

January 19 - February 1, 2024

# Athens Now

information & inspiration

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## Tina's Tales



*Imperfectly REAL...*

"Never say never!"  
A few weeks ago, I actually said I would probably never write anything else again for my Tina's Tales column...  
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# SportsFit Athens: 15+ Years Of "We've Got Your Back!"

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

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scribed physical therapy regimens had been completed. The patients had come to understand the great value of consistent exercise, and wanted a gym that reflected the things they

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*Space For What's Important: Making Room For A Fuller Life...*

Welcome to "Space For What's Important," a column dedicated to helping you conquer...  
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**Publisher's Point**

*New Voices In A New Year*

Since 2007, *Athens Now* has done its best to walk in the lane of its tagline: "Information and Inspiration," and that necessitates that we have a pool of writers to provide the "I and I" that make the paper what it is. Over the years we have had diverse writers and topics, which have ranged from fishing to finance.

We are pleased to introduce three new writers to our paper, and you'll find their inaugural columns contained herein. They are Detri McGhee, Sonya Fehér, and Adam Dodson. To all I say a hearty "welcome," and I know that their thoughts and experiences will serve nicely to inform and inspire.

I met Detri (pronounced DEE-truh) at an author's conference 15 years ago in Los Angeles. We have had adventures that have included a memorable road trip from Las Vegas to Arkansas, attending conferences

together, and sharing life. She has experience as a certified life (insurance) underwriter and chartered financial counselor, and has worked in the ministry as well as in the market place. Her book and course entitled *Criticism Management* I think should be required reading for anyone who wants to learn how to thrive in spite of being stung by peoples' words or actions. Her column entitled, "McGhee On Management" is going to cover a number of topics, whether it's managing others or oneself.

Speaking of management, we could all use help managing our stuff, whether it's clothes, papers or clutter, and Sonya Fehér, who is an author, podcaster, life coach and personal organizer who trains other personal organizers around the world has graciously agreed to help us out. Sonya is proof that even the most cluttered amongst us can learn to manage their space,

and I can say from having interviewed her for the paper as well as on the radio, it has been pure joy. She was firmly of the belief that she would never be able to conquer her own chaos, but conquer she has, and she is paying it forward to empower others to do the same. Her column is called, "Space For What's Important," and her gift is to help you find that out for yourself, and then design an organizational approach that fits your style.

Lastly, when veteran radio sports broadcaster Tim Lambert had to step down from writing "Play Action Sports," he did us a solid and found a fine replacement by the name of Adam Dodson. Adam for several years was the sports writer for the *Athens News Courier* and also has a show on WKAC called *256 Sports Radio*. Adam has an uncommon understanding of the potential for positive impact in the lives of kids through

sports, and his column will be called "256 Youth Sports Spotlight." I am grateful to have these new voices in a new year, and I am confident that you will find their offerings to be educational, entertaining, and motivating.

I have to say once again that I feel like the most blessed woman on the planet. I get to tell stories and help others do the same. I have a team that I genuinely enjoy, a First Amendment that protects us all, and every first and third Friday of each month, we are glad to give you "I and I," information and inspiration. A happy and prosperous new year to all y'all!

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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Detri McGhee



Sonya Fehér



Adam Dodson





# A Colonel, A Senator, A Ranger, And A Lawyer Walked Into A Bar...

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



...and by golly, they were all the same person, and a sane one at that! Throw in a former youth pastor, a paratrooper, and someone who fought on horseback in Afghanistan, along with having worked in the Pentagon, and you have Alabama's own Phil Williams of *Right Side Radio*. Phil is going to be attending the Alabama Veterans Museum Coffee Call on Saturday, February 3, at 8 a.m., and this is an invitation for you to come meet him.

Williams has a popular radio show that can be heard on WVNN each weekday from 2-5 p.m. The Alabama-based syndicated show has a tag line which is "Solid, Conservative, and Just Plain Right," and its fans are known as "Right Side Ruffians." I first "met"

Phil in the early days of *Right Side Radio* when he had callers call in with a pop song that described what was going on in the political arena, and most had chosen "Crazy Train." Mine was Bob Dylan's "Hard Rain Is Gonna Fall," and after that I have been a frequent caller. I have also had the privilege of being interviewed in his studio in Gadsden, and we have both gotten "misty" more than once over our love for soldiers, especially those who are no longer with us.

Phil comes from a military family, and I am sure in the time he speaks to the attendees, he'll briefly tell what it was like to have a grandfather who ran Redstone Arsenal and a dad whose health was severely compromised from the chemicals used



in Vietnam.

I appreciate many things about this man that I call a brother and friend, not the least of which are his understanding of history, the Constitution, the law and the Word of God. It also doesn't hurt that he gives me the opportunity to publish his column in each edition of *Athens*

*Now*. It goes without saying that he endured severe hardship in Afghanistan, including losing 30 pounds because of dysentery, and his service was deeply appreciated by his men, the Afghans, and the Iraqis. We were in Iraq at the same time, but our paths never crossed, and I am glad that this is no longer the case.

While Phil is certainly confident in his own skin, he doesn't like to toot his own horn, so I will. His radio show is my favorite, and I listen as often as I can. He does solid research for his "show prep," and makes an excellent case for everything he covers. I will

also say that more than once I have wondered if I was safe to keep driving because I was laughing so hard. He has resources on his radio show website, [rightsideradio.org](http://rightsideradio.org), and an excellent reading list, so check it out. He also does well when detractors call in, and I am grateful that he doesn't resort to insulting them.

My last statement is that if you are a business owner, you would be doing yourself and your business a favor by advertising on *Right Side Radio*. If you are not a business owner, and even if you are not a veteran, come to Coffee Call on February 3. You'll be glad you did.

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## Tina's Tales

# Imperfectly REAL

by Tina Cook

Office Manager of Don Carter Heating and Cooling

“Never say never!” A few weeks ago, I actually said I would probably never write anything else again for my Tina’s Tales column. It’s good to know I’m still following the prompts from that voice inside my head and the signs from my God above that will not be silenced until I do their bidding. So let’s get on with it...

The place I find myself right now isn’t some NEW epiphany. I’ve been walking into its essence for the past year, experiencing the culmination of it for over a decade. But when I ran across Ralph Ellison’s quote, “When I discover who I am, I’ll be free”... I just felt to my core that it summarized the spirit of life. Honestly, I was propelled somewhat *against my will* into this journey that has dared me to look into the depth of my soul.

When I left my career last year, I went through

a dark period of feeling like I had lost everything. But, the truth is that without that career, I found much that I had lost of myself without realizing it. And I now understand that walking away from something that allowed safety and growth at the time was the only way I could genuinely claim my freedom and begin to embrace *ME*. My sadness, as with any loss, nags at me on occasion but I have grown! And my growth is now so large that the grief is smaller. I recognize it now as simply the beauty of *TIME*. I didn’t move on because I was sure I was ready to make changes. I moved on because I outgrew who I used to be. And, when signs that all is falling apart consume you, a decision has to be made: either switch to survival mode and pull yourself back together or fall apart and lose more of yourself. Change is terrifying but also so refreshingly exhilarating! I de-

cidated it was time for me to join the rollercoaster of life. And, I am enjoying every twist, turn and bump along the way!

In retrospect, I see clearly that my entire life has been an ongoing search for meaning and purpose. I have struggled to understand my nature...*why did I choose at such a young age a destructive path?* Yet, at the same time, I never ceased striving to carve out a significant life for myself despite the often detrimental consequences of my actions. There was always that nagging voice (*Mama, my sister, God...?*) and the softness of the real ME deep inside my heart that kept me searching...longing to have a meaningful and purposeful life.

