

RAPIDES

NEWS

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In My Opinion

BY BETTYE DEKEYZER

Don't Worry ... Be Happy!

I have always believed anyone can begin a new life, get a new job end an unpleasant relationship and change your mind about anything.

Today, people permit bad news both local and national, to affect their lives. Happiness seems to disappear with national issues and world affairs. It is time to take charge of your own life in spite of terrible news, poor economy and the virus. I am not a Pollyanna but it must be understood that while we can do nothing to change the world, or the life of others we can make our own life serene and even enjoyable. It can be accomplished by concentrating only on what and who is uplifting.

My grandfather said some people are so gloomy they are toxic and should be avoided. I asked what toxic was and he said, "Cousin Gertrude is a perfect example of what it means. She can walk into the house where people are laughing and happy and within a few minutes of hearing her bad news, deaths and illness everyone gets a headache and has to lie down with a cold cloth on their head."

The virus has changed and ruined everything including happiness, but I have found a few things that make me happy and I am going to share them with you.

Look to the sky. I was interested in an article the Farmer's Almanac about planets in January that would meet. A celestial event

that happened only every one thousand years. It heralds a stupendous year. There will be a marvelous heavenly night in May when the Earth will sweep through sparkling star dust left behind by a comet that will result in an amazing display of shooting stars. That's enough to make anyone happy.

The last national election created worldwide disappointment but we have forgotten there will be elections in two months for state offices and the results will clear the air in America. I am hoping we will return to the America we love. An election can cause changes no one ever expects. It all hinges on electing the right candidate with excellent values, honesty, courage, great physical strength and superior intelligence. Since I can't think of anyone who has all those assets we must begin looking for him or her today.

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Front Cover Image: Pink Perfection Rose the perfect symbol of Valentine's Day!

Interview with Bob Jordan

By Patsy K. Barber, PhD

What a delightful interview and hearing this man talk about the Louisiana Maneuvers in 1941 and his time in the Air force during World War II. Prior to his high school graduation in 1942 he became a keen observer. It began with a machine gun nest in his front yard with troops of the 32nd Division, Big Red Arrow. Black Forest Cavalry and a good bunch of kids from Michigan, Wisconsin and Chicago who "talked funny". They were going to be back home in a year that turned into five years. They did not use the word "Y'all."

Bob Jordan said, "I remember the horse-drawn artillery and remount station in Kingsville where they kept the horses. The 24th Division railroad battalion that had built the railroad between Fort Polk and Camp Claiborne was stationed at Claiborne."

Bob enlisted with the Army Air Force and spent his first night at Camp Beauregard, then stayed a couple of weeks. He was familiar with military life because his father served in WWI. He talked to military men as he delivered newspapers. He spent summers at summer encampment of boxing matches, track meets and swimming contests with boys from south and north Louisiana.

Bob moved to Des Moines, Iowa with the 35th Division. When they learned he was from Alexandria, they asked if the Hotel Bentley was still there. They had many cold beers in the Mirror Room.

Bob continued: "Most of my work was on P40s and P47s. The latter was used to haul support such as ammunition and rations on Burma Road as combat troops needed them. Sometimes we helped unload 55-

gallon drums of gasoline. WE had field hospitals and always had medics with us. I went to Yengyang, Lingling where runways were built and we occupied shacks there. Monsoons curtailed practice schedules. Chennault had the P40s and got more mileage out of them because he knew how to use them. We had some B24s and B26s coming out of Calcutta to take care of river traffic along the coast.



Chiang Kai-shek and Chennault shaking hands.
From <https://louisianadigitallibrary.org>

I saw Chennault, Chang Kai Shek and staff as well at his home in Chamgking. Chennault was always in Kunming except when visiting outlying stations. He encouraged baseball for recreation and considered himself the pitcher.

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Dear Bettye: My husband interviewed several people for a position and one was an old girlfriend. Since the interview she has called him every day at home and at the office about the job. He does not know how to get rid of her. Should I tell him?

