

February 16 - February 29, 2024

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## The 2024 Athens-Limestone Home & Garden Show Is Almost Here!

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

After a hiatus of way too many years, navigating through COVID and coming out the other side, one of the best parts of spring in Limestone County is back by popular demand: the Chamber of

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### What Makes Ronnie Roll



**Such A Special Week...**  
We were celebrating the fact that we had gotten through a deep freeze, flash floods, storms, and now we had much-welcomed sunshine. The sun came just in time, and so many things were waiting...  
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### 256 Youth Sports

**Talk Women's Sports...**  
Athens High School's Kinley Hargrove decides to make a difference by being the difference. Some people talk the talk, but don't walk the walk...  
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### Horse Whispering



**The HEART Of A Horse...**  
On the album Hoofbeats, Heartbeats, and Wings, singer Mary Ann Kennedy sings about how she was born to ride like a bird was born to flying for a busy spring!...  
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## Worthy By Jamie Kern Lima: Wow! Just Wow!

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Two weeks ago, I made a new friend that I have never met. Her name is Jamie Kern Lima, and here is the reason I feel like she is my friend. First of all, she loves God and wants to serve Him. Second of all, she loves people and wants to serve them.

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**Publisher's Point**

*The Longing For Leadership*

When I was a kid, there was very little talk about leadership and what made leaders great. Due to the fact that I was born just eight years after the end of WWII, there certainly was no shortage of examples, both good and bad, of leaders that had profoundly changed history. Adolph Hitler had definitely led Germany to hell. Winston Churchill inspired fishermen to row out into the English Channel in dinghies to rescue soldiers while families waited at home to “put the kettle on for a proper spot of tea,” and they all took strangers into their homes. Mussolini strutted about and ended up before a firing squad. Eisenhower stayed up all night to pray before D-Day. It seemed that leadership wasn’t so much something that one studied, it was something that one became by example. If ever there was a time when people are longing for leadership, I think it’s now.

Recently, I heard an interview with a man who is the new CEO of a global health food corporation with whom I have been affiliated for the past twenty years. He grew up in Idaho, and is the son of migrant parents. He learned to work hard in the fields, and it instilled in him a solid work ethic. He had a disabled brother who although eventually succumbed to the disease

that slowly squeezed the life out of him, showed everyone how to squeeze the life out of life and live well.

The discussion was a frank and a rare look into the kinds of things leaders of corporations have to face irrespective of their gender, race, or the product they are marketing. He spoke of the difficulty he has already faced regarding making really tough decisions. At times the emphasis needs to be on the individual, and at other times taking care of people well means taking care of business, and the impact ultimately rests on the shoulders of the leader. But you know what particularly spoke

to me about this guy? He learned early on in his life to listen. Before anyone knew that he was going to be the new CEO (after the founder stepped away after more than a half century running the company), the “new guy,” who wasn’t new at all to direct sales, went on what he calls a “listening tour.”

The CEO went undercover and attended all kinds of events, boot camps, gatherings large and small, and took the pulse of the representatives -- those who had worked in the company for years, and those who were brand new. What did he hear, and what fuels the longing for leadership? That at the end of the day, we

all want to be chosen. We want to be led well, not jumping into the ditch of making it only about ourselves nor only about following the dreams of the leader, but to remember the underdog, even the one in a three-piece Versace suit or who is sporting Prada.

Everyone feels like an underdog at some point in their life, even when they are successful. No one but God knows the secret battles and the obstacles that are faced by all humans, but as Maya Angelou said so eloquently, “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” She also said, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” I think that if leaders great and small would do those two things, the longing, no, the starvation for leadership that exists in so many parts of our nation and culture could be reversed in short order. God knows we need it, and it starts with us, even if the only one on our team is in fact, us.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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*Grammy Award winning and Presidential Medal of Freedom winner, Maya Angelou*



# Tales Of The Red Tails

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



In 1941, America found herself in the midst of a conflict that was epic in scope as it pertained to commitment, spilled blood, spent treasure, and changing history. Several people and groups led the charge to victory, unfettered patriotism and love for America, as well as much needed social change. Few had more tales than the "Red Tails." Who were they? The Tuskegee Airmen, more formally known as the 332nd Fighter Group and the 477th Bombardment Group of the United States Army Air Forces. They were fighter pilots, flew escorts, (hence the nickname Red Tails because of the color of the tails of their aircraft), and while all gave some, a total of 84 gave their lives between 1941 and 1946. Nearly 1,000 answered the call to fight in the skies, and fight they did. A few were white, most were black, and for

my own part, waiting on General Benjamin O. Davis Jr. and other airmen when I worked in a convention hotel in Seattle remains a part of my favorite memories of being a server.

General "Benjamin O," as he was known, commanded units that compiled a record of 15,000 sorties. They shot down 112 enemy planes, and 273 planes were destroyed on the ground. Davis Jr. personally led 67 missions, became the first African-American General of the USAF in 1954. As a captain, he became commander of the 99th Pursuit Squadron. He also was the consummate gentlemen, and made a point to express his gratitude to me for the simplest of gestures, like keeping his coffee cup full. His father, General Benja-



*"Benjamin O," better known as USAF General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr*

min O. Davis Sr., though not a part of the Tuskegee legacy, was the first black general in United States History.

The Red Tails were fierce fighters, and their most daring mission was also the longest bomber es-

cort mission to Berlin, which occurred toward the end of WWII in March of 1945. They destroyed three German ME-262 jet fighter planes, and damaged five additional jets. They were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, which is considered to be an honor comparable to the Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force Cross. In 2006, the U.S. Congress voted to award 300 Red Tails with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest award that can be given to a civilian. In 2007, President George W. Bush gave the award nearly six decades after their bravery, and took note that they fought for freedom and came home to a country that still upheld Jim Crow laws in places.



Which brings me to what gives me a lump in my throat. When injustice is present, it is easy to think it will never be dealt with, and that forever it will stand unchallenged. These guys challenged it and demolished it, and they were heroes long, long before they were ever honored for it. God bless the Red Tails who flew and fought, God bless the Tuskegee Airmen who stayed on the ground, and God bless the United States of America, both now and always.

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# Calendar of Events

## Silver Sneakers

### Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Silver Sneaker classes at the Athens Limestone Public Library are now meeting from 1pm to 1:45pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Classes open to all. Equipment is provided. Donations accepted. More info: 256-614-3530 or [jhunt9155@gmail.com](mailto:jhunt9155@gmail.com).

## Coffee Call March 2

8:00am - 9:30am. Alabama Veteran's Museum, 100 Pryor St W, Athens, AL. Coffee Call Veterans and their families are invited for breakfast and fellowship from 8:00AM-9:30AM at the Alabama Veterans Museum and Archive (100 West Pryor Street in Athens). 256-771-7578.

## Gettin' Dirty At The Library: Pollinator Gardens March 12

11:00am - 12:00pm. Athens Limestone County Public Library, 603 S Jefferson St. Limestone County Master Gardeners Association Lecture Series "Gettin' Dirty At The Library" Presents: "Pollinator Gardens at Land Trust North Alabama Trailheads" by Hallie Porter. Free and open to the public!

## Athens-Limestone County Home & Garden Show March 15 - 17

Join the Athens-Limestone County Chamber of Commerce and LOCAL vendors at the 2024 Home & Garden Show. Presented

## Senior Lunch Matinee Series Third Thursdays Monthly

We are back to full speed with our third Thursday Senior Lunch Matinees and first Saturday Early Dinner Shows, already scheduled through Dec 2023. Public events most often will sell out in advance, welcoming attendees from 17 adjacent counties, and 2 neighboring states. Our Senior Lunch Matinees provide guests with a complete lunch including drink and dessert, and a one hour live show featuring one of our roster of 8 of the best regional oldies groups and performers in rotation throughout the year. E-mail reservations are required in advance for all Lunch Matinees and Early Dinner Shows. web: [www.yesterdayevents.com](http://www.yesterdayevents.com)

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## National Walking Week April 1 - 7

Athens-Limestone Visitors Center, 100 N Beatty St, Athens, AL 35611. National Walking Week hosted by AVAAmerica's Walking Club is a great time to get out and about on Athens-Limestone's trails, tracks and treks including the AVA Athens Historic Volksmarch to explore and take steps to benefit your heart, mind and spirit. Trail brochures are available at the Athens-Limestone Visitors Center Mon-Fri from 8AM-5PM and a selection of guest favorites are available in the covered boxes year-round.

## Athens Historic Walking Tours April 13

9:45am - 11:00am. Athens-Limestone Visitors Center, 100 N Beatty St, Athens. Join the Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association at the Athens-Limestone Visitors Center at 9:45AM for check-in and tour selection. Expect a 1-2 hour long tour which begins at 10AM. Comfortable shoes and a light jacket are suggested. Free. Donation Welcome. For more info: 256-232-5411.

## TVA Guided Nature Walk April 20

7:30am. 26979 AL-99, Elkmont, AL. Join TVA's Damien Simbeck to kick off the 2024 Earth Day Expo for a guided nature walk through Marbut's Bend Nature Preserve! Mr. Simbeck is an expert in the native flora and fauna that can be found throughout the trail! Bring your cameras and binoculars, because this trail has it all! Not only is this an easy trail by foot, it is also wheelchair accessible.

## Digital Literacy Classes

Athens-Limestone County Public Library will host a series of Digital Literacy Classes in conjunction with Calhoun Community College & Drake State Community & Technical College. Classes will boost your digital confidence & provide you with skills and training needed in today's job market. Courses include: Computer & Internet Basics, Email, Windows OS, & Microsoft Word®. M-W 9:00 - 12:00 or M-W 1:00 - 4:00. Classes start January 24th. Call us at (256) 306-2830 to learn more.



# *I'm Married... HELP ME!!!*

by Donna Clark



Writing has been a dream of mine for several years. Putting words on paper to encourage someone else was what I wanted to do; however, the reality of that seemed far away, if not impossible. My career background had been in accounting and budgeting. Looking at that experience, there was nothing that would qualify me to be a writer. But the desire stayed in my heart. Taking the encouragement of a friend and words written in an article by D. A. Slinkard, I summoned up the courage to submit my written thoughts to Mrs. Ali Turner, the editor of this paper you're reading. With a prayer and fingers crossed, I hoped that it would meet her standard for publishing and it did! My first article, "The Grace Project," was printed.