Ellison’s words have helped me understand I’m being drawn home again...evolving into my truest self...present for those who *ultimately* matter and love me for all I

am: an imperfect person. I’m letting the big world take care of itself and resting in the comfort of my own small place in it -- giving to others when I can and as I identify their need but also remembering I have needs, too. By no means do I think that I have arrived and *know* exactly who I am. Do we ever? But, I am more introspective, reflective, and question the *WHY* of what I do with each decision I make: *‘Is this something I want to do for me, or instead, is it an expectation, a limitation placed on me by society or even by myself?’*

I’ll wrap this up with a reflection on epiphanies. I think people have them all the time. Usually they are worthless. A small percentage of the time someone may decide to change some aspect of their behavior. Like Paul from the Bible. He was an anal-retentive control freak who liked to persecute Christians. Then God knocked

him down, blinded him, and reamed him out. So he decided to stop persecuting Christians. But if you keep reading, you’ll see that he was still an anal-retentive control freak! He changed his behavior, but I don’t believe people change their essential nature, their core values or beliefs. If you look beyond what you can see, you usually find the real...the heart of a person.

I have discovered this: ***the things that happen in life just make me more ME.*** This I know for sure -- the defining moments in our life are never planned. We control nothing but our actions and reactions. Today, I choose to live with more abandon while staying true to my core values. This choice allows me to continue growing, learning, and most of all, becoming the REAL me! This is my defining moment...and, my lifelong resolution.



# 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.

## Vegetable Gardening Workshop

### January 27

10 AM -11 AM. Limestone County Extension Office, 1109 W. Market St., Ste. A. Free and open to the public. Limestone County Master Gardeners are presenting a series of workshops on vegetable gardening. The first workshop, Jan. 27, will be on Planning Your Vegetable Garden. Find out where, when and how to grow your favorite veggies. This workshop will give great information for beginners and experienced gardeners. Learn some tricks and some money saving tips. Learn how to get your soil tested, test kits will be available.

## Coffee Call

### February 3

#### Featuring Rightside Radio's Phil Williams

8:00am - 9:30am. Alabama Veteran's Museum, 100 Pryor St W, Athens, AL 35611. 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.

## 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)

FB: [www.facebook.com/YesterdayEventCenter](https://www.facebook.com/YesterdayEventCenter)

## Play Outside Day

### February 3

Limestone County, Limestone County, AL. Play Outside Day Families everywhere are encouraged to get outside the first Saturday of every month and play in public parks, enjoy trails, hit the waterways, explore greenspaces and just play! Limestone County offers over 20 trails to explore including walking, cycling, horseback riding and kayaking – perfect for all ages. For more information: 256-232-5411.

## National Walking Week

### April 1 - 7

Athens-Limestone Visitors Center, 100 N Beaty St, Athens, AL 35611. National Walking Week hosted by AVA\_America'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 100 North Beaty Street in Athens Monday-Friday from 8:00AM-5:00PM and a selection of guest favorites are available on the porch in the covered boxes year-round.

## Athens Historic Walking Tours

### April 13

9:45am - 11:00am. Athens-Limestone Visitors Center, 100 N Beaty St, Athens, AL 35611. Each Saturday in April. Athens Historic Walking Tours Join the Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association at the Athens-Limestone Visitors Center (100 North Beaty Street in Athens) at 9:45AM for check-in and tour selection. Expect a 1-2 hour long tour which begins at 10:00AM. Comfortable shoes and a light jacket are suggested. Free. Donation Welcome. For more info: 256-232-5411.

## 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.





# Using Criticism In Your Favor

by Detri McGhee - Certified Life Underwriter, Chartered Financial Counselor



“Criticism management” may be a new term to you, but it addresses a multitude of age-old, universal problems. Fear of criticism gives peer pressure its power. Misuse of criticism crushes dreams and promotes lies. Inadequate criticism-management skills guarantee that the dreaded “Annual Job Performance Reviews” are virtually useless exercises consuming valuable time, energy, and emotion at best, and monsters of dreadful destruction at their worst.

Refusal to accept valid criticism stifles our growth and success. Equally as destructive is the refusal to release our minds from criticism’s destructive power and hateful self-talk. Either error magnifies the negative energy required

merely to cope with our life situations, much less triumph over them – and in the midst of them.

I will often ask my clients, “If you could control the results of all the criticism ever leveled against you, and virtually guarantee that even your staunchest foes could not truly harm you, how would life change?” Invariably they tell me, “Dramatically.”

I have been blessed to work in the financial and insurance worlds, for church organizations and not-for-profits. I have been a trainer, and I am the author of CRITICISM MANAGEMENT: A Speedy Growth Process. I am currently working with corporations on EI (Emotional Intelligence) Training for all levels of employees, and

with individuals and small groups on more personal levels. My book is scheduled for release in the spring of 2024.

CRITICISM MANAGEMENT training brings wisdom, direction, tools, thoughts to ponder, and simple methods to apply to the handling of any and all criticism you will ever face.

Some questions you might consider are:

- How well do you handle criticism? Or, a better question is usually -- How well do OTHERS think you handle criticism?
- How can I get value from an undeserved, incorrect criticism?
- Should it matter WHO brings the criticism? Or HOW they deliver that criticism?

• Why would I want to listen to a mean-spirited criticism?

• What is the best response to a criticism from my boss? Or a co-worker? Or a subordinate at work? Or a family member?

Through the CRITICISM MANAGEMENT program, many issues are addressed and valuable information and techniques for growth are developed.

Warren Buffett says the most profitable investment we can make is investing in our own education and knowledge. Taylor Swift told her Swifties from the stage that they should not let other people’s opinions dictate their views of themselves. Even if you are not a great fan of either, you probably agree that both have attained a high level

of success in their chosen fields, and just might have some valuable opinions. Several other benefits from EI Training, specifically addressed in the CRITICISM MANAGEMENT Program are:

- Improved impact on people where you live and work
- Greater understanding and management of the emotions of yourself & others in moments of tension & conflict
- Deeper connection with your employees, co-workers, friends, and perhaps most importantly, your family
- Some practical ways to handle sudden crisis events
- Greater appreciation of diversity and how to treasure and benefit from that diversity

Studies have shown that people with better developed emotional intelligence skills, as criticism management provides, have greater mental health, job performance, and leadership skills. Personal and professional life benefits.

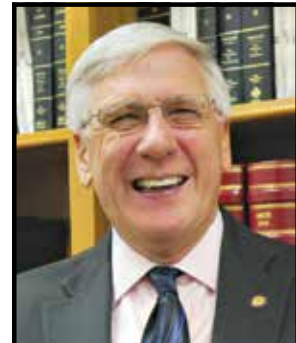
Our website is: [www.criticismmanagement.com](http://www.criticismmanagement.com) where we give you a FREE complete outline of our managing criticism technique. This site is being updated, so if you should have trouble reaching us, email to: [detrimcghee@gmail.com](mailto:detrimcghee@gmail.com) or call/text Detri directly at 870-370-0160. Corporate training, speaking engagements, individual and group coaching opportunities are filled through January, but new Zoom groups open in March and a few training spots remain in February.





## Slow Down In The Snow Down

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



### Editor's note:

*When this interview was conducted, Athens had not yet experienced any power outages. It ended up that there were approximately 4500 customers out of power, and crews worked around the clock in frigid weather to get things up and running again. The mayor and all of us thank them for their speedy response. As the snow and ice give way, please be careful of others and yourself.*

We had to meet by phone on Monday, as North Alabama was in the middle of quite a snow storm. City Hall was basically closed, APD Chief Presnell had wisely asked people to stay at home if at all possible, and to Mayor Ronnie, it seemed that “The Good Lord and Mother Nature took us out of the hustle and bustle of the new year and said, ‘Nope, you are not in charge. Slow down, take care of yourselves and each other.’”