Someone should – and quick. If she is calling so often he should end it. He should tell the office manager to call her and say the position has been filled. If you don't want to give him the advice tell him I said so.

Dear Bettye: My brother is making plans to stay with us for Easter as always. We dread it because they leave clothes and food all over the house. How can I tell him we can't have them anymore?

Tell him you no longer have house guests because of the virus. It is true.

Dear Bettye: My company is downsizing, and I have been offered a very generous severance package or a job that pays less. Since I am 62 which is the best offer?

If you think you are targeted for layoff due to your age talk to an attorney about age discrimination. You could get a settlement so large you could buy the company.

Dear Bettye: A friend asks to borrow anything she likes and never gives it back. Is there a polite way to say no?

Politeness does not require you to lend your clothes to anyone. Ben Franklin had the best advice. He said, "Never a borrower nor a lender be."

Dear Bettye: My friend calls everyone while she is eating and her smacking is horrible. How can we tell her how offensive it is?

Tell her the next time she calls say there is a terrible sound on the line like a cement mixer that could be a dangerous electric problem so you are hanging up. Tell her the same thing every time she calls and smacks.

Dear Bettye: I am a volunteer and work with another volunteer for a month and then change partners. The woman I have as a partner this month does nothing but gossip about people. She talks about men or women who are cheating on their spouses, drink too much and other personal things. I have asked to change partners, but the supervisor says everyone complains about her, but we have to take a turn working with her. What can I do?

Tell your supervisor you have been advised she must dismiss the woman before she causes more trouble than she can handle. The supervisor will be in deep trouble and lose her job because she did not dismiss her long ago. Her gossip will be repeated to the people she has been gossiping about and there could be a huge lawsuit that will ruin the volunteer organization. Gossipers are like a loose cannon – anyone near her will get hurt.

Send your comments and questions to:
bdekrcoa@AOL.com



Six relaxation techniques to reduce stress

Practicing even a few minutes per day can provide a reserve of inner calm

We all face stressful situations throughout our lives, ranging from minor annoyances like traffic jams to more serious worries, such as a loved one's grave illness. No matter what the cause, stress floods your body with hormones. Your heart pounds, your breathing speeds up, and your muscles tense.

This so-called "stress response" is a normal reaction to threatening situations, honed in our pre-history to help us survive threats like an animal attack or a flood. Today, we rarely face these physical dangers, but challenging situations in daily life can set off the stress response. We can't avoid all sources of stress in our lives, nor would we want to. But we can develop healthier ways of responding to them.

One way is to invoke the "relaxation response," through a technique first developed in the 1970s at Harvard Medical School by cardiologist Dr. Herbert Benson, editor of the Harvard Medical School Special Health Report *Stress Management: Approaches for preventing and reducing stress*. The relaxation response is the opposite of the stress response. It's a state of profound rest that can be elicited in many ways. With regular practice, you create a well of calm to dip into as the need arises.

Following are six relaxation techniques that can help you evoke the relaxation response and reduce stress.

1. Breath focus. In this simple, powerful technique, you take long, slow, deep breaths (also known as abdominal or belly breathing). As you breathe, you gently disengage your mind from distracting thoughts and sensations. Breath focus can be especially helpful for people with eating disorders to help them focus on their bodies in a more positive way. However, this technique may not be appropriate for those with health problems that make breathing difficult,



such as respiratory ailments or heart failure.

2. Body scan. This technique blends breath focus with progressive muscle relaxation. After a few minutes of deep breathing, you focus on one part of the body or group of muscles at a time and mentally releasing any physical tension you feel there. A body scan can help boost your awareness of the mind-body connection. If you have had a recent surgery that affects your body image or other difficulties with body image, this technique may be less helpful for you.