Afterwards, I met with Ali in person and shared my heart for writing. I was blown away by the kindness, wisdom, and encouragement that came from this lady, and from that meeting two more articles followed. A few weeks ago, we met again and I shared with her my desire for a series of articles that would be written just for married couples, or those headed down the aisle. I am so saddened by the number of failed marriages and for those who are "going through the motions" in their relationship. Marriage is work and there are times when it can be stressful and difficult and many are just in survival mode at best. My heart is to give encouragement and helpful guidance to all who read these articles, to assure you that your marriage can be good!

I remember a scene in the movie *Fireproof*. Caleb, played by Kirk Cameron,

is sharing how he's so unhappy in his marriage. He spews out all the things his wife is doing wrong and he's just had enough; it's over. The friend he's venting to listens intently, and after hearing Caleb's plans for divorce, he gets up from the table where they are sitting and comes back with a set of plastic salt and pepper shakers and a tube of super glue. He glues them together and warns his friend to not break them apart. He patiently points out, after being joined together with such a tight bond, when broken apart the damage is devastating as the contents spill out. Sadly, the shakers can't be repaired to the state they were before. And so it is with divorce.

We all know that marriage involves two people. According to census.gov, the current divorce rate for those over the age of 15 is 6.9% of 1000. Instead of seeing a number of divorces, I see a number of individual peo-

ple. There are two people whose lives have been affected forever by the broken marriage vows. The hope of a happy life together, all the dreams, future plans, are shattered and what remains is pain and disappointment. If we add children into the mix, the number of individuals who have been hurt grows greater. The ripples go further when you look at the extended family members and friends affected.

There is no perfect marriage -- that would require two perfect individuals and we're not; let's take that pressure off ourselves. However, we can have a very good, healthy marriage. My intent in the next few articles is to give hope, encouragement...HELP! for married couples. It doesn't matter if you're newlywed or you've celebrated your 50th, you can still grow and become better. I want to share with you what I have learned from my own mar-

riage and pass on some wonderful advice from experts on the subject. I don't want to see families falling apart. Couples tired, exhausted, throwing in the towel because it's just become too much. There is HELP! Follow along with me for a few weeks and hopefully there will be some advice given that will strengthen, possibly save, your marriage.

To give you a preview of some of the topics we'll touch on there is a "best" way to show love and there is an "understood" way to apologize. They are referred to as love languages and apology languages. And we each have our own. You may be familiar with both, but are you aware that those languages can change as we go through different seasons of our lives? These two areas are so vitally important for a good, solid marriage, and learning those languages is not hard, in fact, it can be fun. I'll help you in deter-

mining those love languages and apology languages. I'll remind you of little things that can make a HUGE difference in your marriage for the good. I'll even throw in a little advice on the importance of, at times, holding your tongue and overlooking that aggravating behavior. If you're married, you know!

Lastly, my desire to help you is driven by God's word. I truly believe that God intends for us to be happy and at peace with one another. There is a way to achieve that by working through our struggles and differences. He doesn't leave us floundering in this thing called marriage; He gives us instructions and a path. I am looking so forward to sharing that with you!

I'm leaving you with a timely quote I thought was so fitting, from the movie *Miss Doubtfire*... "Help is on the way!"

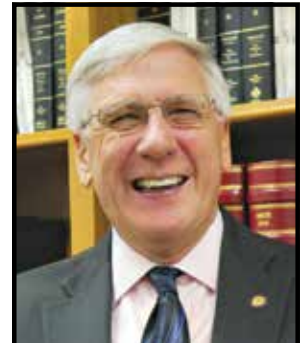
- Donna



# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## Such A Special Week

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



We were celebrating the fact that we had gotten through a deep freeze, flash floods, storms, and now we had much-welcomed sunshine. The sun came just in time, and so many things were waiting in the wings besides budgets and infrastructure issues to happily vie for our attention. That being said, Mayor Ronnie and our city council team are preparing to go back to the bond market to make it possible for connectivity to continue building the quality of life in Athens. “We gotta keep moving forward,” he said.

The 8-year-olds that were part of the Parks & Rec soccer team won their championship, and for them it was like winning the Olympics. Mayor Ronnie said further, “The Athens High School Cheer Team just won the NATIONAL championship last night!” “Whoa!” was the only thing I could say. He showed me a picture of the happy group and said, “They’ll get home today.”

Privately, I wondered if we should have a parade, but there was one already fixin’ to happen, and that was the Mardi Gras parade on Tuesday night. Gail Bergeron, who taught art for years at Athens State University is a native of New Orleans. She brought the Mardi Gras parade to Athens a few years back, and it has grown every year. Our particular parade has a precious twist. The “floats” are wagons and shopping carts that are decorated, and all of the wagons and carts were ready to deliver canned goods to Limestone County Churches Involved (LCCI). It was also the first time in about a century that Mardi Gras, Valentine’s Day, and Ash Wednesday were within 24 hours of each other.

There had been a Night to Shine “prom” for the North Alabama special needs community, and all 261 of the participants had been personally crowned. Mayor Ronnie crowned

the guys, and he wasn’t completely sure how many that had been, and by the smile on his face I could tell he had most definitely enjoyed the opportunity to do so. He showed me the video of people dancing and doing a conga line, and the joy on the faces inspired hope. The event was sponsored by Refuge Church under the leadership of Pastor Jason Parks and the Tim Tebow Foundation

As it pertained further to hope, Holly Hollman was busy working on one of the first Relay for Life projects of 2024, and that was making goodie bags both for those battling cancer as well as their caregivers. The bags had snacks to eat while treatments were being administered. There were lotions because skin gets so dry, personal items, notepads, and more.

Finally, a most unusual celebration was coming up, and that was



day cake today, she made a wish to visit Paris. Then she added she wished she could get to Paris as easily as she blew out her candles.

Family said she got to visit Paris briefly many years ago, but she has always wanted to go and stay for an extended trip.

Residents at The Goldton at Athens, family, and friends helped her celebrate her birthday milestone with a Paris theme, and Mayor Marks presented her with a certificate and key to the City of Athens.

“We live in a wonderful town, and it is a very special week,” said the mayor. I smiled in agreement, and there was only one thing left to do, and that was to pray. So we did, and once again it was time for Ronnie to roll.

the 100th birthday of Venita Stith. Holly Hollman, Communications Director for the City of Athens had the following to say on Wednesday about the happy event:

When 100-year-old Venita Stith blew out the candles on her Eiffel Tower birth-





## 256 Youth Sports Spotlight

# Talk Women's Sports

by Adam Dodson - 256 Sports Radio



Athens High School's Kinley Hargrove decides to make a difference by being the difference.

Some people talk the talk, but don't walk the walk.

Others love to talk about it, but refuse to ever be about it.

Some people are all bark with no bite, while others have plenty of bite to back up their words.

Lastly, since I began 256 Sports Radio, plenty of people have asked for my time and advice for getting their own podcasts started; however, only one person alone has actually followed through with it.

Meet Kinley Hargrove – a multi-sport athlete at AHS, whose leadership and character are far beyond the inbound lines of a basketball court or soccer pitch.

She is the rare example of someone walking the walk.

Fortunately for the 256, she also talks the talk in abundance – as her *Talk Women's Sports* podcast and platform continues to grow in notoriety at an exponential pace.

Beginning earlier this spring semester, the Athens athletics standout decided to be the change she wanted to see.

While we at 256 Sports Radio certainly enjoy going the extra mile to highlight the incredible female athletes of the area, we are not a platform that only focuses on women's sports.

Kinley's platform is her vision brought into the world. She saw way more than a void, but rather a need for someone to step up and cov-

er women athletes along with their successes and struggles alike. She views it as a handy resource to help other female athletes who may be experiencing similar paths in their athletic journey.

She can write, she can interview, she can book guests, and she can edit her video podcast episodes with very little help, but is never too proud to ask for it. She is self-reliant, and also very appreciative of support all the same.

While we at 256 Sports Radio love providing female athletes a platform, I am not a female athlete who can relate to many of them on the personal level Kinley can – having another advantage of being similar in age as a way she can provide perspective while also hearing their own viewpoints.

She updated us with her growth, and the happiness she gets from promoting female athletes' journeys.

"I love getting to talk with them, all of what they say is good, and I hate to cut any of it out," Kinley said.

She saw the need, and addressed it herself. Now, the community has her back, and is very thankful for the support – which includes a recent television interview with one of the local networks based out of Huntsville

While she is a multi-time guest of my show, and I am overjoyed to continue supporting her initiative, she is also someone who does not need my advice, nor my help, as she is thriving all on her own.

That was proven when an

unfortunate death in my family had to naturally take precedent over my work. This resulted in a pause of the mutual agreement Kinley and I have for collaborating on weekly coverage of the standout female athletes and coaches of the northern Alabama area, known as "256 Women's Athletics" which is broadcast on WKAC and Spotify.