Mayor Ronnie went on to

ask me, “Did you hear about the young man who prayed and felt that God led him to find a missing child?” I hadn’t, and so the mayor sent me the AL.com article that told the remarkable story of Markeith Williams, who on Sunday the 14th, joined the Barbour County search party looking for Phenix Wilkerson, a 4-year-old who had been missing for 50 hours. Markeith had his family, including his evangelist grandmother praying while he, his wife, Valencia, and several others searched, and talked about how when they were getting close to finding Phenix, Markeith’s heart began to rush. He said, “As I was getting closer to him, my head started rushing so that’s how I knew I was getting close. I knew it was God with me.” The little guy was about 150 yards away, divinely unscathed given how long he had been gone, and needed very little medical attention. As is always the case with true heroes, Markeith was not there to toot his own horn. Instead,



he simply said, “I was doing that because God sent me to do that.” Quite a story, and quite in keeping with the theme of ‘taking care of yourselves and each other.’ And, how amazing it is that this child was found on Sunday in the afternoon just before the weather turned.

The weather had caused the postponing of the annual Martin Luther King Day march and celebration, and as of this writing, the art and essay contest are going to be held this Sunday, January 21 at 2 p.m. at the

Veterans Museum. We had planned as always to participate in the annual march which had to be cancelled, and were waiting to hear if there will be a march later on. Celebrating the life of Dr. King caused us both to talk about how much we miss Councilmen Jimmy Gill and Frank Travis. “Every day I miss them,” said Mayor Ronnie, and I added, “So do I.” We chuckled about Jimmy, his wisdom as well as humor, which interestingly pertained to staying safe in the storm. “Jimmy used to tell people that he knew that the trees looked like they had gotten a bad haircut, and that they weren’t happy about it,” said the mayor, and then added, “But it’s the ‘bad haircuts’ that protect the power lines, which is critical in the middle of a storm like this.” He also mentioned that so far, the storm had not been too bad due to the fact that there hadn’t been much wind coming through. Over 70 youth from various churches in our area had been amongst the thousands of Christian teens attending the “Strength to Stand” conference in Pigeon Forge. “They had to cut it short a

day and got back last night,” said the mayor. “I am glad they got the chance to go, and that they are home safe,” he added.

The “celebration of the snow” had shown up on the mayor’s street in the form of the antics of three teenagers by the names of Lexi, John David, and Skyler McGee. The three got out in the road and made snow angels and pitched snowballs. City of Athens Communications and Grant Coordinator Holly Hollman had been out on Monday morning walking her dog in the snow and took the serene picture of the antique light framing the “slow-down-snow-down” moment. She quoted in her post one of MLK’s best quotes: “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that.” So true, and Mayor Marks closed out our time by saying to all of Athens-Limestone County, “Enjoy the snow as much as you can. Stay safe, take care of yourselves and each other.” We then did what we have been doing twice a month since 2011 through thick and thin: pray. And then it was time for Ronnie to roll.





SpaceWise

# Space For What's Important: *Making Room For A Fuller Life*

by Sonya Fehér

Welcome to "Space For What's Important," a column dedicated to helping you conquer clutter, overcome the overwhelming, and reclaim your space, time, and life. According to the National Soap and Detergent Association, eliminating clutter can rid you of 40 percent of housework in the average home. Imagine the possibilities – more time for meaningful connections, healthier meals in a clutter-free kitchen, and the energy to engage in activities you love.

Perhaps your struggles with organization began in the house where you grew up, when you moved out on your own, or it escalated with the responsibilities of work and kids. Whether you've battled lifelong disorganization or are tired of living amid chaos, I empathize with the frustrations you face. Running late, forgetting items, not being able to have

people over, and dealing with the consequences of disorganization can take a toll. Whether your disorganization reveals itself through dump zones, shame piles, wasted time or money, self-blame, or an earnest desire for change, I've got your back.

I intimately understand the struggle because I've been there. Convinced I just wasn't an organized person and never could be, I hit a breaking point fifteen years ago while navigating the chaos of raising a toddler. The clutter and disorganization made it impossible for me to function, and it was standing in the way of being the mom and the person I wanted to be.

Despite attempts with various organizing methods, nothing seemed tailored to my reality as a piler who alternated between needing to see things to remember to do them or being over-



whelmed by the visual chaos and needing things to be out of sight. So, I took matters into my own hands. Over two years, I crafted systems that worked for who I actually was, not my fantasy perfect self. Believe it or not, I got to the point where I could tidy up any room in fifteen minutes or less. Even my toddler, then four years old, could contribute. It changed my life in ways I had only dreamed of before.

This transformation sparked a business idea when someone in a group I facilitated sought organizing help. I could confidently say, "I'm great at organizing. Hire me!" She did and my business, spaceWise Organizing, was born. Now, with over a decade of experience and recognition as one of Austin's Best Home Organizers every year since 2017, I've accumulated 4000+ hours of in-person organizing expertise.

My approach focuses on helping individuals organize for who they are, rather than trying to change themselves to fit a system. And I'm here to help you too. In each column, I'll share practical tips drawn from my real-world experiences, to help you declutter and organize your home, time, and life to make space for what's important.

I invite you to be part of the conversation. Submit your questions for troubleshooting specific areas, seeking storage solution recommendations, or exploring how to work with yourself to have the life you want. Email your inquiries to [sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com](mailto:sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com), and I'll address them in future columns. Your journey to a clutter-free and fulfilling life starts here!

Sonya Fehér

Organizer, Coach,  
Author, & Speaker

[spacewiseorganizing.com](http://spacewiseorganizing.com)



space  
Wise



# The Legend Of The Black Ghost

by Phil Williams



Alabama is car country. Legends have been born here. Names like Bobby Allison, Neil Bonnett, and Red Farmer were all born, bred, and raced in their home state. The Talladega Motor Speedway is a motorsports crown jewel, but dirt tracks, drag strips, and custom car garages abound in every corner of sweet home Alabama.

I love hot rods and classic muscle cars. On the shelf in my office is a picture of my first car, a hopped up '68 Mustang. I drove it all through high school and asked my wife to marry me in that car. As a young married couple expecting a child, I sold my four-wheeled baby to have our first baby. No regrets, but the day is coming when I will get back to a classic muscle car, just wait. For now, I just admire them from afar, and dream.

In the late 60s and early 70s, muscle cars came of age. Factories made cars you could pick up from the dealership and race that night at the track. Hemi 'Cudas, Boss Mustangs, Camaros, Chevilles, GTOs - it was testosterone in motion.

In Detroit, the street scene was a 24-mile strip called Woodward Avenue with an underground street racing culture that was almost semi-sanctioned. Drivers ran mostly for pride, sometimes for money, but always for the love of cars.

In the spring of 1970, a

black Dodge Challenger showed up. No one knew the driver of the thunderously loud Hemi-powered monster with the darkened windows. It always won, and then always disappeared. The locals began calling it the Wraith of Woodward, and eventually just called it the Black Ghost. Sometimes it would come back the next night, or the next week, and sometimes it was gone for months. In 1975, the Black Ghost raced down Woodward for the last time, slipping away into street racing legend.

But recently, the Black Ghost was found. In December 1969, one of only twenty-two 1970 R/T SE Dodge Challengers was sold, complete with a 426 Hemi engine and 4-speed "Super Track Pack" transmission. It was a rare car, built for racing from the factory, black on black with a black vinyl gator-skin roof.

The buyer was Godfrey Qualls, a Vietnam veteran who earned a Purple Heart with the 82nd Airborne Division. Oddly enough, Qualls was also...wait for it...a Detroit police officer! He knew where the cops would be, and only raced when the coast was clear.

Qualls passed away in 2015 leaving the Black Ghost to his son. It had sat untouched since the mid-70s with only 45,000 original miles. The younger Qualls tells how, as a child, his dad would put a \$100 bill on

the dash, telling him if he could reach up and grab it before fourth gear that he could have it. He never did.

The original Black Ghost recently sold at a Mecum Auto Auction for just over \$1 million and was added to the National Historic Vehicle Registry.

In 2023, Dodge decided to honor the memory of the Black Ghost by creating a factory made 2023 Black Ghost Challenger with a 6.2 liter Hemi engine that could do 0-60 in 3.7 seconds with a top speed of 200 mph.