3. Guided imagery. For this technique, you conjure up soothing scenes, places, or experiences in your mind to help you relax and focus. You can find free apps and online recordings of calming scenes—just make sure to choose imagery you find soothing and that has personal significance. Guided imagery may help you reinforce a positive vision of yourself, but it can be difficult for those who have intrusive thoughts or find it hard to conjure up mental images.

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The Little Known Legend of Valentine's Day

According to legend, Roman Emperor Claudius 11 forbade young men from marrying. He believed marriage weakened soldiers. A certain Bishop Valentine believed in the power of love and the institution of marriage. He bravely held secret marriage ceremonies in direct opposition to Claudius laws. When the emperor learned what the Bishop had done behind his back he ordered the bishop to be arrested and imprisoned. Once in prison, Valentine befriended his jailor and Blanche his beautiful daughter.

Blanche and Bishop Valentine developed a special bond. When a jailed Valentine still refused to stop hosting secret marriage ceremonies, Claudius ordered his execution. When execution day arrived, Valentine penned a farewell message to Blanche and signed it "From Your Valentine". He was executed on February 14, 270 AD

Today Valentine's Day is celebrated with gifts and cards. Greeting cards number 25% of all greeting cards sent on Valentine's Day or a total of 189 million cards. One billion dollars is spent on chocolates and 189 million roses are sold.



VALENTINE'S DAY

THE PATRON SAINT OF LOVERS



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Interview with Bob Jordan

I remember from the west coast to India on an Italian luxury liner. We pulled into Brazil to refuel and thought we were destined for home port in Italy.

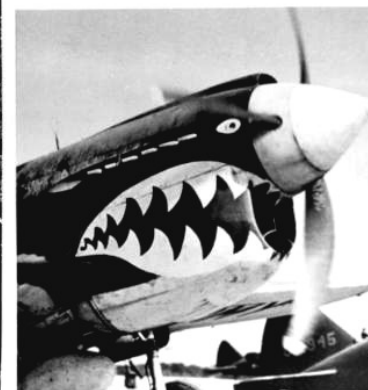
We pulled into Brazil and thought our destination was home port in Italy. Since port fees had not been paid a seize order was issued. An attempt to scuttle the ship was stopped because it had become an American possession. Bunks were five high and meals were twice a day for 8,000 troops. The 46-day trip took us to Bora Bora that was not the vacation spot it is today for mechanical trouble. After a week, we were picked up by an Australian destroyer and two British Cruisers.

Refueled in Perth, Australia and escorted to Bombay, India. Culture shock ensued. Went on a narrow gauge railroad to Calcutta and sat on wooden seats with open windows. Passengers began boarding and I had never seen so many people in my life. Then we drove military vehicles to our destination. Jeeps, 2 ½ ton trucks and gasoline trucks and crossed on ferries every 60 miles. We saw Indians working elephants. Camped along the roadway. We did not dare touch Brahmas and even Hyenas in the forest were sacred. They came into our tent at night with an offensive odor. We were taught that we were guests in their country. Finally, we stopped in Chaubua with its many little airstrips along the Indian border.

We ended up at Qualing. The bases were built by Chinese coolies. As many as 2,000 were pulling a roller to crush the rocks for runways. I was on radio watch one night and heard - "Troops are storming the shore. Looks like the war is going to start in Europe. I woke up every one in the room to tell them. The next big episode was dropping the atomic bomb. Orders came to return home and we went to Shanghai and waited two weeks for ships. I was assigned to USS Annabella Lights, destined for the

Port of New Orleans.

After Louisiana College I went into pharmaceutical selling for 30 years. I met some men from Central Louisiana. Tom Phares from Pollock and his wife Maxine who taught school. Missionary Green Strother serving as chaplain. His brother drove me to New Orleans and to his mother's home. Quite a surprise – Horace Penney was there who served in the Signal Corps



State Library of Louisiana (<http://www.state.lib.la.us>)

B&W photo, October 8, 1976. Montage of images featuring Lt. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault. Written on photo: "Lt. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault, a Louisiana son, is to be honored in special ceremonies in Baton Rouge, Friday, Oct. 8. A memorial statue of General Chennault is being presented to Louisiana by the people of the Republic of China. The inscription at the base of the statue reads: Erected by the people of the Republic of China on the occasion of American Bicentennial on October 10, 1976 in recognition of his service to the Chinese people for freedom and the dignity of mankind."