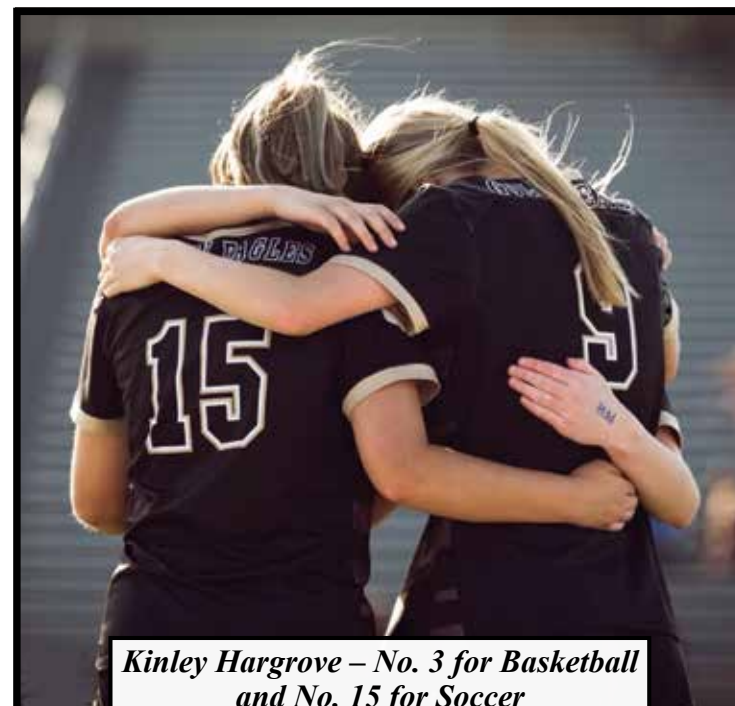
She didn't skip a beat – proving something I already knew: That she is one of the same "confidant women" as she has previously described the Athens High female coaches she views as role models. This includes the two coaches of Kinley's two sports – Capriee Tucker for basketball and Chelsea Hurst for soccer.

"I was happy that my coaches were included in the TV interview. They said they were proud of me. I wasn't on the court; I wasn't on the field – yet they say they're proud of me and that really means a lot," Kinley said.

Keep up the good work, Kinley!

For those interested in supporting Kinley Hargrove and "Talk Women's Sports," they can be found on their website at [talkwomenssports.com](http://talkwomenssports.com), on Spotify at "Talk Women's Sports," on Instagram at "@TalkWomensSports," on Facebook at "Talk Women's Sports," and on Twitter at "@talkWsports."

– Adam Dodson is the founder, host, producer, and editor of 256 Sports Radio. Find us on Spotify, Facebook, and Instagram by searching for "256 Sports Radio."



**Kinley Hargrove – No. 3 for Basketball and No. 15 for Soccer**



# *Revenge Of The Sacrificial Lamb*

by Phil Williams



Something happened in the legal world recently that could have serious ramifications for the cult of wokism. A sacrificial lamb who had been offered up to appease the gods (with a little “g”) of wokeness just launched her revenge.

Over the past several years we have watched as Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI); Critical Race Theory (CRT); and skills for Black Lives Matter (BLM) became cause célèbres with no bearing in reality. Those who were not fully in line with the narrative were offered up as sacrifices to the gods of wokeness. Most notable of those sacrificial lambs is former MMA fighter and actress Gina Carano.

Carano came on the public scene as a Muay Thai fighter and quickly caught the attention of the growing mixed martial arts (MMA) fight scene. She launched into women’s MMA by winning her first fight in 38 seconds and soon after got the attention of Hollywood. In 2008 she was the Female Fighter of the Year at the MMA Awards.

Isn’t this what liberals want? Women who can project strength and charismatic presence all at the same time?

Carano began her acting career starring in action flicks like *Fast and Furious 6* and other work on the small screen. In 2018, she was cast in her biggest role of all alongside actors Pedro Pascal and

the late Carl Weathers. Lucasfilm, producer of the *Star Wars* genre, announced the creation of the first *Star Wars* based television series with a high-quality production called *The Mandalorian*. It was an instant hit with characters like Baby Yoda becoming all the rage. In the mix was Gina Carano playing the good-guy-bad-girl character of Cara Dune, a former Rebel shock trooper turned mercenary.

For two hit seasons Carano was a fan favorite. Her career was off and running. But horror-of-horrors, it turned out that Carano just wasn’t into woke virtue signaling and actually had a mind of her own.

In late 2020, Carano drew the ire of liberals on Twitter (now “X”), who criticized her for not jumping on the BLM movement, leading to accusations of racism. Not long after, so-called fans demanded she put her gender pronouns in her Twitter profile, so she added the words “beep/bop/boop”, which was called evidence of transphobia. She also didn’t get the need for mass masking during COVID and dared to question election results.

The final straw came in February, 2021, when Carano’s Instagram had a post that decried the idea of hating someone else for their political views and likening that to the efforts by Nazis to build hatred of Jews.

The gods of wokeness

were incensed. The sacrifice had to be made.

In early 2021, Lucasfilm and its parent company Disney, announced that Carano was no longer employed. Her Mandalorian character Cara Dune ceased to exist. But they didn’t stop there. Lucasfilm let it be known that Carano’s views were the grounds for their corporate decision making, saying, “Gina Carano is not currently employed by Lucasfilm & there are no plans for her to be in the future. Nevertheless, her social media posts denigrating people based on their cultural and religious identities are abhorrent and unacceptable.” In essence they announced to all of Hollywood that Carano was not someone that should be hired. She was blackballed for having a conservative viewpoint.

Carano stated, “The truth is I was being hunted down from everything I posted to every post I liked because I was not in line with the acceptable narrative of the time. My words were consistently twisted to demonize and dehumanize me as an alt right wing extremist. It was a bullying smear campaign aimed at silencing, destroying, and making an example out of me.”

I don’t know all of Carano’s views on life, religion, or politics. But from this vantage it is clear she was sacrificed on the altar of wokeness. But before she was an actress, Carano was a fighter, and this

lamb just started her revenge tour.

In 2023, Elon Musk announced that if someone felt that they had ever been punished for posting their world views on Twitter (now “X”) he would be willing to pay for legal representation. Musk was willing to defend anyone who stood in the electronic public square and dared to say something that libs don’t like. Carano tweeted, “I think I qualify.”

Carano didn’t have the ability to go up against the industry giants. But then she got a call from lawyers hired by Musk. They were willing to take her case. Suit has now been filed. Discussing the litigation Carano wrote, “It has been difficult to move forward with the lies and labels stuck on me, backed and encouraged by the most powerful entertainment company in the world. I am grateful someone has come to my defense in such a powerful way and look forward to clearing my name.”

I hope that Disney learns a lesson. I hope Carano’s lawsuit and others that are coming send a shockwave through Hollywood. It is fair game not to fire an actress because they’re not any good at acting, have a criminal record, a substance abuse problem, or any other myriad of for-cause reasons. But not because they have an opinion.

Maybe, just maybe, if Disney had handled this more discreetly and merely said that they wouldn’t

be renewing her contract, they wouldn’t be spinning up their lawyers right now. But no, Disney needed to offer up a sacrifice. Disney humiliated Carano so the cult of progressivism would see how “on fire” they were for the liberal agenda.

But this was no ordinary sacrificial lamb. Gina Carano was a fighter first. Every one with a conservative worldview should be rooting for her in this fight.

Ring the bell...let’s do this thing.

Ladies and gentlemen, the main event! Revenge of the sacrificial lamb.

*Phil Williams is a former state senator, retired Army colonel and combat veteran, and a practicing attorney. He has served with the leadership of the Alabama Policy Institute and currently hosts the conservative news/talkshow Rightside Radio M-F 2-5 p.m. on multiple channels throughout north Alabama. (WVNN 92.5FM/770AM-Huntsville/Athens; WXJC 101.FM and WYDE 850AM – Birmingham/Cullman) His column appears every Monday in 1819 News. To contact Phil or request him for a speaking engagement go to [www.rightsideradio.org](http://www.rightsideradio.org). The views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of 1819 News. To comment, please send an email with your name and contact information to [Commentary@1819News.com](mailto:Commentary@1819News.com).*



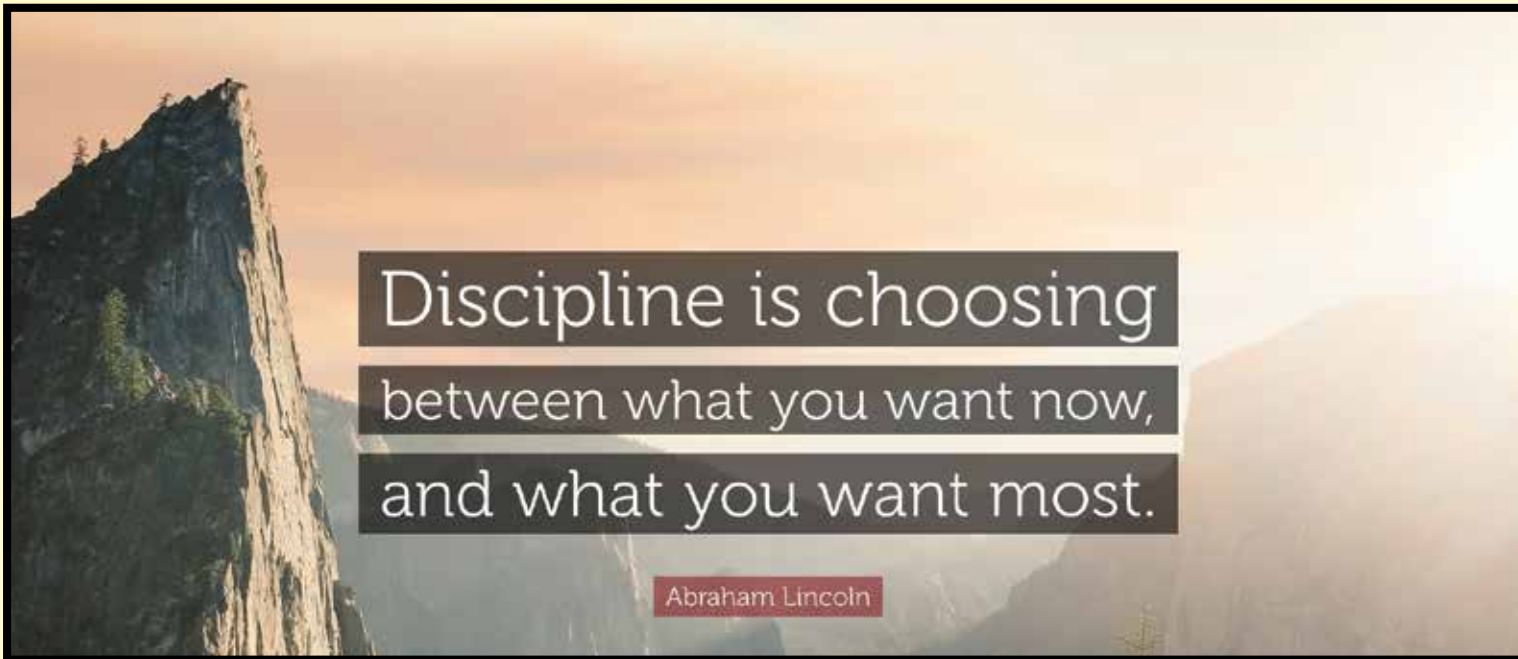


## Slinkard On Success

# What You Want Now Versus What You Want Most

by D. A. Slinkard

*D.A. Slinkard would love your feedback. You can contact him at [da.slinkard@gmail.com](mailto:da.slinkard@gmail.com)*



Discipline is choosing  
between what you want now,  
and what you want most.