Unfortunately, the 2023 Black Ghost Challenger tribute car was one of what Dodge referred to as its "last call" models.

Dodge Motor Company recently ended all further production of gas-powered performance cars, and that my friends, is a crying shame. Succumbing to the forces of a government shakedown, the powers that be at Stellantis, the parent company of Dodge, have decided to move the vast majority of their manufacturing to all electric vehicles (EVs).

But fear not gearheads! They are going into it with an all-electric line of muscle cars. Oh boy. Call me old fashioned, but this is a changing of the guard that feels very hollow.

There is something magical about the smell of exhaust and getting grease on your hands while

turning a wrench on a fire-breather that actually looks, smells, and feels like a dragon waiting to be unleashed. Something special exists when you shift gears on a controlled explosion combusting under the hood, hear air sucking into an oversize carb, the whine of a supercharger, and the rumble of the exhaust fumes passing through the pipes.

Dodge is trying to reclaim the high ground with what it calls its Charger Daytona SRT EV. It is said to be epically fast with its "Ban-shnee powertrain." The super-EV has an electronic transmission but will allow the driver to shift gears manually if they choose. Most importantly the new electric hot rod from Dodge will also have a tailpipe containing a speaker that will generate fake V-8 style engine sounds with up to 126 decibels of computer-generated rumble...hmmm...Does this mean that EV hot rods "identify" as gas burners? Trans-cars anyone?

I understand that the pressure to move to EVs is significant. But the false government-subsidized market is already self-correcting. The recent auto workers strikes, that included Stellantis, represented a war between labor and management over the future of EV manufacturing with one union representative saying, "Corporate America is not going to force us

to choose between good jobs and green jobs. That's a false choice."

Meanwhile car lovers get false exhaust.

The mere fact that Dodge chose to make a final run of tribute cars stuffed with high-revving, gas-burning engines is a clear signal that they know the mistake being made. They are trying to win people over as they step off the ledge.

If folks want an EV, by all means go get one. Most of us just want a choice in the matter. We don't want fake muscle. We want the real Black Ghost back!

*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

## Positive Mindset Is A Must For 2024

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)*

I believe the hardest thing for most people to do is to have a positive mindset. I believe the easiest thing for most people to have is a negative mindset. It is so much easier to think negatively than it is to think positively, and this is why so many people are living a life less than their heart's desire. The question becomes – how does a person obtain this positive mindset? Is it easy? How much work is it going to require? These are all questions that many people have tried to answer, but many have failed in their pursuit of finding the positive mindset.

I have people ask me how I can be as positive as what I am, and it all comes down to the approach I take on a daily basis. We need to understand that no matter what you or I are going through, there is someone out there who would give anything to switch their problems for ours. I believe life is 10 percent of what happens to us, and 90 percent of how we respond to those circumstances. We need to face the reality that every person on the planet is going to have something bad happen to them – but just because something bad happens, it does not signify the end of the world.

As Annie sang, “The sun will come out tomorrow – you can bet your bottom dollar that tomorrow there will be sun.” Sometimes we need to take a moment, take a deep breath, and realize that our circumstances could be so much worse than they are. Our problem

is our mindset of thinking negatively does not allow us to focus on the positive attributes in our life; society teaches us that we need to focus on what we do not have. However, if you take the time and show some appreciation for what you do have, and limit your focus on what you do not have, you will notice a shift in your attitude.

Part of our societal problem when it comes to changing who we are is that we are too impatient when the changes do not occur as fast as we would like them to. We need to realize that change is going to take time and changing to a more positive mindset is going to require changing part of our daily habits and routines. Our habits and routines do not change overnight but are going to require a day-to-day approach. This approach needs to become who we are as individuals and when we are able to change who we are, this is when we can move further into the positive mindset.

I like to focus on things that bring me happiness especially when my flesh is wanting to be negative. I have found when I focus on those things which bring me joy – whether it be my wife, my girls, my



Bible, thinking about Jesus Christ who paid my sin debt – when I start thinking on these things, my mindset begins to shift from the negative and move toward the positive. Now, you need to think about the things in your life that bring you joy and write down this list. The next time you notice your mood begins to swing to the negative side, stop what you are doing and begin contemplating on this list you have written down.

We are in control of our actions, we are in control of our thoughts, and we are in control of what we say. We cannot control what others do, but we can control what and how we respond to others. This further reiterates

the point of life being 10 percent of what happens versus 90 percent of how we respond to what happens. We are already past the halfway point in January, and the question is -- Will 2024 be different for you than what 2023 was or will this year be just another repeat of what last year was for you?

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again expecting

different results, but now is the time to make the changes that will impact our lives and this year the most. What would our society be like if we all had more positive expectations from ourselves and others? We need to be the change we want to see in the world. Our society is impacted by our mindset, and this shows me the importance of being positive in a negative world.

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## Clean, Green And Beautiful

# Glass Recycling

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

Why recycle your glass? The decomposition rate of glass is NONE, meaning every piece of glass ever made is still on this earth in some form. There are no microorganisms on the Earth that are able to break down glass materials. Glass is 100% recyclable, and can be recycled endlessly with no loss in quality or purity. Recycled glass can be used to substitute for up to 95% of raw materials. Recycled glass is always part of the recipe for glass, the more used in the process, the less energy and raw materials are used, which leads to a lower cost. The more glass is recycled, the greater the benefits to our environment are!

The container and fiberglass industries collectively purchase 3.35 million tons of recycled glass annually. Over a TON of natural resources are saved for every TON of glass recycled. Energy costs drop 2-3% for every 10% of recycled glass used in production. Using recycled glass even extends the plant life of the equipment used. All of this saves us, the consumers MONEY, and we all benefit from that. Just a few things made from recycled glass -- more bottles, countertops, tiles, Glassphalt, beads, and construction materials.

As I'm sure everyone knows, there is no way to recycle glass in Limestone County. In fact,

there is only one place in all North Alabama that can recycle glass -- Phoenix Glass Recycling of North Alabama in Huntsville. Not only do they accept bottles and jars for recycling, but they also have a store to shop for stemware, dishes, whole containers, etc.! In 2024, they will have a monthly *Shop, Drop & Free Glass Friday!* They have the best, most informative website as well.

Even though their website ([www.phoenixglassrecycling.com](http://www.phoenixglassrecycling.com)) has the answer to most any question you may have, I'm going to make it even easier. Yes, there is a MINI-

MAL fee to drop your glass. I'm talking \$5 processing fee for nonsubscribers, and \$5 per cart. A cart holds an average of 100 bottles. They do prefer you book an appointment to drop off (you can do that through their website) as well as to shop unless it's a *Shop, Drop & Free Glass Friday*.

Let's talk about *Shop, Drop & Free Glass Friday*. Each month will feature a different color and type

**Shop, Drop & Free Glass Friday!**  
 Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 from 11AM to 5PM  
 Free Item of the Month: BROWN GLASS (+ Growlers!)  
 Special Sales: Bar & Kitchenware 4 for \$1!  
 \$5 per cart Drop Offs - No Appointment Needed!

Our small sales shelves are FULL!  
 Come browse what we've got and take some free glass while you're here!

Upcycling glass keeps it out of landfills and is great for crafting, canning, and decorating projects!

For details, go to our event page on Facebook!

**PHOENIX GLASS RECYCLING**

**SHOP, DROP & FREE FRIDAY!**  
 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 from 11AM to 5PM  
 Free Item of the Month: CLEAR BOTTLES AND STEMWARE!  
 Special Sales: 4 OZ Canning Jars 5 for \$1!  
 \$5 per cart Drop Offs - No Appointment Needed!

Our small sales shelves are FULL!  
 Come browse what we've got and take some free glass while you're here!

Reusing glass keeps it out of landfills and is great for all kinds of craft, canning, and decorating projects!

For details, go to our event page on Facebook!

