tests, and scans before you leave the hospital, along with your discharge summary and operative report if you had surgery. It can be shockingly difficult for me to get copies of those things.

**DR ROY BENAROCH, paediatrician**

**36** Don't let loved ones spend the night alone in a hospital. It's important someone is there if they get confused or need help getting to the bathroom or if their breathing pattern changes. If the hospital has restrictive

visiting hours, ask if it will make an exception.

**DR MICHELE CURTIS**

## Our Human Side

**37** Every time I operate on a patient I have to remind myself that this patient is a member of my family. It's so easy to rush an operation if you have got to go to a concert that night. It's so easy to wake up in a bad mood and go to work and treat your patients badly. It's so easy to ignore the family who wants to speak to you at 10pm and you want to go home and have dinner and see your kids. I have to consciously say to myself "Charlie, wait, you're a member of that family. What if that was your child on the table?"

**CHARLIE TEO, neurosurgeon**

**38** My worst moment ever was on New Year's Eve in 2008, when the code-blue pager went off. A baby we'd operated on had stopped breathing. Ten of us were frantically doing everything possible, but we couldn't resuscitate her. I had to tell her parents that their firstborn daughter had died. I was up all night grieving with them. Every New Year's Eve, I think about them.

**DR JAMES PINCKNEY**



## HONESTY IN RESEARCH

"Sheep walked around and nothing was significant" –  
a researcher's plain English version of their scientific paper  
"Predicting Range of Motion and Joint Posture: Subchondral  
Apparent Density in the Sheep Hind Limb". **LOLMYTHESIS**



# All in a Day's Work

HUMOUR ON THE JOB

## THE ART OF HOME REPAIR

At my local gallery, a woman and her ten-year-old son were having a tough time choosing between one of my paintings and another artist's work. They finally went with mine.

"I guess you decided you prefer an autumn scene to a floral," I said.

"No," said the boy. "Your painting's wider, so it'll cover three holes in our wall."

SUBMITTED BY BETTY TENNEY



## THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT

I was at the customer-service desk, returning a pair of jeans that were too tight.

"Was anything wrong with them?" the shop assistant asked.

"Yes," I said. "They hurt my feelings."

SUBMITTED BY A.P.



## NOW YOU SEE IT...

One day my brother went into a shop to ask for a camouflage jacket for his son. The assistant said they'd arrived in stock but they were having trouble finding them.

My brother couldn't resist. "Boy," he said. "They must be REALLY good camouflage jackets."

SUBMITTED BY RICK WILLIAMS

## DIETARY ADVICE

As a speech therapist, I was working with a pre-schooler on both body-part identification and the 'k' sound. To that end, I had him use plasticine to make a sculpture of me.

"Is that my neck?" I asked, trying to get him to repeat the word.

"No, that's your chin," he said. He added more plasticine. "Is

THAT my neck?" I asked.

"No, that's your other chin."

SUBMITTED BY ILENE SMITH

## CLASSIC COMPLISULT

It's amazing how a person can compliment and insult you at the same time. Recently, when I greeted a colleague, she said, "You look so gorgeous, I didn't recognise you."

SUBMITTED BY ELAINE SCHYVE

## STOPPED SHORT

**CLIENT** Please remove the unnecessary circle at the end of the sentence.

**ME** You mean ... the full stop?

**CLIENT** I don't care what you designers call it; it is unsightly. Delete it.

Source: clientsfromhell.net

## ALWAYS READ THE FINE PRINT

A salesman talked my uncle into buying 10,000 personalised pens for his business, saying that he would be eligible to win a 32-foot yacht. A born gambler, my uncle agreed.

Well, he won. And a few weeks after the pens arrived, his prize showed up: a tiny plastic yacht with 32 plastic feet glued to the bottom.

SUBMITTED BY EDDIE EDWARDS



*"It's the new iEye. It lets me see where I'm going when I'm using my phone."*

## BEATS WORKING

My secretary liked to yammer on the phone with friends. One day I was about to interrupt her chat and tell her to get back to work, when she looked up at the clock and put an end to the conversation. "Sorry, I have to hang up now," she said. "It's time for my break."



SUBMITTED BY JAMES R. MAXWELL

The closest to perfection a person ever comes is when he fills out a job application form.

SUBMITTED BY STANLEY RANDALL





For 13 years, a polar bear endured abuse and near starvation in the tropics. Here, the extraordinary story of her rescue and recovery

# Saving Bärle the Circus Bear

BY ELSE POULSEN  
FROM THE BOOK *BÄRLE'S STORY*

ILLUSTRATED BY AMEESHA LEE



**O**n a south-facing slope in northern Canada, chunks of snow roll down the hummock from an underground disturbance. When the surface finally erupts, out pops the head of a female polar bear. She inhales through her nose and exhales through her mouth.

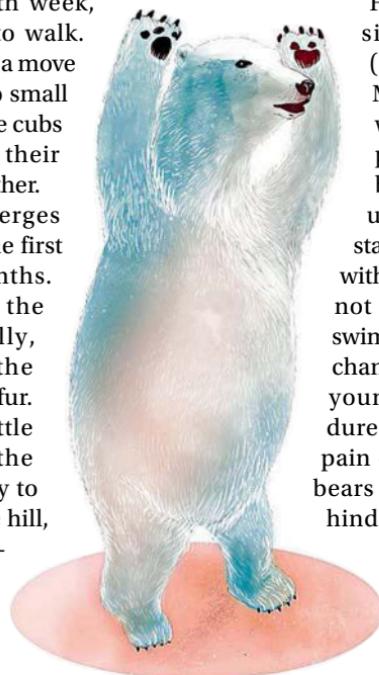
Four months earlier, the bear had given birth to twins. Delicately furred, they tucked into her belly for warmth and food. She licked her cubs to keep them clean, nudging them back into place when they squirmed away.

At four weeks, they could hear, and at five weeks, their eyes opened fully. By their sixth week, they were trying to walk. Soon it was time for a move – the space was too small and cramped, as the cubs trampled all over their mother and each other.

The female emerges from her den for the first time in eight months. She slides down the knoll on her belly, then wiggles in the snow to clean her fur. In seconds, two little heads pop from the crater. The cubs try to scramble down the hill, until, giving up control, they tumble like balls into their mother.