Abraham Lincoln

We are all creatures of habit, and this goes for those people who are winning at life and those people who are struggling. Whether we want to admit it or not, the majority of people have a certain way of how they go about their day. I know I have my daily routine, and I guarantee those reading this article have established their daily routines as well. Have you taken the time to ask yourself whether or not your daily habits are adding value to your life or stripping value from you?

How we live our lives consistently is a determining factor for what we will and will not achieve. Sometimes our habits can be destructive and break down any success we could have potentially had. We have settled into a life of making bad decisions, and each bad decision keeps leading us to yet another bad decision. When we keep making the same mistakes over and over again expecting a different result, we are living out the true definition of insanity.

If your daily habits are something you feel like you could do better on, I want to encourage you right now to decide to change how each day goes for you. Too often when we think about the change we want to have in our lives, we fail to realize that the decision to change is instantaneous. We fail to realize

this concept because most people do not believe they have truly changed until they achieve what it is they are looking for. True change does not come in the result, but the change occurs in the moment we decide to live our lives differently.

I oftentimes ask people if they can be one percent better today than they were yesterday, and I have yet to meet someone who told me they could not do this one percent improvement. I believe we all could because it is something we believe we could easily obtain in our minds. One percent is not that drastic of a change, so we have the confidence to say, "Yes, I can improve today by that one percent." Now, if you were to take this mindset and improve over the course of the next ten days – we are talking about a ten percent improvement all because of one decision we make each day.

Some people say it takes twenty-one days to make a habit, others say twenty-eight days, while others say thirty days. No matter what you think it takes to build a habit, begin approaching your daily life to continually improve over who you were yesterday. Think about this – after 180 days we are talking about an improvement of 180 percent which would be a big turnaround from who you were compared to who you are. One decision is all it takes to start your lifelong journey of becoming who you want to be.

A simple exercise anyone can do is take the time to think about what your ideal day would look like and take the time to write it out. It will be important to map out each day, and be specific because the more specific you are, the more vivid your ideal day will become. I think too many people are too vague when it comes to the life they are after.

Therefore, they struggle to achieve success because they have not properly demonstrated what they want themselves. When you aim for nothing, you will hit it every time.

Take the time to answer what your mornings will look like. What would the ideal day be for you? What would waking up look like? What would be the daily routine that is ideal for you? This answer is all dependent on the individual -- because how I want my day to go is going to be different than how you want yours. This is the great thing about life, and it is called indi-

viduality. We have free will to pick and choose how our days are going to go, whether this is for the good or the bad.

After you finish your morning routine, proceed to your afternoon, your evening, and then your nighttime routine. Remember to carefully write out how your ideal day would go and be descriptive. Paint the picture for your habitual success, and you will be better off because of the newfound clarity you have. We all have our daily habits, but we must decide how each day will go for us and then take massive action now.

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# Clean, Green And Beautiful

## 2/10 Of A Mile

by Claire Tribble - Executive Director, Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful

Two tenths of a mile. One thousand and fifty-six feet. Twenty-one bags. Twenty-one bags filled with wet, nasty fast-food bags and wrappers, empty cans and liquor bottles, cardboard, Styro-foam cups, and the list goes on. Earl spent several hours picking up all of the trash that some people decided to throw out of their car while they drove down Highway 127. Did they throw it all in that small section? Probably not. All of the rain in the past couple of weeks allowed some

of it to flow through the ditches. Nevertheless, twenty-one bags were filled with wet, nasty fast-food bags and wrappers, empty cans and liquor bottles, cardboard, Styro-foam cups, and the list goes on. It's sad for several reasons. The first being that people are that inconsiderate. Just wait until you get home (or wherever you are going) and throw it in the trash. It's really not that hard. It's sad because it shows how little some people care for their community. Another heartbreaking reality is that these twenty-one bags are a



drop in the bucket for all the litter that lines Highway 127. If we were able to pick up the entire length of Highway 127, I wouldn't be able to even guess the tonnage. But I know it would be unbelievable.

And we know, it's not all trash that has been thrown out of the car window. After Icemageddon 2024, we learned that not everyone bags their trash. And not everyone ties their trash bags shut. When trash is loose in or beside the trash can, water, wind, and animals can easily spread it about. Loose trash is also prone to flying out of the back of the garbage trucks.

Have you ever paid attention to the amount of trash that litters the sides of the roads? It's astonishing. And very

depressing. Athens and Limestone County are growing at a rapid pace. This problem will only get worse. We can do so much better for Limestone County.

There are some things that you can do to help. First off, if you see something, say something. You can call or email us (256-233-8000 or KALBCares@gmail.com) and report littering. We need as much information as you can give us, and we'll file a report. Bag and tie your garbage bags. And

you can always have a cleanup! Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful will always support you. We can help you organize, promote, and, of course, provide grabbers, bags, vests, and gloves! We also have 3 cleanups on the calendar for this spring, and we always need volunteers!

*Correction to a date in last week's article: The Joann Christopher Memorial Elk River Cleanup is April 27th, 8-12.*



Become a Fan



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

(256) 233-8000  
KALBCares@gmail.com  
www.KALBCares.com



Cooking with Anna

# Take Courage And Just Do It

by Anna Hamilton

*Those growing up in the 90s should remember when Nike began using the slogan, “Just Do It!” for their ad campaigns. It fostered a sense of courage and encouragement to do whatever you set your mind to. Everyone wanted a pair of Nike shoes to wear to school. It was the cool thing to do.*

*Did you know that in Ezra Chapter 10 the term “Just Do It” was born? At the beginning of chapter, Ezra is praying and confessing to God and a large crowd of Israelites gathers around him. They begin to weep as well. They*

*all realize they are in the wrong, and in unity are committed then to doing what is right. In verse 4, they tell Ezra to “Rise up; this matter is in your hands. We will support you, so take courage and do it!”*

*Nike’s version of “Just Do It” relies solely on self. It doesn’t lean on others for support or help. It says you alone can do whatever you*

*continued on page 23*

## Spiced Black Bean Soup

### Ingredients:

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 4 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced thin
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 (15 oz) can black beans, undrained
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- ½ tsp oregano
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp celery salt
- ½ tsp dried cilantro
- ¼ tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp allspice
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Sour cream, for topping
- Cheddar cheese, for topping
- Cilantro, for topping
- Avocado, for topping




### Directions:

*Heat oil in saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped veggies and sauté until onion is translucent. Add ginger and garlic and sauté for one more minute or until the garlic is fragrant. Add black beans and vegetable broth and the rest of the spices. Bring to boil and simmer for 30-35 minutes. If desired, use a food processor to puree half of the mixture for a smoother soup. Top each bowl with whatever toppings you would like and enjoy!*

# Fitness Equals a Better Quality of Life: *The Transformative Power of Physical Activity*

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens



In an era where the pace of life is faster than ever and demands on our time and energy are relentless, the importance of prioritizing our health and well-being cannot be overstated. Fitness, encompassing both physical activity and a healthy lifestyle, is a key determinant of a better quality of life. The benefits of incorporating regular exercise into our routines extend far beyond physical appearance, reaching into mental, emotional, and social dimensions. Let's explore the transformative power of fitness and how it contributes to an enhanced quality of life.

### Physical Health Benefits

The foundation of a better quality of life lies in good physical health. Regular physical activity has been linked to a myriad of health benefits, including improved cardiovascular health, strengthened muscles and bones, and enhanced immune function. Engaging in regular exercise helps control weight, reducing the risk of chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. The release of endorphins during exercise not only promotes a sense of well-being but also serves as a natural stress reliever.

Furthermore, physical fitness contributes to increased energy levels, better sleep patterns, and a heightened ability to tackle daily tasks with vigor. As individuals incorporate exercise into their routines, they are more likely to experience

improved mobility and flexibility, fostering a sense of independence and vitality.

### Mental And Emotional Well-being

The connection between physical activity and mental health is undeniable. Exercise has been proven to be a powerful tool in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression. The release of neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and dopamine, during physical activity contributes to an improved mood and a sense of overall well-being.

In addition, regular exercise enhances cognitive function and memory, reducing the risk of cognitive decline as individuals age. The mental clarity achieved through fitness allows for better concentration, improved problem-solving skills, and an overall positive outlook on life. It becomes a proactive approach to maintaining mental sharpness and emotional resilience in the face of life's challenges.