**PHOENIX GLASS RECYCLING**

of glassware that is FREE! This is a fantastic opportunity for people collecting for weddings or parties and crafters! They have special pricing on certain items such as Pyrex, stemware, kitchenware, and more! They also accept glass with no appointment for only \$5 per cart during this event. Just for an example, the January event featured free brown glass (like growlers), and bar and kitchenware 4 for \$1. This is a great opportunity for anyone who is stocking a new kitchen!

Follow Phoenix Glass Recycling of North Alabama or Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful (I will share the event) on Facebook to keep up with the monthly *Shop, Drop & Free Glass Friday* fliers. The deals are there to be taken and help curb the environmental effects of glass! It's a win-win! If you have any questions, visit [www.phoenixglassrecycling.com](http://www.phoenixglassrecycling.com)...I'm sure the answer is there!



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## Cooking with Anna

# Sweet Surrender

by Anna Hamilton

*We live in a world where surrendering is considered weak. For one to surrender, one must admit defeat. You are admitting defeat. However, as Christians, we are called to surrender to God's control in our lives. We are to give up our power in this world, so that we will be able to show the world God's glory. Complete surrender is what is required of us as Christians.*

*I read a quote this week that has been contributed to many different people over the years, "We repent enough to be forgiven, but do we surrender enough to be changed?" Repenting is the easy part of admitting you are wrong. It may seem like admitting wrong and saying sorry is the hard part, but that is a myth. The hard part is truly giving your life over to Christ, true surrender, after the repentance.*

*James 1:22-25 is used a lot when speaking of how we are to control our tongues as Christians, and it absolutely applies. We should control our mouths and the words that we speak,*

*but it also speaks to how we are to not be only hearers of the word, but doers. "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do." We know we are to give ourselves over to God, but somehow, we find this part of our Christian life difficult.*

*God wants us fully. As our Father, God wants his children wholly. Surrender is easier said than done, however. Even if*

*continued on page 23*

## Honey Mustard Salmon

### Ingredients:

*4 salmon filets, about 6 oz. each*

*2 Tbsps. honey*

*1 Tbsp. soy sauce*

*2 Tbsps. olive oil*

*2 Tbsps. Dijon mustard*

*2 cloves garlic, minced*

*1 Tbsp. spicy brown mustard*

*Salt and pepper to taste*

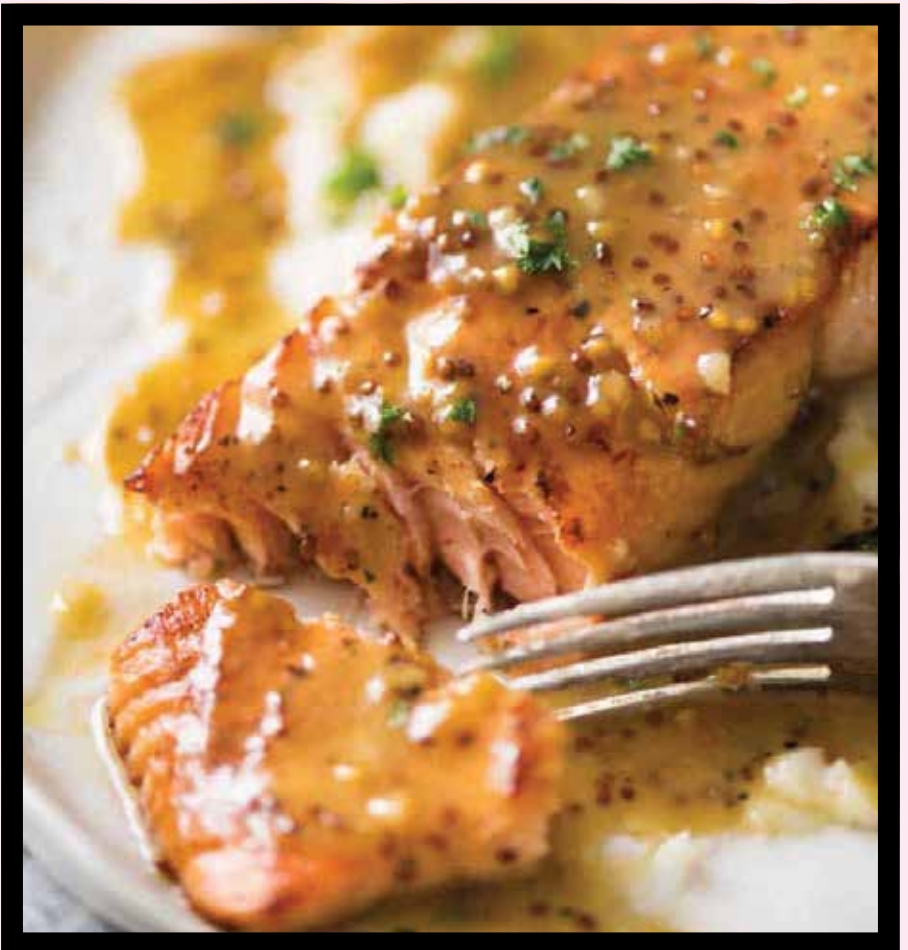
*Fresh lemon wedges for serving*

### Directions:

*Preheat oven to 400 degrees.*

*Season salmon filets with salt and pepper and place them on a lightly greased baking sheet.*

*In a small bowl, whisk together the Dijon mustard, whole grain mustard, honey, soy sauce, olive oil, and*



*minced garlic. Brush the honey mustard glaze over each salmon filet, coating them evenly.*

*Roast the salmon in the preheated oven for about 12-15 minutes or until the salmon is cooked through.*

*We like to turn on the broiler for an additional 2-3 minutes to caramelize the honey mustard glaze. Serve with lemon wedges.*



# The Transformative Power Of Fitness: *How It Makes You A Better Person*

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

In today's fast-paced and demanding world, the importance of physical fitness extends beyond just looking good; it plays a crucial role in shaping our overall well-being and character. Engaging in regular fitness activities goes far beyond the physical benefits; it has a profound impact on various aspects of our lives, contributing to personal growth, mental resilience, and overall happiness.

### Physical Health and Energy Boost:

Regular exercise is synonymous with good physical health. It strengthens the cardiovascular system, improves muscle tone, and enhances flexibility. When our bodies are in peak condition, we experience increased energy levels, allowing us to tackle daily challenges with vigor. This newfound vitality spills over into other areas of our lives, enabling us to be more productive and efficient.

### Mental Clarity and Focus:

Exercise is not just a workout for the body; it's a workout for the mind. Physical activity stimulates the release of endorphins, neurotransmitters

that act as natural mood lifters. This surge in feel-good chemicals is linked to improved mental clarity and enhanced focus. Individuals who engage in regular fitness routines often report increased productivity and sharper cognitive abilities.

### Discipline and Goal Setting:

Achieving and maintaining fitness requires discipline and commitment. Setting fitness goals, whether it's completing a marathon or mastering a challenging yoga pose, instills a sense of purpose and direction. This discipline spills over into other areas of life, fostering a proactive and goal-oriented mindset. The ability to set, pursue, and achieve fitness goals translates into a heightened sense of achievement in personal and professional spheres.

### Stress Reduction and Emotional Resilience:

Life is filled with stressors, and how we manage them can significantly impact our overall well-being. Exercise acts as a powerful stress reliever by reducing levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, and promoting the release of endorphins. Regular

physical activity helps build emotional resilience, allowing individuals to navigate challenges with a calm and composed demeanor.

### Self-Confidence and Positive Body Image:

The physical transformations that accompany regular exercise often lead to improved self-esteem and body image. As individuals witness the positive changes in their bodies, they develop a sense of accomplishment and self-worth. This newfound confidence extends beyond the gym, influencing how individuals perceive

and present themselves in various social and professional settings.

### Social Connection and Community:

Many fitness activities are inherently social, providing opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals. Whether it's joining a sports team, participating in group classes, or simply having a workout buddy, the social aspect of fitness fosters a sense of community. Building relationships within a fitness community enhances interpersonal skills, communication, and teamwork.