Bärle's life could have begun this way. It's thought that she was born and raised on the west bank of Hudson Bay in 1984. Records suggest she may have been sent to Germany in 1986 through the Manitoba Polar Bear Export Program. Developed by biologists, conservation officers and government officials, the programme was dedicated, in large part, to relocating orphaned cubs from the province of Manitoba to facilities abroad. In Germany, Bärle (pronounced "bear-la") ended up with animal trainer Fredy Gafner. Shortly after 1990, Gafner took his bear show to the Mexican Suarez Brothers Circus.

For 13 years, Bärle and six other polar bears (Alaska, Royal, Willy, Masha, Boris and Kenny) were forced to perform pantomimes of human behaviours: walking upright while climbing stairs, dancing and playing with balls. Bärle was denied not only the ability to run, swim and climb but also the chance to find a mate, raise young and hunt. She endured mental and physical pain – trainers whipped the bears on the face, head and hindquarters – as well as a sweltering Caribbean environment hostile to her polar-bred sensibilities.



Over five million years, polar bears have evolved to handle extreme cold. They can overheat when the temperature rises above 10°C, forcing them to plunge into the ocean or lie on their backs on a frozen surface – options unavailable to Bärle. Heat's effect on a polar bear is dramatic. While humans sweat to stay cool, bears don't. They must pant to cool off, so the hotter it is, the more frequent the panting. A polar bear's normal respiration rate is between ten and 30 breaths per minute, with 30 being the high end after exertion. The suspected rate for the circus bears? Sixty, while lying still. As a result, they were dehydrated and scrawny.

When not performing, Bärle and her peers were warehoused in a trailer divided into six-cubic-metre metal cages. They had to lie diagonally if they wanted to rest on their bellies, curl up into a C shape to lie on their sides, or put their feet against the wall to lie on their backs. Animal investigators documented temperatures as high as 45°C next to their cages.

Bärle would likely never have been rescued had it not been for Ken and Sherri Gigliotti, a Canadian couple. In 1996, the Winnipeg residents took a wedding anniversary trip to Cozumel, Mexico, where they visited the Suarez

Brothers Circus. They were shocked by the polar bears' appearance and conditions, so they brought home a circus programme and shared it with the *Winnipeg Free Press*. When the newspaper published the photos later that year, it triggered an international outcry. "We were told some of the bears came from Churchill, Manitoba, and we are from Winnipeg," the province's capital, said Ken, explaining why they were determined to bring evidence of the bears' suffering back to Canada. "That made it personal to us, and we were appalled that these magnificent animals could be so out of place and so far from home."

Soon after the *Winnipeg Free Press* story appeared, Debbie Leahy, then director of captive

animal rescue and enforcement at People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), began investigating the Suarez Brothers Circus. She watched the bears perform several times, and once she received a behind-the-scenes tour. During each visit, the bears were panting and filthy. The stench of urine filled the tent, and flies were everywhere. "It was horrifying," she said.

Leahy devoted herself to the bears' rescue. She inspired government officials, community leaders, zoo directors, veterinarians and celebrities

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to advocate for them. In 2002, the Manitoba government passed the Polar Bear Protection Act, which stipulated that only orphaned cubs under two years of age were eligible for zoo placement and that to be considered, zoos must satisfy strict standards.

## Rescue at Last

Due to mounting pressure from interest groups, complaints from the public, and regular visits from US Department of Agriculture inspectors, the Suarez Brothers Circus chose to abandon its polar bears in Puerto Rico. On November 5, 2002, the US Fish and Wildlife Service officially seized custody of the animals, and two weeks later, preparations were made for their transit.

In mid-November, the six bears [Alaska, a female, had already been removed by US officials in March] were airlifted out of the Caribbean. A FedEx plane deposited them at zoos across the United States. Detroit – Bärle's new home – was the final stop. As an animal-behaviour expert who had studied bears for a decade, I had been given the task of her rehabilitation. I went with my colleagues from the Detroit Zoo to the airport, where we took possession of the crate containing Bärle.

After our van arrived at the zoo, our team piled out of the vehicle. A gurney was wheeled near the loading dock, and the back doors of the van were opened. When all was in place,

we re-entered the van and surrounded the crate. On the count of three, we heaved our cargo – weighing about 180 kilograms – and slid it forwards to the gurney. Bärle's conduct caught me off guard: there was no huffing, jaw snapping or crouching in a corner, which seemed out of character for a bear. Thinking about her life, I realised that probably the only reprieve she got from her trainers was while she was travelling. In her crate, she couldn't get hit or hurt. Maybe that's why she was so calm. But if her crate offered her the only refuge she'd known in her 13 years, would we be able to coax her out of it and into her new quarters?

We wheeled the crate from the loading dock and into the quarantine area – where she would be spending the next 30 days – and pushed one end of the crate to rest on the entrance of her enclosure. While my colleagues chained the crate onto the enclosure fence to secure it for Bärle's exit, I began interacting with her, hoping to demonstrate we were harmless. In my years of rehabilitating wildlife, I had learned a valuable lesson: first impressions count. I take no chances with charm; I buy my way in. With Bärle, I had grapes – sweet, juicy grapes.

I crouched in front of her, and we locked eyes. Like humans, bears communicate using a combination of words (in their case, sounds that have specific meaning) and body language. I pushed a grape through the crate's metal mesh and held it up to her nose.

Never taking her eyes off mine, she gently held the fruit with her lips and then intentionally dropped it, with what seemed to be a smile. I've experienced this behaviour before with bears and interpret it as politeness. A bear may not want or need what I'm offering but will take it if it wants the interaction to continue. If annoyed, it will refuse the object, refuse to make eye contact, and express aggression with paw slamming or huffing.

I didn't know if Bärle had ever tasted grapes before. Her diet in the circus had consisted largely of old bread, lettuce, carrots and cheap dog food. I offered her a second grape, which she took with her lips and ate. Her smile hadn't waned. It didn't matter to me if she ate the fruit or not; my objective was to show her we could be trusted so that she'd feel comfortable enough to leave the crate.

Bärle's face was a curious wash of age and youth. She was a small bear with a head no bigger than mine. Her fur was a mess. The long guard hairs were broken or missing, her undercoat was matted and bald spots revealed flaky black skin. Her facial muscles had atrophied, giving her the sunken appearance of an abused bear. She looked older than her 18 years – in captivity, polar bears can live until

their late 30s – yet a cub-like innocence shone through her expression. The complexity of it and her radiance drew me in.

Michelle Seldon, associate curator of mammals, told me the crate was locked in place. "It's time," she said. I tossed a trail of grapes from the crate to a room where a straw nest awaited. I stepped out of the enclosure, and we lifted the sliding barriers between the enclosure and the crate.