### Social Benefits

Beyond the individual, fitness also plays a crucial role in fostering social connections and a sense of community. Group fitness classes, sports teams, or even a simple workout buddy can provide a support system that encourages consistency and commitment to a healthy lifestyle. These social interactions not only make exercise more

enjoyable but also contribute to a sense of belonging and camaraderie. Moreover, participating in fitness activities often involves engaging with others who share similar interests and goals. This shared sense of purpose can lead to the formation of lasting friendships, creating a network of support that extends beyond the gym or exercise class. The social aspect of fitness contributes significantly to an individual's overall well-being, reinforcing the idea that a better quality of life is not just an individual pursuit but a collective

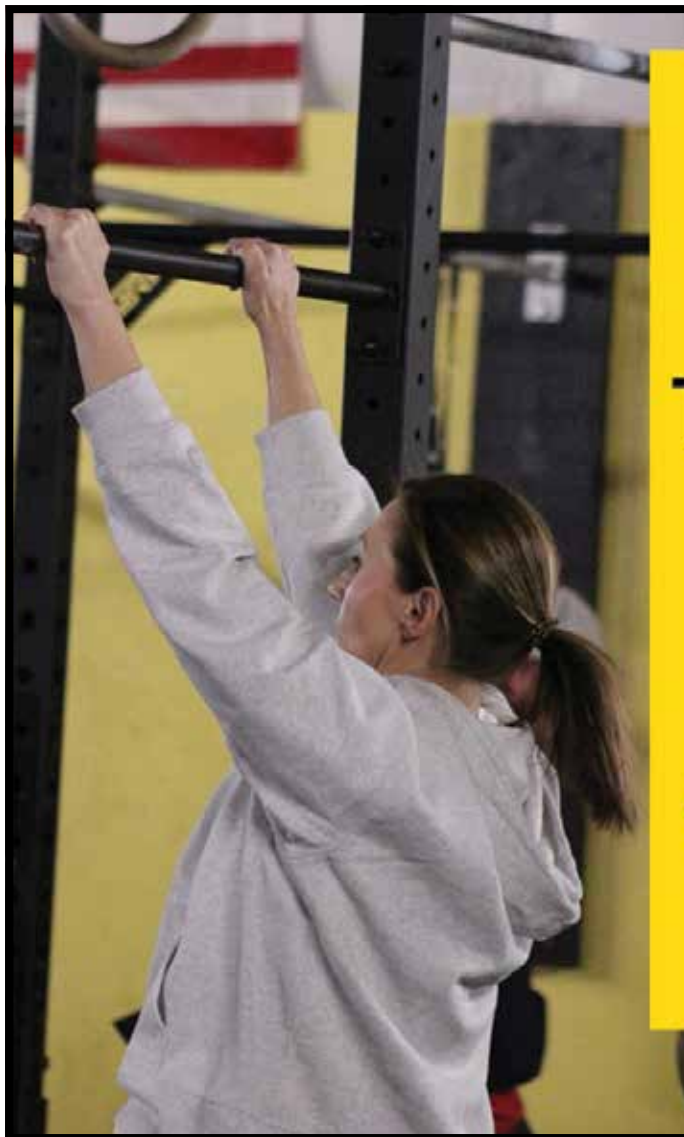
endeavor.

In conclusion, the equation is simple: fitness equals a better quality of life. The physical, mental, and social benefits of regular exercise extend far beyond the superficial goal of achieving a certain aesthetic. Prioritizing fitness is an investment in one's health, happiness, and overall well-being. It is a holistic approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of the body, mind, and social environment.

As we navigate the complexities of modern life, integrating fitness into our routines becomes not

just a choice but a necessity. Whether through cardiovascular activities, strength training, yoga, or any form of physical exercise, individuals can unlock the transformative power of fitness and experience a life that is not just longer but more vibrant, fulfilling, and filled with a sense of purpose.

Ready to elevate your life with the addition of physical fitness? CrossFit Athens is here to help. Reach out to us at [info@crossfitathens.com](mailto:info@crossfitathens.com) or give us a call 256-777-8275 to learn more and schedule your FREE TRIAL!



DO  
HARD  
THINGS



# The 2024 Athens-Limestone Home & Garden Show Is Almost Here!

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

Commerce Home & Garden Show. It will be held March 15-17 at Carter Gym on the Athens State University campus.

When I say, “back by popular demand,” I am not kidding. Pammie Jimmar and Brooke Pettus of the Chamber of Commerce both told me that Chamber members started asking awhile back when the Home & Garden Show was going to be back, and they are working hard to get all the details finalized.

This year, the Presenting Sponsor is Impact Roofing. Gold Sponsors are EarthSmart Windows and Doors, Persell Lumber and Mill Shop, Window World of HSV, and Yellowhammer Roofing. Silver Sponsors are Grayson Carter and Son Contracting and Parallel 36 @ Liberty.

“We felt like this year was the perfect time to bring the show back,” said Pammie Jimmar, President of the Athens-Limestone Chamber of Commerce. For her part, Pammie was brand new to the area and the position when COVID hit and used that time to “fall in love” with the Athens-Limestone County Community and position the Chamber to bring the Home & Garden Show back. She talked about the fact that Athens is positioned well for this event; it’s right in the middle between Huntsville/Madison, Decatur, and Florence.

Chamber Events Coordinator Brooke Pettus said that Chamber members began to contact her about bring-

ing the H & G Show back and agreed with Pammie that this was the perfect time. She likes Home & Garden shows because they “spark new ideas.” She also noted that it is important that we support what she called “the DIY (Do It Yourself) community.” There are people who love tackling projects great and small, and this event is perfect for them. There are a whole lot of folks who want to find an excellent company to take care of what they envision, and again, this event is perfect for them.

Admission for the event is \$5 CASH ONLY, and children under 12 are free. Kids will have the chance to do crafts, and face painting will be available. There will be food trucks available all three days.

Representatives from every aspect of home improvement will be present, from remodeling to roofs to windows to siding to plumbing to new construction to real estate to financing and more. You will be able to explore the latest trends in kitchens, baths, paint, siding, lighting, and decorating. For your home’s interior, you can find help with custom picture framing, lighting, and furniture selection.

Because the Chamber of Commerce is all about building business as well as building community, this “making-a-comeback” event is something that I think all of us can agree that we need. With Limestone County being the fastest growing county in the great State of Alabama, people are hungry for the chance to see what makes this area so attractive,

why living here is such a good idea, and what they can do to make their own personal space beautiful and unique. I expect that this year’s Home & Garden Show will almost feel more like a celebration rather than a largely commercial endeavor, and I know it will have been worth the wait!

In all, there is something

for everyone at a price that can’t be beat, and the Limestone County Chamber of Commerce Home and Garden Show is a marvelous way to wait for spring to finally spring. See you there! The Limestone County Chamber of Commerce Annual Home and Garden Show

Friday, March 15, from 5

to 8 p.m., Saturday, March 16th from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sunday March 17 from 12-4 p.m.

Carter Gym, Athens State University on East Pryor Street

For more information, please call the Chamber at 256-232-2600 or email Brooke Pettus at brooke@alcchamber.org.

**ATHENS-LIMESTONE COUNTY HOME & GARDEN Show**

**Presented By: IMPACT ROOFING**

**March 15-17, 2024**

**Athens State University Gymnasium**

**\$5.00 Admission CASH ONLY**

**Kids 12 & Under Free**

**Join the Athens-Limestone County Chamber of Commerce and LOCAL vendors at the 2024 Home & Garden Show**

**Gold Sponsors:** EarthSmart Windows & Doors, Persell Lumber and Mill Shop, Window World, Yellowhammer Roofing

**Silver Sponsors:** Grayson Carter & Son Contracting, Inc., & Parallel 36 @ Liberty

# Everyday-Cation!

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



(Every article I am going to highlight one of our current 'Cations. Check out our Facebook page and website for more 'Cation ideas!)

This week's Cation? EVERYDAY-CATION!

Ok, all you "trying to be everybody's everything" folk! It's time to get some rhythm of rest in your day. Why?

*Because you can't give what you ain't got.*

*Because it's possible to serve AND rest (and at the same time!)*

*Because you function more when you stress less.*

*Because your loved ones want your smiles more than they want to be on your to-do list. (Ask them!)*

*Because YOU actually are—get this—one of the "everybody" you are trying to be everything to!*

I used to feel I never had time for "me." Actually, I did plenty of scrolling on the phone (which is distracting, not restful). I had many bits of time here and there, I just wasn't using them for rest.

I also used to wake up at 3 a.m. and not be able to sleep because of all the pressure and stress to go back to sleep (y'all know sleep math, right? "If I go to sleep right now I will get 2 hours and 17 minutes of sleep...What if our daughter wants to join the circus?...If I go to sleep now, I will get 54 minutes of sleep...I heard the dog sneeze, what if he's sick?")!

Thank the Lord, at some point I thought, "This is actually nice in the dark and quiet, curled up and comfy, with no to-dos right then. I'm going to embrace this."

You know what happened? I slept through the night. Because I took the pressure off of myself to sleep, it was safe for me to sleep.

Now I still wake up sometimes, but I don't stress about it. I just enjoy it and go to bed earlier the next day.

I also learned to embrace downtime. I experimented with this on myself and my daughter (because I'm a nerd and we are my first and third longest running psychological experiments). We tried rest times with no plan. We ended up scrolling through phones and didn't feel the least bit more rested.

Then I tried LIVING my rest time. I scheduled it, announced it, and made little plans involving hobbies and naps. Those days were so much more restful!

So let's put some rest and relaxation in our everyday. It really only takes 3 things:

1. A **decision** to embrace life/let tomorrow worry about itself.
2. A **plan** of how to live in the moment.
3. A **set-up**: Get out the fancy mug, dust off your hobbies, put down the phone and pick up the book. Or a cookie. Or fabulous hat.

Music can shape our moods, so let's make a playlist of happy tunes:

"It's a Good Day"-Peggy Lee

"It's a Good Day"- Hilary Weeks

"It's a Good Day to Have a Good Day"- Whisperin' Bill Anderson

"Sunny Side Of The Street"- Frank Sinatra

"It's a Great Day to Be

Alive"-Travis Tritt

"Gonna Be a Good Day"- Rayelle

"It's a Lovely Day Today"- Ella Fitzgerald

"Good Morning"-Mandisa

"Good Day"-Weeekly

"Little Bitty"-Alan Jackson

"Don't Worry, Be Happy"- Bobby McFerrin (you're welcome for the earworm... lol)

"Just Fine"-Mary J Blige

"Living In The Moment"- Jason Mraz

What to wear: What's YOUR favorite outfit or piece of jewelry, tie, shoes, hat? Even if it's a ball gown and you're just going to vacuum the house, wear it!

What to eat: Let's get something a little special. Lunch at Suzanne's Bakery sounds awesome! You can eat in or take it to...