In conclusion, the transformative power of fitness goes well beyond the physical realm. Engaging in regular exercise contributes to personal growth, mental resilience, and an overall positive outlook on life. By incorporating fitness into our daily routines, we not only invest in our physical health but also nurture qualities that make us better individuals – disciplined, focused, emotionally resilient, and confident. The journey to becoming a better person starts with a single step on the treadmill or a yoga mat, paving the way for a holistic and fulfilling life.

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## 'Cations

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



So I think it's time that we don't limit our restful, engaged life to just two weeks out of the year. We can live life now.

Let's start by thinking about why vacations are different (this IS a tourism article, after all).

Vacations aren't about the destination or the travel (Did I really type that in my out-loud voice? Why yes, yes I did.) but are more about being in the moment, about tuning in, not out.

When we're on vacation, we change our mindset, our intent, our deliberate excitement about having the same chicken sandwich. We let ourselves have a little fun. We give ourselves permission to breathe and think and sleep and do.

Honestly, we're still the same person. We brush our same teeth, are still vaguely lactose intolerant, and still stay up way too late. It isn't that food is free or the traffic is light or that airlines never lose tourist luggage.

But because we're on vacation, we love it. We decide to enjoy ourselves. We decide to be deliberate. We act instead of react. We kiss on the beach, play family games, put our phones down, and watch the moon rise.

The thing is that we can do that at any time! Oh, we can't fly off to Aruba any time, but we can take a moment to get a little excited about lunch, about bedtime, about the moon,

about 5 minutes in the bathroom alone (unless you have cats like mine who like to stick their paws under the door like preschoolers saying "Mom! Mom! Mom! Can you see my fingers wiggle?").

Just think...have you considered that your "quick meal while shuffling the kids home from practice" is the exact same food that the people at the next table are lingering over because they are "on vacation"? Same burger, different vibe. They're excited to be doing exactly what you are doing.

One of my best friends, as a full grown adult, has "Scooby Doo" nights. She loves that show and instead of just flopping on the couch and bingeing it for hours, she takes the time to put on special pajamas, make cocoa and snacks, and truly enjoy herself. She turns television into an event. Every time she does that, she has a little mini vacation. She rests. She delights. She takes the time to be deliberate.

What if we could have that enjoyment in our daily lives? What if we delight in the "mundane miracles" of the life we are given? What if the hard times could also be times of peace? What if we don't need to escape, we just need to adjust?

That's what we at the Athens-Limestone County Tourism want to introduce in 2024. We want 'vacation' to



mean everything from "Big tour bus coming in from some far-off city" to "I have an hour to kill before my haircut."

We are starting a new campaign of "'Cations." These are going to be mini-plans that you can use to be deliberate in your everyday life. They will be based on theme and will have a few ideas to

get you started.

These are also going to be excellent ideas for when you have visitors. Or if you want to have a girls' night or a guys' night. If you need some bonding time with a loved one, or just need an "excuse" to focus on something in your life.

So put your arm in mine and let's stroll down the

rest of our lives with intent. Let's take a moment to look, to pause and enjoy, to rename our brief minutes from "have-to" to "GET-TO-AND-I-HAVE-THIS-AWESOME-PLAYLIST-AND-I-CAN'T-WAIT-TO-GET-STARTED!"

Stay tuned, your 'cations are coming.

IF YOU'LL SET A FIRM FOUNDATION,  
she'll build her dreams upon it.

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# SportsFit Athens: 15+ Years Of “We’ve Got Your Back!”

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

learned and the strength they had gained while being treated at Encore. Jonathan Henderson, whose family started Encore and also owns SportsFit, in turn made “we’ve got your back” a reality in Athens by spearheading the 2008 opening of SportsFit, one of five 24/7 exercise facilities located in North Alabama and in Mississippi. SportsFit Athens is on the north side of Hwy 72 right across from the Surgical Tower, at 22423 US Hwy 72 East.

I spoke with Chelsey Smith, who is the regional director of SportsFit and a “lifer” when it comes to fitness and working out. She loves free weights and the squat rack, and for cardio she uses either the Stairmaster or the rowing machine. Chelsey has worked for the company for a total of five years, with a hiatus during COVID. She has also done some marketing and was able to tell me what SportsFit brings to the table with regard to approach, philosophy, trends, equipment, classes, and community outreach. Chelsey spoke with confidence when she said, “We are a traditional gym, and stick with tried and proven approaches to workouts, classes and fitness in general. Trends such as kettle bells have stayed and are incorporated into the equipment we have available.” SportsFit also recently upgraded

their spin class equipment.

The facility offers more than 200 classes, and below is a partial “A-to-Z” listing of what is available:

**SportsFit Athens Group Fitness Class Descriptions:**

**Barre** – Combines ballet-inspired moves with elements of Pilates, dance, yoga, and strength training, no ballet experience necessary!

**BODYPUMP** – Full-body strength training workout. Uses body weight, barbells, and dumbbells to tone, strengthen, and sculpt the entire body.

**BODYSTEP** – In this workout you can expect a mixture of upbeat, rhythmic stepping, with squat and lunge patterns to work the legs. Combine this with movements like burpees, push-ups and weight plate exercises, and the result is a fun, uplifting, full-body workout!

**HIIT Strength** (High Intensity Interval Training) – High intensity cardio and calisthenics followed by recovery periods.

**Kickboxing** – Intense workout using kicks, punches, and cardio segments to tone your entire body.

**Muscleworks** – Resistance training using dumbbells, body bars, stability balls, and mats.

**RPM** (spin) – Indoor cycling workout where you control the intensity. This low-impact workout takes you on a journey of climbs,



One of the many group fitness classes at Sportsfit

sprints, and flat riding. Be sure to bring water and a towel! (Please arrive a few minutes early to set up your bike.)

**Silver Sneakers** – Designed for active older adults, these classes combine low-impact cardio movement with toning and stretching exercises for stronger muscles, a healthier heart, and an increased range of motion.

**Shine Dance** - Come party with your besties! Shine dance fitness class is rooted in traditional dance such as jazz, hip hop, and ballet. We take those foundational moves and create dance routines that are easy enough for beginners yet challenging enough for the more seasoned dancer.

**Yoga** – Increase your strength, balance, and flexibility by combining flowing postures with relaxation

and breathing techniques.

**Zumba** – Cardio dance workout with a little merengue, a little salsa, and a little reggae. Great cardio for all ages.

The facility offers more than 200 classes as well as video-based workouts -- something akin to an in-house Peloton, where you can access an iPad on the wall and bring up a class for everything from yoga to dance classes and more. The name of the video-based system is Les Mills, and the following describes their “why” as well as some of the classes they make available:

*We’re on a mission to create a fitter planet. This doesn’t mean making people work out. It means helping people fall in love with fitness so that they want to work out.*

**Body Attack** - The high-energy fitness class with moves that cater for total beginners to total addicts and gets you fit for the sport of life.

**Tone** - We are excited to bring you LES MILLS TONE™. We listened to your global feedback and heard your desire for a more modern training experience. Created from the foundations of BODYVIVE 3.1, LES MILLS TONE maintains the original 3-in-1 training style -- a mix of cardio, resistance, and core while playing with different training concepts to ensure everyone gets the best results from their workouts.