**THERE WAS NO  
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CHARACTER  
FOR A BEAR**

moving. Some staff members had tears in their eyes; we were shutting the door on Bärle's circus life forever.

No doubt she had detected the drop in temperature, the grapes and straw so fresh, you could smell its sweetness. Bärle feigned interest in the grapes. Then she moved forwards, gaining speed down the hall to the straw. She approached it cautiously, first mouth-ing and smelling it, putting a paw in, then mowing her belly through it, and finally falling over in a full-body roll-and-rub dance. With straw caught in

her dreadlocked coat, she fell asleep. Like relieved parents, we turned out the lights and softly closed the door.

## Road to Recovery

For the first few days, Bärle slept most of the time, as we did routine tests for parasites and disease. Waiting for her was a four-metre-deep saltwater pool in a large enclosure mimicking her original pack-ice environment, along with a separate 4000 square metre tundra enclosure, featuring an outdoor cave, a stream and a smaller freshwater pool with live trout.

I continued my work developing a trusting relationship, greeting her in the morning with a handful of grapes, calling her name. But Bärle was not eating well. We gave her a variety of fruits and vegetables, insects, meats and fish. All she would eat was the grapes, along with some bread and lettuce. I sat in front of her enclosure and ate, to demonstrate the foods were edible. She was interested in the fact that I was eating and came over to have a closer look. I ripped off a piece of bread with my teeth and ate it. I held the other half between the bars for her. Maintaining eye contact, she took it with her lips and dropped it. Again, she was being courteous. I repeated the demonstration. This time she took her share and ate it. I praised her softly. "Good girl, Bärle. Such a good girl."

I carried on with some lettuce, and then the following day added peanuts to the repertoire. I demonstrated how

to shell the nut with my teeth, spitting out the shell. She watched intently, then took a peanut with her lips. She fumbled around inside her mouth for some time. Then out popped the shell, and before long she was eating peanuts just like our other bears.

We moved onto other foods. Demonstrations of eating fruit, vegetables and nuts went seamlessly. But insects, meat and fish posed a problem. I was not keen on demonstrating the delights and techniques of eating live mealworms, raw meat or whole fish. As it turned out, mealworms wiggled and caught Bärle's attention. With a little smile on her face, she seemed amused by their movement and simply stippled them off the floor with her tongue when they stopped.

It was vital that Bärle develop an appetite for raw fish, since it would become the mainstay of her diet once she was integrated into the bear community. When Bärle came over to sit with me by the fence I placed several dead fish at her feet. I stuck one through the mesh and wiggled it to see if it was of interest to her. It was, but not enough for her to eat it. She just kept looking at me with that little smile on her face.

Desperate, I feigned a fish-eating demonstration by holding a dead herring up to my mouth while pretending to eat. It didn't work. I repeatedly dropped the fish on the floor, and once down my shirt sleeve. Bärle moved her nose to my sleeve and looked into

my eyes as if to let me know that was where the little carcass had gone, in case I'd missed it.

Another day a live fish jumped out of the tank and landed on the floor. The poor fish leapt around, and that caught Bärle's attention. She lay down and watched until the fish lay still. Then she touched it with her nose and it flopped around again. Bärle had a broad smile on her face. I was anxious for her to just eat the fish and put it out of its misery, but she didn't. She sat up and tried to pick up the fish with her front paws, but it slipped out and flopped onto the floor again. She finally did get the fish in her grasp and began to strip off the skin, then biting it in half and eating it. At this point I was more relieved that the ordeal was over than thrilled that Bärle had actually eaten a fish. But after this incident she began to eat fish regularly. Bärle's appetite improved, and so did her desire to start exploring her new environment.

## Nosy Greeting

We decided it was time for Bärle to meet the other bears at the zoo. We moved her into the Arctic Ring of Life, or the ARL as we called it, a building with eight stalls and a long hallway with a 1.2-metre-deep freshwater pool. We would give Bärle access to the entire building, and keep the other bears outside for a few days to give her time to get to know the new area and to view the other bears without having to interact with them if she didn't want to.

She was due for a veterinary check-up, for which she had to be immobilised. So we anaesthetised her; she was given her exam, then placed in the ARL. She woke up, and an hour later was sitting up and sniffing the walls. She got up and moved around, then we gave her some food and water.

She spent a great deal of time licking her front paws, grooming the fur and the paw pads. This was the first time we observed Bärle taking an interest in



cleanliness. Traumatised animals frequently lose interest in grooming and personal hygiene, so this development was cause for quiet celebration.

The other bears were locked out of the ARL, but that didn't prevent their intense curiosity or keep them from fact-finding missions. At intervals the bears crowded outside the doors, sticking their noses into cracks as far as they could and sucking back the inside air for information.

The following morning we brought some of the bears inside. We had two groups, because the two unrelated males, Adak and Triton, did not get along. Adak was smaller, so we let in his group, with three females.

Like excited schoolchildren, they all tried to cram their bodies through the doorway at the same time, pushing and shoving and woofing. Bärle was closed into one of the stalls where she could either greet the new bears at the mesh gate or move away from the door and have some privacy. She chose to stay by the gate and observe the bears.

Adak walked up to the gate first and licked Bärle's nose. Sissy came up and stood shoulder to shoulder with him, and also licked Bärle's nose. The other two females, Vilma and Icee, hung back, perhaps concerned about the arrival of a new bear and how that could change their daily routine.

When the other bears were shifted back outside, Bärle was given access to the entire building again. She spent her time taking naps and exploring,

meticulously collecting information and experiences by smelling, pushing and pulling on the doors, the mesh and the automatic waterers. She spent a few days taking naps, eating, immersing herself in the pool, and acclimatising herself to her new surroundings.

Next we introduced Bärle to the outdoor environment, the two enclosures visible to each other but separated by two moats and a boundary wall between them.

We moved the other bears outside the tundra enclosure and let Bärle meet her next challenge. She stood at the door, breathed in the wind-borne scents for a moment, and then went outside to the 4000-square-metre area. She walked slowly on the grass, looking down and smelling it. She sniffed everything in her path, the rocks, sticks, vegetation, air. She was not smiling. She was working, thinking. She reached the pool and tasted the water, then circled the tundra enclosure twice in her investigations. She lay down in the grass, rolled over, feet in the air, and wiggled and gyrated in the joy of the outdoors. Her adventure only lasted about an hour and a half, but it had gone well.