The Duck Pond! Come see me! (You get an extra FIVE points toward the 'Cations

campaign prize if you're wearing your ball gown). Water, grass, sky, a playground (if you have kids that need to burn off some energy or if you like slides and rides too). Bring a journal and write 2 things: the good in your life AND what sort of rest you can work into your day. Post a pic if it's not too personal.

Then stop and just breathe. In. Out. In. Out. Drop your shoulders. Look around. Be IN the moment. Through the day, and every day, breathe in and out and look around at the amazingness of your life. Food. Shelter. Trees. Sky. Love. Beauty.

Take a walk around the park, phone tucked away. Feel the strength of your legs, the wind in your hair, the sun (or rain!) on your face.

Then let's go to Buff City Soaps. They have great pampering items there. Buy one just for you. I like their mystery boxes because I like surprises.

Remember, "rest" isn't a crumb you lick off the plate after everyone's done with you. YOU are one of the "everyone" (Yes, that's the third time in 2 articles that I said that. It's on purpose. Hint, hint.). Peace, calmness, relaxation are all a matter of YOUR choice, YOUR decision. You can have a busy life on the outside, and still be restful on the inside.

**To Do** (remember to take pics and tag us in each of these. FB: Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association and IG: @athenslimestone-tourism):

- Make a playlist
  - Wear something that makes you happy
  - Go To Suzanne's Bakery and tag them too (FB: Suzanne's Bakery & Eatery IG: Suzannesbakery)
  - Go To Duck Pond
  - Go To Buff City Soaps
- (I declare, you're looking more restful already!)





# Worthy By Jamie Kern Lima: *Wow! Just Wow!*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

And thirdly, she has set out on a quest to properly love herself the way God commands us to do, and to teach others to do the same. Her intent is to “leave the campground better than when she found it,” and to not lose her soul in the process. Her desire is to both learn and teach a concept of self-worth that is neither woo-woo or conceited, but is practical, doable, manageable, and above all, will make our Maker smile. Broadly, even.

Here are some reasons why Jamie feels like a friend and fellow traveler. She has battled with

her skin, with her weight, and with her identity. She has at times been in sorry relationships, found that no matter how much she achieved, it was never enough, and struggled to find her destiny and purpose, let alone walk in it.

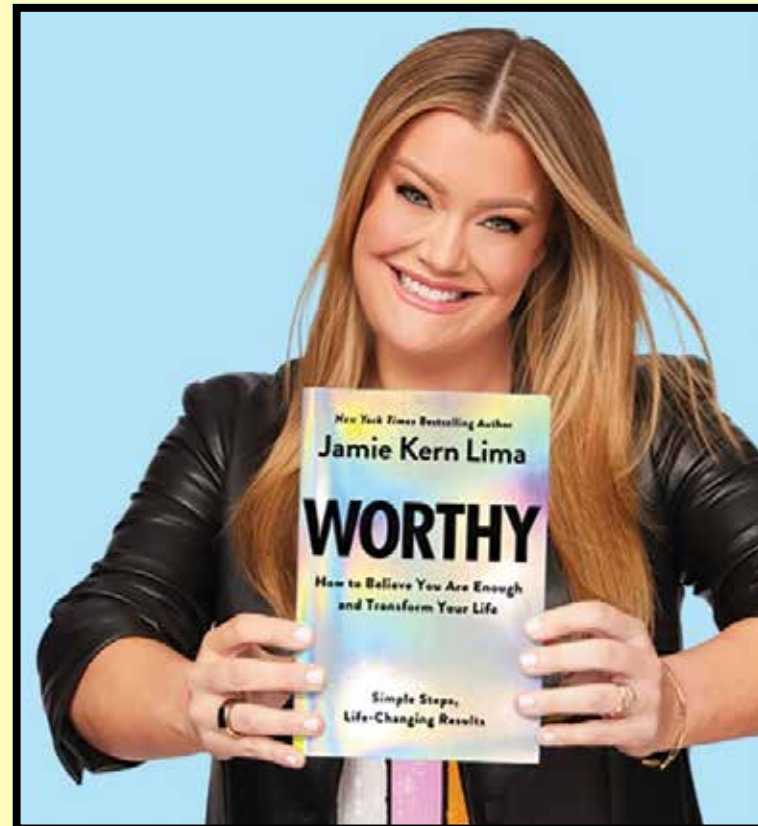
I have battled with eczema since I was born, and have at times itched so bad that I just wanted to go Home for good. It is no fun to look like a lobster and have your eyes nearly swell shut from the swelling and inflammation. Weight? Oh yeah, that has been an adventure. Sorry relationships? Yep, if you count a scar on my right hand that I got when I was 18 from my next-door

neighbor, and boyfriends who were utterly dysfunctional, I think I qualify for the “Sure-do-know-how-to-pick-‘em-Award.” (Thankfully my husband is not a member of that particular band.)

I have been to “Never-never-enough Land” more times than I could count, even as a believer. I am light years from where I began when I first was a little hippie chick Jesus Person in 1970, and I am on a quest to walk in the Scripture that says to “love your neighbor as yourself” full on, and discover what it actually means.

So, my “new friend Jamie” has written a book that is simply called, *Worthy*. In it, she talks about being adopted, looking for love in all the wrong places, getting her dream job as a news anchor and having the rosacea with which she battles turn bright red in the middle of the broadcast to the point that the producer said in her earpiece, “What’s wrong with your skin?” Ow. Just ow.

So, what did she do? She and her husband quit their jobs and through countless iterations came up with a makeup line that was designed to help heal skin. How did they do that? Google. Add to that, hundreds of “No, we are not interested,” responses from would-be investors, and then the all-time zinger -- “We don’t think women will buy from someone who looks like you,” and you have the components of what basically forced Jamie to find her worth in

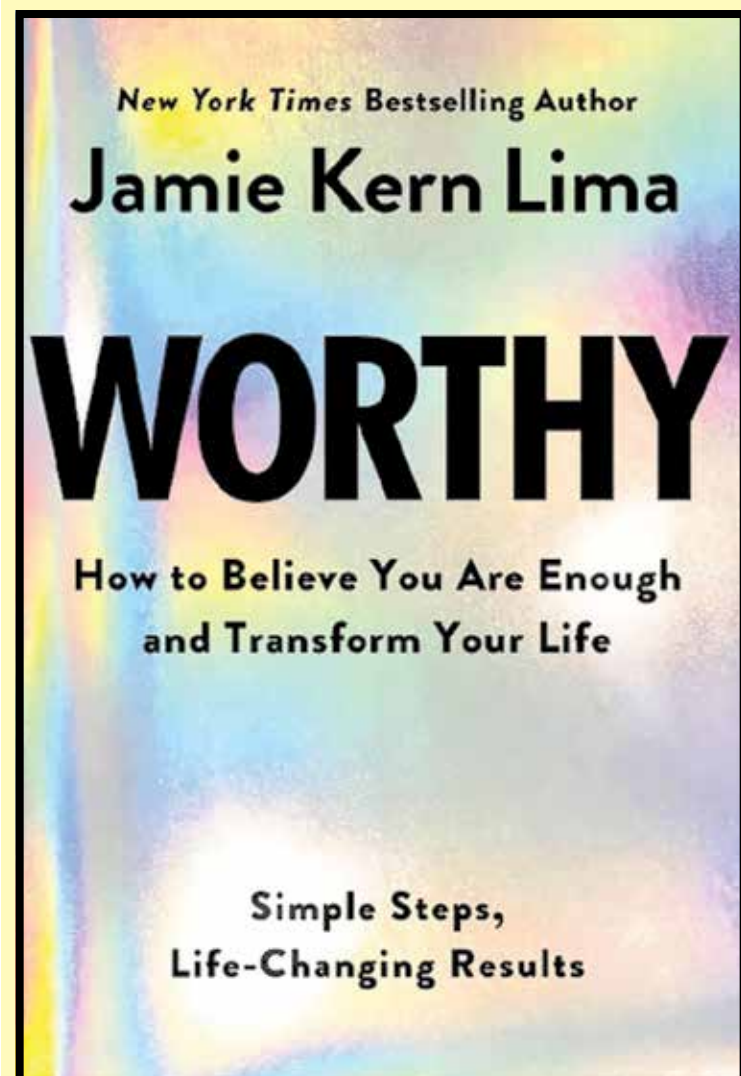


something, and Someone far more reliable than humans. And oh, by the way, she sold her company, It Cosmetics to L’Oreal for 1.2 BILLION dollars and went on to become the first female CEO of L’Oreal, like, ever.

Here is a teaser of a concept that I hope will inspire you to get the book and devour it. **Self-confidence and self-worth are not the same thing. Not by a long shot.** One has to do with the external, and one has to do with the internal. You want an “I-could-have-had-a-V-8-moment”? That is the first of many. Jamie has an uncommon handle on “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and she is just gettin’ started.

Since breaking the billion-dollar bulwark, Jamie is teaching women and men to find and walk in their God-given purpose

with humility and boldness, and build community in the process. When I hear her speak, I feel like we are out for coffee down the street, or maybe we’re in our pajamas. And, I have decided to pre-order the book, *Worthy*, which is going to be here on the 20th of February and join her Facebook group. I hope you will do the same, and I hope we can compare notes and cheer each other on. *Worthy* is available at Amazon, on Audible, and at [www.worthy.com](http://www.worthy.com). Jamie is also sponsoring an all-day, FREE seminar on February 24 called, *Becoming Unstoppable*. I have signed up, and can hardly wait. If you are game, curious, desperate, hungry, or all of it, go to [www.becomingunstoppable.com](http://www.becomingunstoppable.com). I could go for some serious “turned-upside-down” time. You?



# From Toxic To Thriving: *Transforming Organizational Culture*

by Eric Betts, Udemy Instructor in Religion, Leadership and Ethics



In the bustling corridors of corporate offices and the hushed cubicles of startups, toxicity festers like a silent virus. It infiltrates conversations, corrodes camaraderie, and stifles innovation. Just as a polluted river chokes the life within it, a toxic workplace culture impedes progress, sapping creativity and draining the reservoir of productivity. From subtle micro-aggressions to blatant power plays, the toxicity seeps into every crevice, leaving employees disenchanted and organizations shackled.