If you want the optimal mix of strength, cardio, and core training, this is it. Step into a LES MILLS TONE class and you'll tick





## January Group Fitness Schedule

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4:30 AM		RPM 30 Nakita	BODYSTEP 30 Diane	RPM 30 Nakita	BODYSTEP 30 Diane		Saturday the 8th
5:00 AM		BODYPUMP Nakita	RPM Jim	BODYPUMP Nakita	RPM Jim	BODYPUMP Erin	BODYPUMP 7am Erin Tabata 8am Erin
8:10 AM		HIIT Strength Cortney	Zumba Jenn D	Yoga Jenn B	Shine Dance Jenn B	Yoga Jenn B	Saturday the 13th
9:00 AM		Barre Cortney	Muscleworks Jenn D	HIIT Strength Cortney	Muscleworks Jenn D	Barre 30 Jenn B	BODYPUMP 7AM MaryBeth RPM 8AM MaryBeth
10:15 AM		Silver Sn Move-Alternating	Silver Sn Move-Brie		Silver Sn Move-Cortney		Saturday the 20th
10:45 AM		Silver Sn Muscle-Alternating	Silver Sn Muscle-Brie		Silver Sn Muscle-Cortney		BODYPUMP 7AM MaryBeth RPM 8AM MaryBeth
3:00 PM	Yoga-Dana						
4:00 PM			HIIT Strength Jenn D	4:30 BODYSTEP Diane	HIIT Strength Jenn D		Saturday the 27th
5:00 PM		BODYSTEP30 Diane	RPM 30 Mary Beth	RPM MaryB	RPM 30 MaryB		BODYPUMP 7am Erin Tabata 8am Erin
5:30 PM		BODYPUMP Diane	BODYPUMP Mary Beth		BODYPUMP MaryB		
6:00 PM				BODYPUMP MaryB			

off a complete workout in 45 minutes. The challenging mix of lunges, squats, functional training, and tubing exercises will help you burn calories and take your fitness to the next level. Also a great foundational class, LES MILLS TONE has a wide variety of options accommodating all fitness levels ensuring everyone leaves the workout feeling successful.

**Sh'Bam** - A fun-loving, insanely addictive dance workout. SH'BAM™ is an ego-free zone – no dance experience required. All you need is a playful attitude and a cheeky smile so forget being a wallflower – even if you walk in thinking you can't, you'll walk out knowing you can!

**Body Jam** - Choreographed by Gandalf Archer-Mills in Auckland, New Zealand, BODYJAM™ is the ultimate combination of music and dance. Tracks that you love right now? They're in BODYJAM. That new style you've heard about? It was in BODYJAM last year.

**The Trip** is a fully immersive workout experience that combines a 40-minute multi-peak cycling workout with a journey through digitally-created worlds. With its cinema-scale screen and sound system, this IMMERSIVE FIT-NESS™ workout takes

motivation and energy output to the next level, burning serious calories.

**Core** - Inspired by elite athletic training principles, LES MILLS CORE™ is a scientific core workout for incredible core tone and sports performance. You build strength, stability, and endurance in the muscles that support your core, improve balance, assist injury prevention, and become better at everything you do.

"All the moves in LES MILLS CORE have options, so it's challenging but achievable whatever your level of fitness. During the workout, trained Instructors guide you through correct technique as you work with resistance tubes and weight plates, as well as bodyweight exercises like crunches and hovers. Plus, there are some hip, butt, and lower back exercises too."

Because of SportsFit's blend of tradition and technology, they are able to tailor make classes for any age or fitness level. Chelsey told me that they have a solid representation from the senior community in our area. By the way, the Silver Sneakers program is part of select Medicare coverage and is offered nationwide. Les Mills' "Born to Move" is a fitness program specifically designed for kids from the age of 3

to 16. Chelsey also emphasized the blessing of having a pool. "We LOVE having a pool!" she said, and also wanted people to know that each SportsFit is located right next to an Encore facility, which uses pools for

much of their rehab programs. And, you don't have to be a swimmer to take and benefit from the pool-based exercised classes.

I asked Chelsey what SportsFit does to help people keep their New Year's resolutions past the month of January. Her answer? "We try to create a friendly-staff atmosphere that is kind and knowledgeable. We also have competitions that are fun, not too intimidating, and that get people involved. We also encourage our members to join in community fitness events like the Chick-fil-A 5K or Make-a-Wish.

There has never been a better time to join SportsFit, whether you have made a resolution or not. Join in their 15th anniversary celebration and take the win all year long.

# SportsFit Athens

## HOURS & CONTACT

The Athens SportsFit Fitness Center is open 24-hours.

## STAFFED HOURS:

**Monday-Thursday:**  
7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Friday:**  
7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Saturday:**  
8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

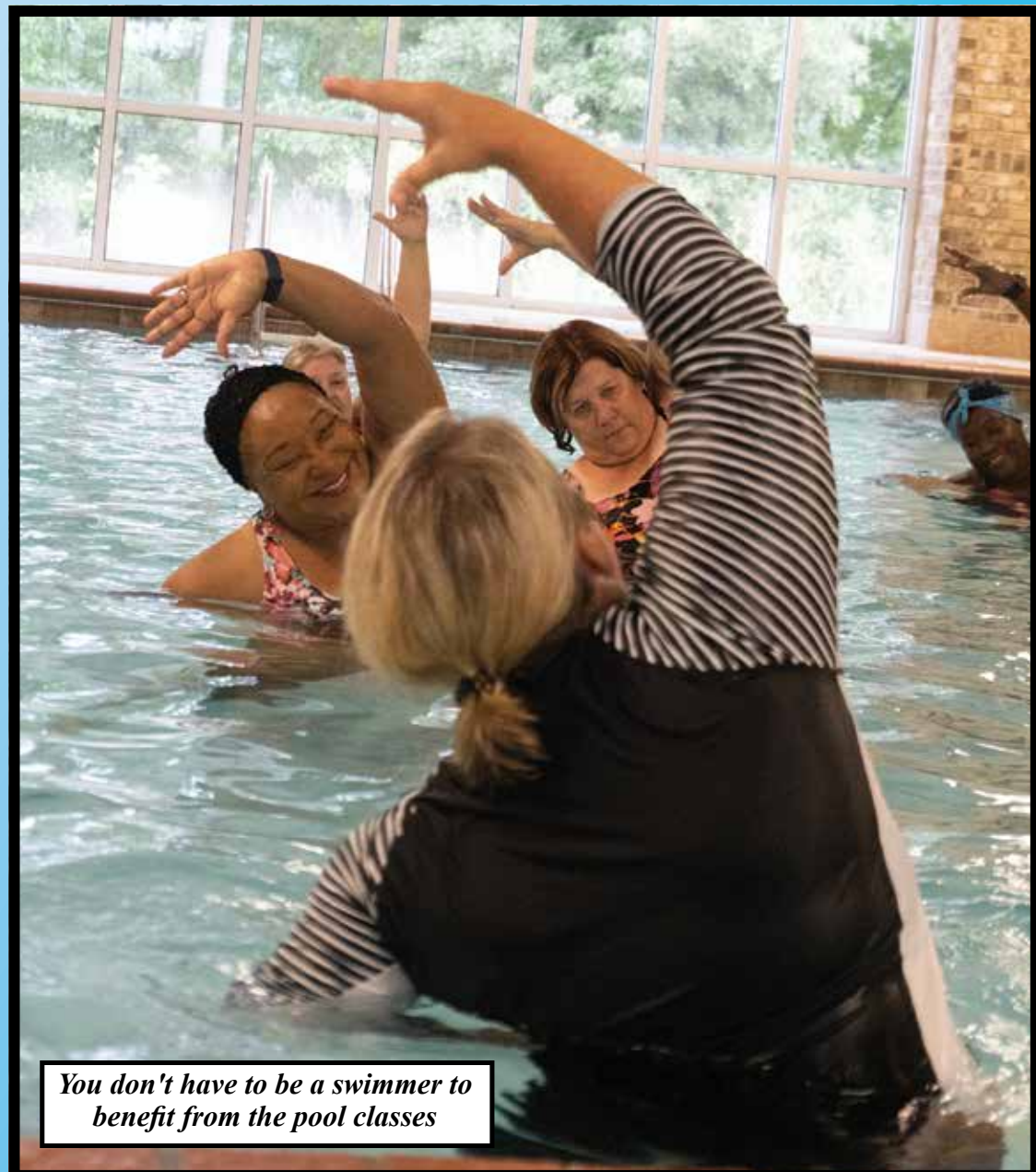
## CHILDCARE HOURS:

**Monday-Thursday:**  
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and  
4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Saturday:**  
8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

## LOCATION

22423 US Hwy East  
Athens, AL 35613



*You don't have to be a swimmer to benefit from the pool classes*



## *Prioritizing The Inner Person*

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



It is common for people to make New Year's resolutions related to observable activity, such as losing weight, eating better, exercising more, or quitting smoking. However, focusing solely on external goals can lead to a sense of emptiness and lack of fulfillment. This is because it neglects and fails to improve the real you, which is the inner person.