## Social Cues

Bärle suffered a setback when we found she had ringworm, and we had to put her in quarantine for 45 days. When the quarantine was lifted, we decided it was time to introduce her to the other bears. Since Sissy was the

least aggressive animal, we gave Bärle and Sissy access to each other, separated only by a fence. Bärle watched everything that Sissy did, while Sissy seemed completely uninterested.

A few days later, we gave Sissy access to the tundra, as Bärle watched intently. When Sissy settled in at the far side of the enclosure, we opened Bärle's door. Anticipating she might need some encouragement, I started over to sit with her – but she was out the door by the time I got there.

Bärle moved across the tundra in Sissy's direction, pausing only briefly to consider Triton, who was standing across the moat in the pack-ice enclosure, eyeing her and surveying the proceedings. For about ten minutes Bärle wandered about, feigning interest in some sticks, rocks and snow, while looking at Sissy. Finally she walked up to Sissy and tried to touch the side of her face with her nose. We had counted on Sissy for a measured response, and we were not disappointed. Sissy sensed Bärle's complete lack of malice. Still, Sissy faced her off, clucking, huffing and mock-mouthing Bärle's neck, backing her up.

Bärle tried again to make contact, tobogganing on her side several times across the snow towards Sissy, ask-

ing her to play. Again, Sissy moved forwards, huffing in Bärle's ears and mock-biting. Bärle got the message and went back to her fake foraging business while considering her options. Throughout the day Bärle either slid or amiably walked up to Sissy, but was met with the same repelling response. Sissy clearly wanted to be left alone. But the integration was peaceable, so it was a success.

Bärle spent several days with Sissy, and then, at about two-week intervals, she was introduced to the other bears. Sissy never warmed up to Bärle – once even charging her and biting her in the rump – but Bärle's introduction to Vilma went much better. Bärle located Vilma's position in the enclosure and

“  
SHE SNIFFED  
EVERYTHING,  
THE ROCKS,  
STICKS,  
VEGETATION,  
AIR. SHE WAS  
NOT SMILING.  
SHE WAS  
THINKING

carefully grazed her way over to her. Bärle and Vilma ate together for about 15 minutes, then Vilma approached Bärle with the traditional cheek-sniffing and mouth-fencing.

After a few minutes Vilma tried to corral Bärle towards the pool. Bärle sat down, so Vilma tried to nudge her from behind. She tried to raise Bärle to her feet. When that didn't work, Vilma bolted a short distance. This move worked, because now Bärle was facing the pool, and Vilma tried to push her in that direction.

Finally Bärle got the message and followed Vilma to the water. Vilma leapt in and splashed water with both paws. Bärle stood there staring at her. Vilma's splashing grew more intense, and she slammed her upper torso into the water, drenching Bärle and everyone else who was watching.

Bärle slowly entered the pool. Vilma moved into deeper water and porpoised in shallow dives in front of Bärle, who instantly copied her. Both bears were smiling. They played for hours; and these two bears forged a lifelong friendship based on their water sports. And Bärle got what she needed – a bear friend who had her back.

## Bärle Finds a Mate

Triton was the largest bear, and so he was the last one to meet Bärle. As he came out of his doorway, he tried to greet Bärle with a sniff-check, but she backed away and watched him go. She took long, deep breaths through her nose, and exhaled through her mouth, collecting information. Then she started rubbing her body against the walls and the gate. She was nervous.

Bärle crossed the tundra, taking side glances at Triton. When he looked up, she averted her eyes, as if something else had caught her attention. Triton then ate his way over to Bärle, and took

the last 10 metres in three giant leaps. Bärle twirled around, and he tried to cheek-sniff her. She reared up and bounced off him, paw punching him in the shoulder. He backed up.

They danced like prizefighters. Both cheek-sniffed and huffed, showing that they were anxious. Bärle sat down, stood up, and backed up a few steps, while Triton stayed where he was. Bärle moved forwards and engaged him. When he tried to flank her, she sat down.

Finally Triton moved off, hanging his head. Then Bärle moved closer to him, and suddenly Triton had a bright idea. With his mouth, he picked up a maple branch that had been stripped of its leaves and dropped it in front of Bärle as a gift.

She ignored it, walked over it, and sat down. I detected a slight smile on her face as Triton left.

In short order Triton returned, dragging an entire maple sapling in his mouth, complete with leaves that he then dropped in front of Bärle. Although Bärle was smiling, she moved away slightly and looked in the opposite direction, ignoring the gift.

Triton picked it up and put it down closer to her. Again she pretended not to see it. Insistently, he picked it up and dropped it down next to her, and

“  
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BRANCH THAT  
HAD BEEN  
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DROPPED IT IN  
FRONT OF  
BÄRLE AS A GIFT

finally Bärle accepted the gift with a quick sniff and lip-check. She turned and walked away, and he followed in traditional courtship behaviour. Continuing the dance, she turned and half-heartedly chased him off.

Now Icee cut in and sought Triton's attention by greeting him nose to nose, and Triton momentarily gave Icee his attention. Bärle turned to walk away but looked over her shoulder, beckoning him to follow. Triton looked from one female to the other. Icee huffed softly at him. When he turned to look at Icee, Bärle flew in his face and admonished him. Icee left, and Triton wisely feigned interest in the grass.

Bärle left to go swimming. Triton tried to join her, but she lowered her head in annoyance, and so Triton backed off. Bärle moved away from the pool and rolled in the grass to dry off. Then Vilma wandered over to the pool to lie down, and Triton greeted her briefly while looking at Bärle. Vilma seemed to ignore Triton, both looking at Bärle during the interaction.

The integration was a complete success. Bärle was leaving behind her life as a traumatised circus bear, and was carving out a place for herself negotiating with our other self-concerned, opinionated, well-adjusted mature bears. She was a robust contender to be bartered with in normal bear negotiations.

Over the winter, Bärle and Triton began to develop an extraordinarily strong bond. They played together,

slept together, ate together and were frequently near each other. As the season progressed Triton actively courted Bärle, and she allowed him to corral her into various areas of the tundra and pack-ice enclosures. They were frequently together, rubbing against each other, playing together and sharing their food.

As summer passed, Bärle grew less interested in social behaviour and began to check out dens and old nesting sites. By early November she was resting most of the day, only getting up to build her nest, fluffing, arranging, and then rearranging the straw bed in the den. By mid-November Bärle slept almost exclusively in the cubbing den. It was time.