Continued from page 1
"Don't Worry --- Be Happy!"

I researched Happiness and found many wise men who said wonderful, funny and stunning things about Happiness and here are a few:

Ernest Hemingway

Happiness in intelligent people is the rarest thing in the world.

Dalai Lama

Happiness is not made. It comes from your actions.

George Burns

Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.

Marcel Proust

Be grateful to the people who make us happy. They are the charming gardeners that make our hearts blossom.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Do good deeds and you will be accused of ulterior motives – but you will be happy.

Abraham Lincoln

Folks are as happy as they decide to be.

J. R. Tolkien

To value food, friends and music above gold is happiness.

Audrey Hepburn

The most important thing is to enjoy your life because to be happy is all that matters.

Mahatma Gandhi

Happiness is when what you think, value, say and do is in harmony.

I hope these wise men and women made you happy. The final quote is what my Grandfather said when asked how anyone can be happy in this world and he replied,

"People don't understand happiness. It is not a permanent condition, and if you are lucky it occurs now and then. I have observed that those who search for it never find it."

I really laughed and felt happy for the rest of the day when I read the Quote by Clare Booth Luce:

"Money can't buy happiness but having a ton of it makes you comfortable while you wait for it to happen."

Continued from page 4
Six Ways to reduce stress.

4. Mindfulness meditation. This practice involves sitting comfortably, focusing on your breathing, and bringing your mind's attention to the present moment without drifting into concerns about the past or the future. This form of meditation has enjoyed increasing popularity in recent years. Research suggests it may be helpful for people with anxiety, depression, and pain.

5. Yoga, tai chi, and qigong. These three ancient arts combine rhythmic breathing with a series of postures or flowing movements. The physical aspects of these practices offer a mental focus that can help distract you from racing thoughts. They can also enhance your flexibility and balance. But if you are not normally active, have health problems, or a painful or disabling condition, these relaxation techniques might be

too challenging. Check with your doctor before starting them.

6. Repetitive prayer. For this technique, you silently repeat a short prayer or phrase from a prayer while practicing breath focus. This method may be especially appealing if religion or spirituality is meaningful to you.

Rather than choosing just one technique, experts recommend sampling several to see which one works best for you. Try to practice for at least 20 minutes a day, although even just a few minutes can help. But the longer and the more often you practice these relaxation techniques, the greater the benefits and the more you can reduce stress.

By Julie Corliss

Executive Editor, *Harvard Heart Letter*

Image: © Robert Kneschke | Dreamstime.com

RAPIDES & STATE AGENCIES CONTACT INFORMATION

Rapides Council On Aging

Homebound Meals, Chore, Transportation for groceries and medications within city limits of Pineville and Alexandria.

Open 7am – 3pm

Call 318- 445-7985

Legal Service for Seniors

318-443-7281

Medicaid Office (Local)

Call 318-484-2420

Rapides Senior Citizen Centers

Meals, Recreation. Programs and Assistance.

Call 318-487-1561

Alexandria Housing Authority

Call 318-442-8843

Cenla Community Action

Committee

Utility Assistance, Rent, mortgages, prescription drugs, 40-pound box of food monthly, Adopt a senior program and Income Tax Assistance.

Call 318-314-3480

Pineville Housing Authority

Call 318-473-9729

Food Bank of Central

Louisiana

Call 318-445-2773

State Elderly Protection

Office-Baton Rouge

Call 1-833-0577-6532

Social Security Office

1-877-876-3171



Did You Know?



February comes from the Latin word februa that means "to please". The month was named after the Roman Februalia and was a monthlong festival of purification and atonement.