Leadership, like a compass guiding a ship through turbulent waters, holds immense power to shape organizational culture. Yet, too

often, leaders unwittingly become passengers, blissfully unaware of the tempest brewing around them. Avoidance and cluelessness become their default modes, perpetuating toxicity. Instead, leaders must don the mantle of vigilant observers—attuned to the subtle tremors, the hushed grievances, and the unspoken tensions. Their duty lies not in averting their gaze but in confronting the storm head-on. Only then can they steer their teams toward calmer seas, fostering an environment where growth thrives and productivity flourishes.

Vaishali Badgular, a content and SEO specialist at Time Doctor, an employee-friendly time-tracking system that boosts

productivity, provides a comprehensive list of often unaddressed toxic workplace behavior in one of her many articles. She says that “negative workplace culture is one that harms the well-being, productivity, or morale of the employees.” Some examples she offers concerning negative workplace culture are:

- **Bullying, gossiping, or forming cliques** that exclude or spread rumors about other employees
- **Poor communication and unclear expectations** that lead to confusion, frustration, or missed deadlines
- **Dictatorial management** that does not listen to feedback, values, or ideas from the employees

• **Lack of core values or inconsistency** between the stated values and the actual behavior of the leaders or the organization

• **Excessive absenteeism, illness, or fatigue** among the employees due to stress, burnout, or dissatisfaction

• **Condescending tones** are one way of expressing disrespect and undermining others’ confidence and self-esteem. Some signs of condescending behavior are over-explaining, name-dropping, using demeaning nicknames, interrupting, assuming one is ignorant due to faulty stereotypes and equating experiences, according to Natalie Hamrick, who writes extensively

on workplace dynamics on her blog, particularly in her article on “How To Deal With Condescending Colleagues.”

In order to maximize team-building, productivity and success, leaders must be willing learners concerning their own behavior as well as being vigilant about workplace attitudes and behaviors. They must first be clear about their own workplace codes and rules, and enforce them equally and consistently. Lack of clarity and favoritism within the leadership can have a ripple effect in the workplace. Even if the headwinds of toxicity are strong, blowing against efforts to implement change, don’t give up. It is an ongoing work.

As the dust settles and the echoes of change reverberate, the transformation becomes palpable. Toxic behaviors, once entrenched, have been confronted and dismantled. The leaders’ unwavering commitment to vigilance has borne fruit—a culture of respect, empathy, and collaboration now blooms. Employees breathe easier, shoulders unburdened by the weight of toxicity. The ripple effect extends beyond office walls, touching not only productivity metrics but also individual well-being. In this renewed landscape, progress surges forth, fueled by the collective resolve to nurture a workplace where growth thrives and humanity prevails.



# Hello, Self...

by Jackie Warner

**Career Development Facilitator**  
**"Impact, Engage, Grow" Community Matters**



It has been a while since we shared a moment... We have been down the road a time or two... maybe even three, but look at you!

I am thankful for the good days and for the not so good ones too... the experiences have added to my patience and given me wisdom to be a better version of who I am meant to be. Ecclesiastes 7:14 says to "Remember that nothing is certain in this life. In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity, consider: without question, God has made the one as well as the other, so that man cannot discover anything

that will come after him."

Have you ever written a love letter to yourself? We write letters and send cards to friends and family all during the year, but rarely do we take time to write to ourselves. Reflections, Affirmations, and self-talk is good for the soul!

As we celebrate February, known for Valentine's Day and love, remember to love on yourself

1. See the beauty in you! No need to compare yourself to others.
2. Care for yourself -- intentionally taking care of your mind, body, and soul.

3. Get up and get out; move your body and your mind.

4. Turn down the noise of life, friends, and love ones so you can hear your own voice.

5. Recognize that boundaries are necessary. Note to self -- Gates can't always stay open.

6. Your feelings are meant to be acknowledged; lean in for clarity and self-discovery

7. Not everyone is going to like you... so know that it is okay.

8. Journal your ideas, goals, thoughts... and then

engage in positive self-talk often.

9. Explore interests, hobbies, and new things, always.

10. Sing, cry, laugh, and talk to yourself.

11. Live with intention.

12. Speak life.

13. Learn to value your identity in Christ and nurture your relationship with God.

*Dear Me...*

*From now on...*

*I'll speak to you kindly...*

*I'll listen to you*

*I'll be honest...*

*I'll get to know you more*

*I'll spend time with you*

*Always know....*

*You are loved*

*You are strong...*

*You are appreciated...*

*You are forgiven*

*You are faithful...*

*You are moving on...*

- Author Unknown

*Until Next Time, Be Sincere, Kind and Intentional*

Jackie Warner, Community Outreach Specialist

Email:

[thebridge.us@gmail.com](mailto:thebridge.us@gmail.com)

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# The HEART Of A Horse

by Deb Kitchenmaster

On the album *Hoofbeats, Heartbeats, and Wings*, singer Mary Ann Kennedy sings about how she was born to ride like a bird was born to fly. "Love me... Love my horse... Treat 'em like the air I breathe. The way they move is poetry... My heart feels fuller... My soul feels freer... The world looks better from the back of a horse." Let's take a moment and consider some interesting data on a horse's heart and share some horse trivia.

A horse's heart weighs roughly 1% of the overall body weight. The average horse's heart weighs 8-10 lbs. and pumps 7 to 10 gallons a minute at rest. During exercise, the equine athlete's cardiac output can reach over 65 gallons per minute. Heard

of the racehorse Secretariat? He had the largest recorded heart at 22 pounds.

The equine heart is not much different from the human heart, only bigger. Both are 4-chambered and pump warm blood. A horse's heart is located in the same place as a human heart -- between the lungs and ribs and above the diaphragm. The heart is beating approximately 48 times per minute. If you have a stethoscope you can hear the horse's heartbeat from the left side, right behind the elbow, around the area where the girth of a saddle would lay.

Horses, like other mammals, have only one heart. However, the frog (an area located underneath each hoof) acts like a pump to push blood up the leg with

each step the horse takes.

A 2010 study found that horses remembered how an individual human behaved towards them based on just one interaction, even as long as 8 months later, and behaved better with handlers who used positive handling techniques, such as stroking or speaking in a soft voice. Horses can hear a human heartbeat from 4 feet away! They are in tune to that person's heart -- healthy or unhealthy, good or bad.

Some studies have suggested that horses can synchronize their heartbeats with that of their owner. That would explain why humans and horses can have such close bonds. There was a time that I and my horse, Annie, were in training for a Kandi Classic Morgan and open horse show. We were training to compete in the Western Pleasure class. Annie wasn't especially fond of showing. She preferred trails in the prairie grasses in open terrain. I was a bit nervous. Annie was totally aware of what was going on inside me and her new surroundings. Emily came up to us on her horse as we were exercising our horses in the outdoor arena the night before the show. She told me to pick out a song (any song) and sing it INSIDE, setting the tempo for how I preferred Annie's speed of movement. Without moving my lips, I began singing a song from my heart. What happened? Annie relaxed and slowed down! It worked! We did well.

Let's jump start our own hearts with some fun facts



about horses. The oldest horse to ever live reached the age of 62! Old Billy was his name, and he lived 37 years longer than the average life expectancy of a tamed horse.

The smallest horse that ever lived was only 2 feet tall. Einstein, by name, is the smallest ever recorded and was only the size of a box of cereal at birth.

In 1846, a Shire horse in England named Sampson was the tallest horse that ever lived. He measured 7.2 feet tall.

Horses always have a lookout in the pack. No pack of horses will ever simultaneously lay down at the same time, as one will always stand as lookout for the others.

Horses have fewer bones

than humans. Humans have 206 bones in the skeleton whereas horses have one less at 205.

What about the eyes? Horses have the largest eyes of any mammal on land, even bigger than an elephant's. Due to size and placement, they can almost see 360°!

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. Ephesians 1:18-21*

**Your NEIGHbor,  
Deb Kitchenmaster**

256-426-7947

[horsinaround188@gmail.com](mailto:horsinaround188@gmail.com)

# Space For What's Important: *Organize Month By Month*

by Sonya Fehér

Since we're solidly in the middle of February, it's a good time to start thinking about what you want from your home in 2024. You might be thinking that you should have done this at the beginning of the year, but January isn't necessarily the best time to plan new projects. Whether you're trying to get back into a routine after the holidays or the very short days sap you of extra motivation, January may give you no jump start whatsoever.

Enter February, a wonderful month to begin planning.

First, get a pencil and a piece of paper. Or you can do this on your computer so you can make changes. For a fancy bonus visual organizing method, use sticky notes. Create one note for each month and put it up on the wall. Then create a sticky note for each area. You can move the notes around as you consider which area will be organized when. Once you've finalized your choices, you can move the sticky notes to your wall or desk calendar so you'll have a visual reminder of what you'll organize each month.

Next, make a list of the spaces in your home and yard. This can include rooms, closets, storage areas, and both indoor and outdoor spaces. You might group types of areas together – like clothes closets and bathrooms.

Thirdly, list the months from March - Decem-

ber. I'd like you to think about your year now and how your home gets used differently depending upon what month it is.

Let's start with the weather. Whether it's a seasonal clothes switch out or you'd like to organize your garage before you're in triple digit temperatures, planning when you focus on certain spaces based on seasons and weather is worthwhile. Room organizing projects based on the weather might include entryways and mudrooms with coat closets, bedroom closets, garages and attics, storage sheds, and outdoor areas.

Next, think about what activities you do that mean certain areas of your home get used most. Maybe you hang out in the backyard in spring or summer. You might be organizing outdoor games, camping

gear in the garage, your grill area or pool toys. Maybe you have more kids' slumber parties or out of town guests in summer so having the guest room, kids' rooms, or playroom organized then would be especially helpful. Or you travel more at a specific time of year, so you want to get your luggage and other travel items organized before that time.

When do you ask the most from your kitchen? Do you bake a lot over the holidays? Need to get the kitchen set up to make school lunches or start saving money by making more meals at home and taking your lunch to work?