## A New Life

November 22, 2004, was a beautiful autumn day, sunny and just above freezing. Bärle nestled deep inside her den, scratching and licking her paws, gently rearranging the straw in her nest. She rested as darkness drew in, enveloping her as it likely had her mother, some 20 years before when she was denning in the wilds of northern Canada.

At 11.06pm, Bärle raised her hind-quarters and with her head down began breathing heavily in short, quick contractions. Two minutes later a small, pinkish-white cub dropped into the straw. Within minutes Bärle had reoriented herself and was smell-checking and licking parts of the



*Bärle swims with her nine-month-old cub, Talini, in 2005 at the Detroit Zoo;  
Talini still lives there today with her mate, Nuka*

amniotic sac off the cub. Later, she gently picked up the cub in her mouth while rearranging straw and changing position. Bärle cradled the cub in the crux of her arms as she continued to lick her clean, and dry her with her tongue which was so big that it blanketed the baby each time.

In the morning the cub was nursing, and Bärle seemed completely adept at her nurturing skills. About 7.30am, Bärle quietly stood up, left the baby in the straw, and took a brief excursion. She was stretching, getting a breath of air, and possibly reassessing the safety of her environment.

Bärle proved to be a relaxed and confident mother. She would adjust the cub's position on her chest to suckle. She experimented with different lying positions, and there was much fluffing and raking of straw while she kept an eye on her baby.

At the age of 39 days the cub opened her eyes and blinked, and yawned for the first time. A few days later she got up and walked, taking a few steps, resting, then taking a few more. On day 67, the cub tried to follow Bärle when she took a break. Bärle picked up the cub with her mouth as if to move her back into the den, but then, as if she

BÄRLE'S STORY: ONE POLAR BEAR'S AMAZING RECOVERY FROM LIFE AS A CIRCUS ACT  
©2014 BY ELSE POULSEN. PUBLISHED BY GREYSTONE BOOKS. GREYSTONEBOOKS.COM

changed her mind, she put the cub back down again. From then on, the cub was allowed to follow her mother.

At 11 weeks, the cub began to mouth Bärle's food, trying to bite a piece of pear and then a fish head. At 13 weeks, Bärle escorted the cub out to the pool room. The other bears detected their activity, and one of them pounded on the door to get inside to investigate. Bärle curtly huffed distress calls at the cub and pushed her towards her room. The cub didn't want to leave and tried to dodge back around her mother. On the fly, Bärle grabbed the baby by the rump and dragged her back to the den.

In April, Bärle took her cub out to the tundra, huffing at the other bears who were watching them from the pack ice. It was impossible to know if she was greeting them, introducing

her new cub, or warning them to stay clear of her cub. Over the summer we named the cub Talini, and she learned to swim in the outdoor pool. Eventually Talini was introduced to the other bears, and Bärle began to separate herself from her cub.

Bärle could be rather abrupt with Talini, and sometimes chased her away from food and the nest. Bärle didn't want to play or cuddle with her, and worst of all Bärle didn't want to nest together anymore. Talini was devastated, and sometimes regressed into a clingy, whiny cublet. But Adak noticed the change, and he took an interest in Talini and swam with her and engaged in mock-fighting.

The seasons came and went. And although Bärle bred with another male, she never again gave birth to a cub. To this day, Talini continues to thrive at the Detroit Zoo, and now has a mate, Nuka. But in July 2012 Bärle lost her appetite, and when the vet examined her she discovered tumours throughout her abdominal cavity. Bärle died at the age of 27 from liver cancer.

Bärle had arrived at the Detroit Zoo an empty worn-out hull, but with a grip on life that would never let go. She bravely took advantage of every opportunity offered to her to learn, to make mistakes, to express herself without consequence. And in the end she transformed herself from an abused circus act back to what she was always meant to be: a true polar bear. R

## Puzzles

*See page 120*

### STAIR TRAINING

840. Each number is found by multiplying the preceding one by the number that corresponds to the position of the step. The number on the second step is twice the preceding number ( $7 \times 2 = 14$ ), the number on the third step is three times the preceding number ( $14 \times 3 = 42$ ) and so on.

### GRIDLOCK

1. The Roman numeral at the top of each column indicates the number of 1s it contains. Therefore, column IV must contain four 1s.

### WHAT'S THE RULE?

32. The number in the top triangle of each figure is the sum of the two numbers in the lower triangles plus the number of symbols inside the rectangle.

### FINAL COUNT

39.

### HIDDEN MEANING

- A. Raised eyebrows
- B. Well balanced
- C. Middle of nowhere
- D. Eating leftover food



# Unbelievable

TRUE TALES TOLD TALL



## Follow Your Dreams

Nury Vittachi on how to achieve fame without getting jailed



**THE CAR WINDOW** winds down and New Age author Paulo Coelho asks for directions to the expressway. "Here, have this map," I reply, handing him a folded piece of paper with *Follow your dream* written on it.

OK, that hasn't happened yet, but I'm told we live in an infinite

multiverse which means that it is statistically guaranteed to happen somewhere at some point.

It worries me that so many young writers and filmmakers I meet think *Follow your dream* is the most profound idea ever.

My question is, which dream? The one where I am chained naked to Goofy at a Disneyland parade? The

one where Kylo Ren from *Star Wars* is fondling his light sabre and looking at me in a creepy manner? Or one of the disturbing ones?

A colleague offered advice. "I think they mean that you should follow your *daydream*. Not the weird dreams you have at night, thanks to your strange eating habits," he said, as if other people didn't eat mac 'n' cheese with vindaloo sauce late at night.

Following my daydreams makes it worse. How do I arrange for Taylor Swift and Emma Watson to fight over me? Or to have a group of novitiate nuns chase me with tickling sticks?

To me, the phrase needs a disclaimer:

"Follow your dream unless it quickly becomes obvious that you really, really shouldn't."

In my crime reporter days, I recall a one-legged petty thief from Indonesia who decided to follow his dream and graduate to bag-snatching. He was quickly caught by local police who gently suggested he rethink his career choice.

It strikes me that what many people mean by the phrase is that they want to be famous. To achieve this, forget long-held dreams and just have a startlingly original idea. For example, Indian student Ketan Kumar, 24, stole a train for his girlfriend. He thought

she would be impressed with a gift of the 8.20pm express to Amrapali. She wasn't, and nor was the local constabulary. Ketan, buddy, you need to think more deeply about how girls work. Big, ugly steaming lump of metal? Perfect for guys. For girls, think credit cards and fancy dinners.

Ketan did achieve fame but ideally one should find an idea that gains media attention without getting you locked up.