February Holidays:

- February 2 – Ground Hog Day;
- February 14 – Valentine's Day;
- February 16 – Mardi Gras;
- February 17 – Ash Wednesday.

Hold Hands

Eighty couples were given a stressful test with only the woman completing the test. Those who held their husband's hand now and then finished quicker, scored higher and exhibited less pressure.

Rice and Arsenic

According to the Consumer Report another test was conducted with instant rice and boiled rice. The result was 1.8 micrograms of arsenic in instant rice and 6.0 micrograms of arsenic in boiled rice per serving. The test was made with American rice.

Canned versus Fresh Fish

A recent USDA study found canned salmon had a higher level of omega 3 than fresh fish. Canned sardines have the same level of omega 3 as salmon. Tuna has omega 3 but also has mercury.

Fruit versus Juice

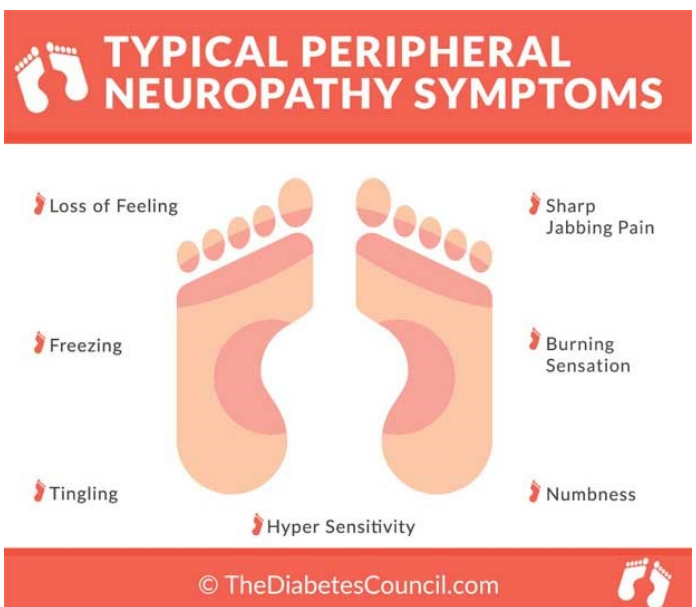
Both are great for you but fruit contains dietary fiber that helps reduce the danger of heart disease. Whole fruit contains fewer calories than juice.

Popping Knees

Popping or cracking of the knee joint can be a harmless result of contact between parts of the knee joint and the surrounding fluid. If your knee feels stiff, swollen, painful or feels like it is weak you should see your doctor.

Burning Feet

A burning sensation on the soles of the feet can arise from any number of causes from ill-fitting shoes to diabetes. The most serious case is caused by damage to leg nerves. Some people have fiery feet because they are sensitive to the chemicals in the inner lining of the shoes. Try another shoe and if the burning still is there see your doctor.





Punxsutawney Phil is held up by his handler for the crowd to see during the ceremonies for Groundhog day on February 2, 2018 in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. SOURCE: Brett Carlsen/Getty Images

Groundhog Day always falls on February 2. That day traditionally marks the midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox. At this time farmers are trying to determine when to plant their crops so they try to forecast whether there will be an early spring or a lingering winter.

According to legend, if the groundhog sees his shadow there will be six more weeks of winter and if he doesn't spring is just around the corner. It is not a good omen if the day is sunny because that means more snow and frost. A dark cloudy is rain and warmer weather will make the fields ready for planting.

So, will the groundhog see his shadow? It depends whether February 2 is sunny or cloudy. In spite of two feet of snow and a dark morning, the groundhog was said to have seen his shadow. That means the cold weather will last six week longer. He was carried in the arms of his trainer wrapped in a blanket. Everyone else was freezing, but he was warm and didn't care how long it would be cold.

It was encouraging to hear on the news that he has been wrong many times before. Additionally, within six weeks on March 20 spring begins whether he sees his shadow or not!