Filing taxes usually makes people wish they had their papers in order. A big paper organizing project won't necessarily work while you're doing tax prep, but planning ahead to get your papers organized before

tax season next year might be helpful.

These are just a few ideas to consider when you're assigning parts of your home to certain months of the year. So, start a room and month match up. Some areas may not need to be at a particular time. You can assign those to the months that aren't taken. Prioritize the areas based on what's giving you the most trouble or what would be easiest to approach.

Finally, assign rooms/areas to particular months. If you have too many in a particular month, reconsider what you'll do when or plan out your organizing project over a two-year period instead of just one. Here's a sample schedule you might use to get started and then move things around based on the rhythm of your year. Rearrange accordingly.

January: Papers, office,

finances

February: Bathrooms

March: Clothes closets

April: Garage/garden sheds

May: Playrooms/hobby rooms

June: Living room

July: Kitchen & dining

August: Entryway & hall or coat closets

September - Pantry

October: Linen closet & laundry/utility

November: Holiday décor/guest room

December: Bedrooms

Want help organizing a particular area of your life? Send an email to [sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com](mailto:sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com) so she can answer your questions.

*Sonya Fehér*

*Organizer, Coach, Author, & Speaker*

<https://spacewiseorganizing.com>

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## The Alternative Approach

# Do You Have The Advantage?

by Roy Williams



More and more evidence is surfacing about the importance of consuming at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. The reason it is so important is what the fruits and vegetables contain. As they grow, they pull minerals from the soil and turn elemental minerals into organic or predigested minerals that are easily absorbed into the human body. Those same plants also manufacture vitamins that are just as essential to the health and balance of the body.

Every cell in our body is dependent on 16 vitamins and 79 minerals in order to survive, heal, and replicate as they are damaged and age. Without those nutrients and others that come from the plants like essential oils, amino acids, enzymes, and even fiber, our bodies will, over time, become deficient. The symptoms of those deficiencies are easily recognized and can be classified as degenerative disorders. The most common symptoms include **low energy, hair loss, weak and brittle fingernails, dry skin, bone loss, gas, bloating, constipation, sore joints, back pain, sluggish thinking, and even loss of sexual desire.**

Over time, I realized in my own active and busy life, it is hard to find the time to consume five servings of raw fruits and vegetables every day. Absolutely no one knows the value and effectiveness of doing it more than I. But even I seemed to lack the discipline necessary to accomplish that goal. Trying hard to accomplish it, I would take apples or grapes with me on the road. We would keep a variety of fruits on hand at all times and even purchased lots of vegetables like broccoli, carrots, spinach and lots of different types of nuts.

Finally, I told my formulator that, in today's fast paced society, we must formulate a fruit and vegetable supplement to fill in the gaps and make it easier for our customers to reach that goal. It took over three years before we found the right fruits and vegetables that would meet our strict requirements, which included all organically grown using no fertilizers or pesticides, then cold processed to maintain the nutrient values we required.

Then, to guarantee that our formula was superior to any other product on the market, we decided to add some of the most powerful super foods, essential fatty acids, amino acids, probiotics and



prebiotics, enzymes, and antioxidants. We also wanted this supplement to be the easiest to use and also be affordable to the average person anywhere in the world. It turned out to be truly superior when compared to other fruit and vegetable products, so we decided to call it **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie**.

It is so easy to use; just take 2 capsules with your first and last meal each day and rest assured you are receiving the nutrients from five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Remember, you will also be delivering the nutrients from the super foods and the other support factors that block oxidation, decrease inflammation, help with digestion and elimination, and those wonderful essential fatty acids and amino-acids that aid in the healing process of your body. It also supports a much more efficient immune system. It is my belief that

**Ultimate Fruit & Veggie** is even more important to human health than a daily multivitamin.

The last thing I wish to point out is that **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie** has also proven to be more affordable than all the other supplements in this category. We have compared it to those advertised on the national media where you have to purchase one bottle to receive the fruits and another bottle to receive the vegetables in a one-month supply, and each of their bottles cost about the same as one bottle of **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie** in a full two-month supply. Most of those competitors do not contain the super foods or support factors ours contain.

**Ultimate Fruit & Veggie** is turning out to be a stand alone when it comes to receiving the most of what the body requires to sustain good health and maximum energy. We are not saying that it is

all you will ever need, however, for the sheer values of vitamins and minerals from the best sources on earth, it cannot be surpassed at this time.

For those of you who want to make a statement about overall health that will have an impact throughout your life, just consider adding **MSM+C** to your daily intake of supplements. That combination, **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie** and **MSM+C**, will take you to the next level of great health including the lubrication of the joints and vertebra; easing pain; prettier and healthier skin, hair, and fingernails; and increased energy. For more information go by Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herb Shop in Killen or go to [www.nhc-herbs.com](http://www.nhc-herbs.com).

*Your friend in health,  
Roy P. Williams*

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Gwen Williams  
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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

## *Take Courage And Just Do It*

by Anna Hamilton

*set your mind to. And while we all like to think that we are self-sufficient, we all know that is a lie we like to tell ourselves. We all need support.*

*The wonderful thing about the Bible's version of "Just Do It" in Ezra tells us that we can do it with the support of the community of believers around us. Knowing that you have full support of Christ and your family of Christians behind you would give anyone courage. When you set your mind on doing what is right, you can feel sure and confident that Christ will support you and be behind you. How wonderful it is to have the courage to just do it!*

*This week's recipe is a delicious soup that is perfect to eat while we anxiously await the arrival of spring. This recipe is a yummy vegetarian soup, but you can easily add shredded chicken or cooked ground beef*

*if you want. I hope you enjoy this stick-to-your-ribs soup as much as my family does.*

*"David also said to Solomon his son, 'Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God, my God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished.'" 1 Chronicles 28:20*

*"But now, this is what the Lord says—He who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Isaiah 43:1-3*

# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

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## Mental Health Minute

# Y is for Yoga

## The Mental Health Benefits of Yoga

by Lisa Philippart,

Licensed Professional Counselor

**“Yoga is not about self-improvement, it is about self-acceptance.”**

- Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa

Wait! Come back! I know what you are thinking...you have absolutely no interest in yoga...it's a fad that won't go away...you tried it before and it didn't do anything. I get it. I've said the same things. Please, just take five minutes tops (I know this is supposed to be a mental health minute) to learn how and why yoga can be the key to psychological and emotional healing. When practiced effectively, yoga is a mind-body-spirit exercise that can help decrease anxiety and depression, improve memory and focus, and even resolve issues with relationships and self-confidence.

Fundamentally, yoga is a

practice of poses and breathing techniques designed to strengthen and balance the body and the mind. But as a psychology, yoga helps us work with the nature of the mind, the framework of being a human, and the understanding of how emotions live in our bodies and affect our behavior and our minds. So let's get specific:

1. When you practice yoga, you are moving from your sympathetic nervous system to your parasympathetic nervous system. Simply paying attention to breathing deeply, and moving with intention, can take you from fight or flight status to resting and calming your nervous system.

2. Yoga allows you to connect to your self. Your true self. By developing a more non-judgmental relationship through your unconscious mind, you are telling your self that you are

worthy of the “me” time. And really, doesn't everything come down to your relationship with yourself? Yoga can provide that grounding in your sense of self, which develops into a healthy, balanced center. Nothing to prove and nothing to hide.

3. Believe it or not, yoga improves your romantic relationships! When you are more at peace with yourself, you are more likely to be that way with your partner. Yoga teaches compassion and love for who you truly are, which transfers to the way you treat those you love.

4. Yoga helps you to become aware of where in your body you hold certain types of energy. For example, when you are anxious or stressed, where do you hold that tension or tightness? This emotional energy can be released through various

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Lisa.P@livinglifecounselingctr.com  
livinglifecounselingctr.com



poses and movements. You are healing from the inside out.

5. Stick with me, because this may be a bit esoteric. (Love that word!) Yoga can often guide you in dealing with your family-of-origin issues. You were born with gifts and challenges over which you have no control. Have you owned who you are? You are the only one who can change your actions and behaviors. Yoga embraces the authentic you.

So, if you prefer yoga as a social activity, commit to a

class. Or if you tend to be more solitary, learn a few poses and commit to making meditation time daily. Either way, the physicality of yoga will boost your mind and spirit in surprisingly positive ways.

Until next time...Lisa

*Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor, who divides her time between her own private practice in Huntsville and providing personal counseling services at Athens State University.*





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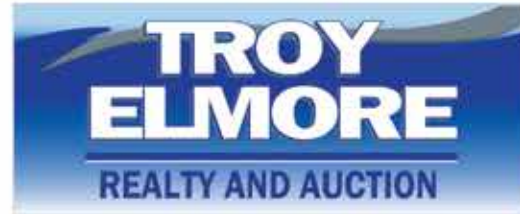
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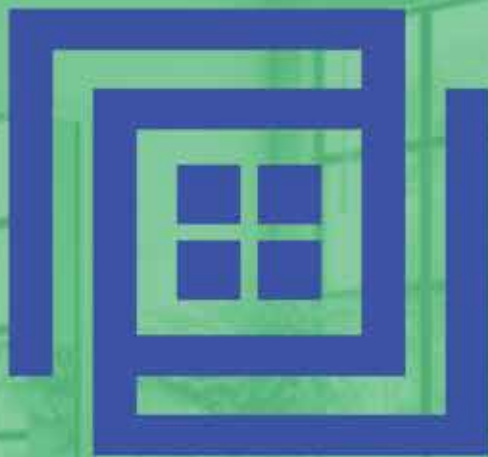
Intelligence  
without  
ambition  
is a bird  
without wings.

~ Salvador Dali



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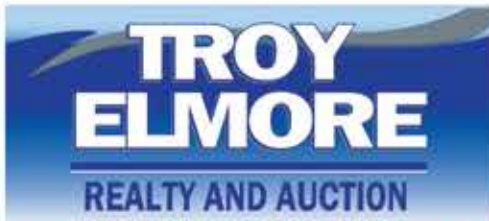


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