Like the Indonesian high school students who created an air freshener from cow dung. Rintya Miki Aprianti and Dwi Nailul Izzah fermented cow poop for several days to maximise the, er, fragrance, and then put it

into a spray-top container. The result was instant fame in the news media.

Personally, cow poop is not my top choice for house fragrances, but others disagree. "The smell reminds me of summer vacations, playing with cousins, gulmohar flowers, and reading novels in the courtyard under the shade of a mango tree," said Karuna Menon, a reader with Indian and Malaysian roots. It takes all sorts, Karuna.

Time for a daydreamy doze. Taylor, Emma, where are you?

**Nury Vittachi** is a Hong Kong-based author. Read his blog at [Mrjam.org](http://Mrjam.org)

# out & about

NEWS

BOOKS

FILMS

DVDS

## FINDING DORY Animation



Everyone who fell in love with Dory (voiced by Ellen DeGeneres), the Pacific regal blue tang fish who helped reunite Nemo and his dad back in 2003, will be delighted to see her return to the screen in *Finding Dory*.

Set six months after Nemo was reunited with his dad Marlin, Dory – who was suffering memory loss – starts to have recollections of her own childhood. Remembering something about “the jewel of Monterey, California”, Dory, accompanied by Nemo and Marlin, sets off on a quest to find her own parents. Needless to say, along the way everyone learns a few unexpected things about the real meaning of family. This is a wonderful, feel-good adventure that is sure to please as much as the original.



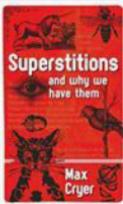


## SUPERSTITIONS AND WHY WE HAVE THEM

Max Cryer

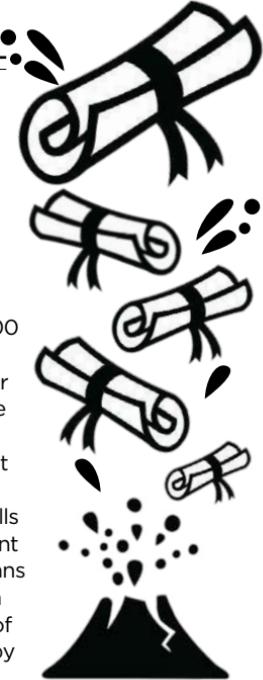
Exisle Publishing

What's going to happen if you drop a slice of bread butter-side down on the floor? Well, apart from the obvious, superstition has it that it will start to rain. And, if you roll cobwebs into a ball and then swallow it (good luck with that), chances are you'll alleviate an asthma attack. Clearly, some irrational beliefs are wackier than others, and in this entertaining book, Max Cryer kicks off with 'abracadabra' and ends with 'yawn' as he delves into all manner of life's everyday occurrences, rules, traditions and commonplace objects and uncovers the quirky and curious superstitions that lurk behind them.



## Better Read With Lead

When Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79CE, Pompeii and nearby wealthy Herculaneum were entombed under a thick layer of ash. In 1752 explorers there uncovered the first scrolls in a hoard that now numbers over 800 in a building dubbed the 'Villa de Papyri'. About 200 have never been unfurled, since unrolling the charred papyrus can destroy it. But a team led by Italian physicist Vito Mocella has discovered that the ink used on some of the scrolls has an unusually high lead content - some 400 years before historians had thought metals were used in ink. This opens up the prospect of the rolled-up scrolls being read by advanced scanning techniques.



## SPOTLIGHT Drama, Thriller

This is the disturbing true story of a group of investigative reporters from the *Boston Globe* and their shocking revelations of a cover-up of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. Aware that they are taking on the most powerful institution in the city, they slowly learn the scandal may have begun decades ago. The cast includes Michael Keaton, Mark Ruffalo, Rachel McAdams and Liev Schreiber. Topical and tense, it won the Best Picture Oscar earlier this year.



## Not the Titanic

When the UK's National Environment Research Council (NERC) came to naming its new £200 million Royal Research Ship that will carry out vital scientific work in the Arctic and Antarctic, they threw open a public ballot for suggestions.

One name stood out a nautical mile ahead of the others: RRS *Boaty McBoatface*.

Britons embraced the ridiculous - *Boaty* was 80,000 votes ahead of the second place getter as we went to print, and a Portsmouth to Waterloo



train service ran with lights stating 'Trainy McTrainface' in its honour.

NERC has said the poll is advisory only, so the ship could end up RRS *David Attenborough*, the name that James Hand - who submitted *Boaty McBoatface* to the poll - actually voted for, or the RRS *Katharine Giles*, after

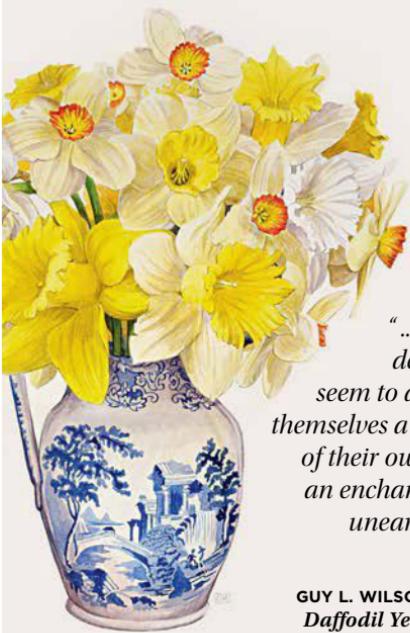
a climate scientist who was killed in a cycling accident. Other suggestions included RRS *Usain Boat*, RRS *Pingu* and RRS *Ice Ice Baby*. Meanwhile, Hand has been offered a job by Royal Caribbean Cruises, naming new ships, and NERC has received the equivalent of millions in free publicity.



## THE MONEY MONSTER Drama, Thriller

Lee Gates (George Clooney) hosts popular TV show *Money Monster*, offering viewers advice on all things Wall Street. When a high-tech stock mysteriously crashes, irate investor Kyle Budwell (Jack O'Connell), who has lost everything as a result of this investment, storms the show taking Gates, his crew and producer Patty Fenn (Julia Roberts) hostage.

Rather than shutting down the show, the cameras continue to roll and America tunes in to watch what could be a live execution. Directed by Jodie Foster, this drama is a comment on both the economic climate and today's obsession with reality TV.



*"... as twilight deepens, they seem to distill about themselves a magic light of their own, and cast an enchanted spell of unearthly beauty and peace"*

GUY L. WILSON, *American Daffodil Yearbook*, 1937

## DAFFODIL

Biography of a Flower  
Helen O'Neill

HarperCollins Publishers  
Australia

The red rose stands as a symbol of unity, the poppy for consolation, the violet for faithfulness. What, then, the daffodil? After a chequered floriographic history, this flower of myths and legends has established itself as a symbol of rebirth and hope, a theme O'Neill explores in her beautifully illustrated book.

Combining autobiography, history, horticulture, poetry, arts and crafts, wars and the world of medicine, *Daffodil* is a powerful tribute to and love affair with one of the world's most popular flowers. Who can resist evocative names such as 'Bath's Flame', 'White Lady', 'Zest', 'Golden Bells' or the hoop petticoat daffodil? Pale and pretty or bold and flamboyant, lightly scented or robustly intrusive, the daffodil has a lyrical story to tell.



## Did You Know?



### HELEN MIRREN

- Was born Helen Lydia Mironoff on July 26, 1945.
- Has played royalty six times: *The Queen* (2006), *Elizabeth I* (2005), *The Prince of Egypt* (1998), *The Snow Queen* (1995), *The Madness of King George* (1994) and *Caligula* (1979).
- Won at least 29 awards for her portrayal of Queen Elizabeth II in *The Queen*.
- Has a Native American star tattooed on her left hand symbolising 'equal but opposite'.



## THE TUDORS

Seasons 1-4



Filled with political intrigue, dangerous court liaisons and personal and religious plotting, this series introduces viewers to the flamboyant and dangerous court of England's King Henry VIII (Jonathan Rhys Meyers, below).

Beginning in Season 1 with Henry VIII growing distant from his first wife, Queen Catherine of Aragon, the series moves quickly to the period when Anne Boleyn became his obsession. In the subsequent three seasons the viewer follows Henry's fortunes through four more wives and battles at home and abroad with powers both temporal and spiritual, all in gorgeous costumes.

The box set is available at [www.shop.readersdigest.com.au](http://www.shop.readersdigest.com.au).



## ME BEFORE YOU

Romance

Love is often found when - and where - we least expect it. Bubbly Louisa Clark (Emilia Clarke, *Game of Thrones*) takes on the role of caregiver and companion to cynical Will Traynor (Sam Claflin, *The Hunger Games*) who is left paralysed after an accident. The once successful banker has all but given up on life.

Over time, Louisa convinces Will there is a point in living. Set in the beautiful English countryside and based on the Jojo Moyes novel of the same name, it is a tearful - yet heart-warming - movie.



## Spiders from Oz



Australians like to travel, and are famous for their large variety of eight-legged fauna. So it seems only natural that the huge golden orb spider found by a family in Mapua at the top of New Zealand's South Island probably blew there across the Tasman Sea. A process known as 'ballooning' - essentially arachnid kite surfing - sees spiderlings release threads of gossamer silk to catch wind currents. The Bibby family, in whose garden the spider took residence are wholly unfazed by their visitor, with Neville Bibby describing her as, "Spectacular ... she's bigger than the size of my hand." While the spider spins a large web to catch bees and wasps, the Bibbys don't mind, thinking it "magnificent" and "amazingly strong". Sadly, the cold New Zealand winter means she's unlikely to see the spring.

*Golden orb spiders can grow as large as 5 cm - not including legspan*





## COUNTRY STYLE GARDENS

Edited by Victoria Carey

HarperCollins Publishers Australia

 Peonies and roses trembling like tutus, a magic carpet of daffodils, a hedge trimmed in the shape of a herd of elephants. Gardens come in many forms, fragrances and colours and this rich and varied collection, drawn from the pages of *Australian Country Style* magazine, takes us on a fabulous, romantic journey. From the shady woodland, lawn and shrubberies of a Tasmanian garden that reflects the changing seasons to a scented garden in Queensland, the unruly and the formal approaches to gardening are in glorious evidence. Including a practical guide to the best plants for each season and advice on where and when to plant them, this book will appeal to the gardener in all of us.

*Wisteria ... in flower, it should be a dripping sensation, an ornament for an archway or pergola*

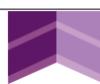
PHOTOS: (SPIDER) SHUTTERSTOCK; (BOURLIER) FRANCE 3

## Steady Studier

Colette Bourlier has just completed her PhD in France, attaining a High Distinction. But Colette is more remarkable than most graduates – she's 91 and has been working towards the degree for 30 years. "It took a bit of time to write because I took breaks," she explains. Her thesis on immigrant workers in Besançon was helped by her decades of teaching literacy to migrants in that city.

Her professor, Serge Ormaux, admitted Bourlier's submission involved an unusually long process, but added, "She is probably the only person who knew all the aspects in such detail and who was able to weave everything together. She backed it up with statistical analyses."





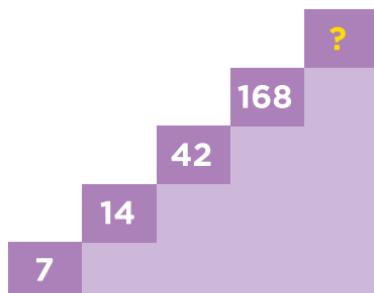
# Puzzles

*Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers,  
then check your answers on page 111.*

BY MARCEL DANESI

## STAIR TRAINING

Proceeding up the staircase, the numbers form a logical sequence. What number belongs on the top step?



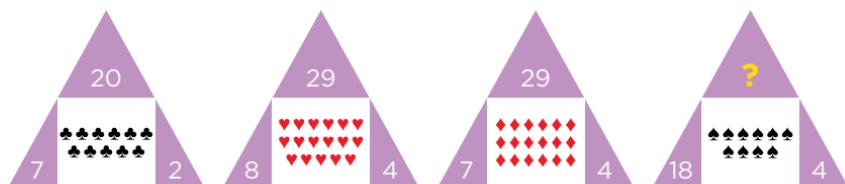
## GRIDLOCK

This grid follows a secret rule. See if you can spot what it is and fill in the missing digit.

I	II	III	IV	V
1	0	1	2	1
0	1	0	1	1
2	1	0	?	1
5	5	1	1	1
3	0	1	1	1

## WHAT'S THE RULE?

What number is missing from the fourth figure?

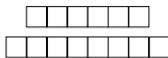


## HIDDEN MEANING

Identify the common words or phrases below.

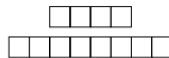
**eyebrows eyebrows**

**A**



**WEL L**

**B**



**OWHER**

**C**



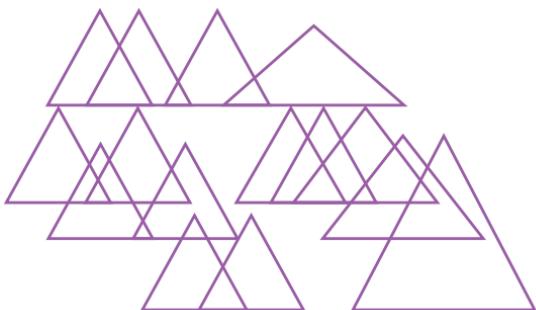
**eating  
food**

**C**



## FINAL COUNT

Including those formed by overlapping figures,  
how many triangles are there in the image below?



**BRAIN POWER**  
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 **PILOT**

FRIXION ERASABLE PEN



# Trivia

**1.** Which poisonous garden plant is used to produce a powerful heart medicine? *2 points*

**2.** What feature helped identify the skeleton found buried under a parking lot in 2012 as that of King Richard III? *1 point*

**3.** In culinary terms, what does the term 'chiffonade' mean? *2 points*

**4.** Which song became the first song in the US to sell over one million digital copies within a week of its release? *2 points*

**5.** Operation 'Neptune Spear' had the task of capturing which wanted man in 2011? *1 point*

**6.** By what colour was the wizard Gandalf known in *The Fellowship of the Ring*? *1 point*



**7.** In what year were vitamins discovered?  
*1881, 1912 or*

*1946?*  
*1 point*

**15.** Which fashion icon was murdered in 1997 by Andrew Cunanan? *2 points*

**16-20 Gold medal**

**11-15 Silver medal**

**6-10 Bronze medal**

**0-5 Wooden spoon**

1. Foxglove (digitalis). 2. A curved spine. He had scoliosis. 3. To cut leafy greens or herbs into long, thin strips.  
4. Adelio, by Adele. 5. Osama bin Laden. 6. Grey - Gandalf the Grey. 7. 1912. 8. Tagalog, known officially as Filipino.  
9. Hypertext transfer protocol. 10. New Zealand, in its territory of the Belleny Islands. 11. The X-Files. 12. Braveheart.  
13. A snake. 14. Mother of pearl (also known as nacre). 15. Gitanji Versace.



IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

# Word Power

## *The Shape of Things*

You already know that staying in shape is a key to good health. But it is just as important to keep your vocabulary finely tuned and toned. Try this quiz – about shapes of the literal sort – then hit the next page for answers.

BY EMILY COX &amp; HENRY RATHVON

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1. gangling</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: loose and lanky. B: bulging with muscles. C: short in stature.</p> <p><b>2. helix</b> <i>n.</i> – A: having a pointed tip. B: warped or subtly deformed outline. C: a three-dimensional spiral.</p> <p><b>3. deltoid</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: triangular. B: circular. C: squared off.</p> <p><b>4. trefoil</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: pliable. B: having a three-leaf design. C: tapering narrowly.</p> <p><b>5. conical</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: like an igloo. B: like a cone. C: like a tunnel.</p> <p><b>6. pentagram</b> <i>n.</i> – A: five-pointed star. B: crescent moon. C: square.</p> <p><b>7. elliptical</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: slanted in structure or design. B: embossed. C: oval.</p> <p><b>8. sigmoid</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: crossed like the letter X. B: curved like an S. C: bent like an L.</p> | <p><b>9. whorl</b> <i>n.</i> – A: well-rounded body part, such as a muscle or feature. B: flat surface. C: circular pattern.</p> <p><b>10. serrated</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: a series of interconnected circles, rings or similar shapes. B: elongated. C: having notched edges.</p> <p><b>11. cordate</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: stringlike. B: heart shaped. C: free-form.</p> <p><b>12. svelte</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: undulating or waving. B: slender. C: in a checked or repeating pattern.</p> <p><b>13. sinuous</b> <i>adj.</i> – A: having many curves and turns. B: covered in scales, like a snake. C: seedlike, as in an avocado or a peach.</p> <p><b>14. lozenge</b> <i>n.</i> – A: 90-degree angle. B: level used in architectural design. C: diamond.</p> <p><b>15. ramify</b> <i>v.</i> – A: become solid, as cement. B: jut out. C: split into branches or parts.</p> |
|--|--|

## Answers

**1. gangling** – [A] loose and lanky. The protagonist of “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” was the gangling pedagogue Ichabod Crane.

**2. helix** – [C] spiral. Judy is a keen DNA researcher, so she’s getting a tattoo of a double helix.

**3. deltoid** – [A] triangular. The people who designed the pyramids obviously knew a thing or two about the stability of deltoid structures.

**4. trefoil** – [B] having a three-leaf design. The gardening club uses a delicate trefoil symbol – a gilded clover – as its logo.

**5. conical** – [B] like a cone. My favourite conical item? Why, the ice-cream cone, of course! Preferably one that’s topped with three scoops of chocolate.

**6. pentagram** – [A] five-pointed star. This tarot deck is missing all the cards with pentagrams!

**7. elliptical** – [C] oval. Just two times around the elliptical running track, and Rebecca was feeling wiped out.

**8. sigmoid** – [B] curved like an S. On Superman’s chest sits a single bold, scarlet sigmoid symbol.

**9. whorl** – [C] circular pattern. To find the treasure, take 50 paces due east from the tree with the whorl in its trunk.

**10. serrated** – [C] having notched edges. “I’m not sure that old serrated knife is best for carving this turkey,” Dad advised.

**11. cordate** – [B] heart shaped. Sarah is baking cordate cookies for her cardiologist boyfriend.

**12. svelte** – [B] slender. The holiday feasts pose a serious challenge to my svelte frame!

**13. sinuous** – [A] having many curves and turns. The red setter weaved its sinuous body around our legs, nearly causing an accident.

**14. lozenge** – [C] diamond. The boys dug up the grass to create a makeshift baseball lozenge so they could play a game through the holidays.

**15. ramify** – [C] split into branches or parts. “We need to ramify this department to keep productivity high!” Kerrie emphasised at yesterday’s staff meeting.

### WHAT'S THE ANGLE?

In geometry, you find various shapes called *polygons*, from the Greek *poly-* for “many” plus *gonia* for “angle”. Hence, a pentagon has five angles (and sides), a hexagon has six, a heptagon has seven, an octagon has eight, and so on.

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

**9 & below:** Obtuse

**10-15:** Well-rounded

**15:** Word Power Wizard

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