Prioritizing the inner person and not just superficial aspects of life when it comes to New Year resolutions is important because it helps us focus on our spiritual growth and personal development. By prioritizing spiritual virtues such as kindness, empathy, patience, humility, and devotion to prayer and reflection, we can align our goals with the teachings of our faith or our values and contribute to our overall wellbeing.

In addition, focusing on the inner person can have a positive impact on our relationships with others. By incorporating virtues such as charity and under-

standing into our resolutions, we can cultivate a more forgiving and compassionate attitude, leading to stronger and more lasting relationships with friends, family, workmates, and your community. It is these inner virtues that lead to more stable relationships and networks, according to Vicki Zakrzewski, a Ph.D. and education director for Greater Good Science Center. She has written about this topic in Greater Good Magazine.

Developing more kindness, patience, and humility can expand the circle of your influence to help others and improve the world around you. Zakrzewski shows how kindness and generosity have been linked to greater life satisfaction, stronger relationships, and better mental and physical health. When we practice kindness, we are more likely to consider others' beliefs and opinions, which can lead to a deeper understanding and appreciation of those around us. By cultivating patience, we can learn to listen



more attentively and respond more thoughtfully, which can help us build stronger and more meaningful relationships with others.

Humility is another important virtue that can contribute to stronger relationships and a stronger connection to the community. According to Tiara Blain, who holds a master's degree in psychology, and is a freelance writer for Very Well Mind (an online health and psychol-

ogy magazine) suggests in an online article that humble people are able to offer the gift of acceptance to others, which allows our protective walls to come down and fosters a sense of trust and intimacy. Humility also helps us become less self-involved and more attuned to the feelings of others, which can lead to a deeper sense of empathy and compassion. Blain says that "humility also helps in the development of self-growth and self-

awareness, because it allows one to rationally acknowledge ways in which they can improve themselves." This is because humility allows one to manage self-esteem, and become self-assured without boasting, bragging or looking for credit. It allows you to confidently give others credit and praise, which in turn builds relationships, all while recognizing the need for further personal development.

It is my hope that you grow and increase in your inner person for the good of yourself and others in this new year. Yes, strive for excellence in your observable actions, but equally apply effort toward those invisible virtues for the health of your inner person and the good of all.

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# Equity In Health Heals

by Jackie Warner

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



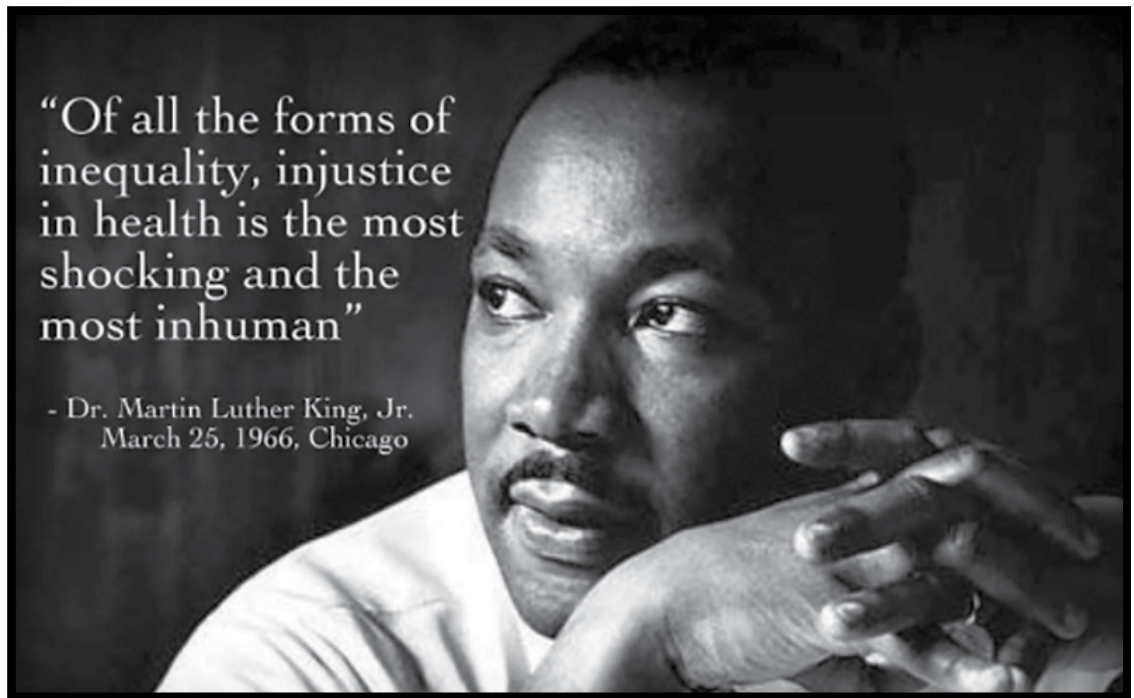
As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, I am reminded of his fight for healthcare equity. I share his quote from 1966: "We are concerned about the constant use of federal funds to support this most notorious expression of segregation. Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and the most inhuman because it often results in physical death."

Now fast forward to present day 2024, almost 60 years later. It was just a few days ago, I received a call that a family member was being transported to a local hospital for treatment, and when I arrived, I was asked to wait until all was prepared for a visitor in the ER. Once allowed back to the area, the nurse on staff was kind and seemed genuinely concerned about the care of my family member. I asked if the nurse would continue to be on shift, and they informed me that he only had about 20 minutes left.

About one hour later, I received a call from the next nurse on duty, stating that my relative was being discharged. I knew this could not be the case because of their condition, so I questioned the discharge decision, attempting to be an advocate to help since the patient was so sick. I was met with much opposition and disregard for the patient's health, saying that we would need to sign them back in if we wanted

any additional care. We then asked about the diagnosis and any testing conducted and was told we would have to request medical records once they were open, which would be in 3 days. I was upset and disappointed at the lack of concern, seeing the patient now discharged was seated in the waiting room throwing up with severe head pain. I asked to speak with the quality assurance representative on call but was told they had no one at that time. Another nurse came out and asked me about my association with the patient, and I explained who I was. Then I was told by the nurse they could not let patients just come here to sleep, and further stated they must have room for those who are really sick. Let's not forget this patient came via ambulance and was discharged without any prescriptions or real diagnosis for their condition.

After many attempts to obtain adequate treatment, which seemed hopeless, I told my relative I would take them to another health facility...And yes the relative was admitted to the



next hospital diagnosed with pneumonia. Did the patient not have pneumonia at the first local health facility? Of course they did, but my relative was discharged and sent out as if they were a homeless beggar on the street with no insurance, just looking for a bed to sleep in. Neither was the case.

The struggle is real and continues. According to a national survey, minorities say they have to speak up to get the proper care while being treated with less respect than other patients. I did not take the survey but sadly have witnessed

this too many times in our communities.

CDC says that to build a healthier America for ALL, we must confront the systems and policies that have resulted in the generational injustice that has given rise to racial and ethnic health inequities. I challenge all of us to be a voice on the side of right for equitable health removing bias actions.

1. Having an intentional understanding of the cultures from which your patients come
2. Avoiding stereotyping your patients; individual-

ize them.

3. Implicit biases (unconscious biases) are pervasive; we all have them, but they can be unlearned.

4. As with medication, the words we speak and actions we choose can heal or harm.

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

*Jackie Warner, Community Outreach Specialist*

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# Horses In Snow

by Deb Kitchenmaster



There actually is a poem written by Roberta Hill/Whiteman entitled, "Horses in Snow." You might want to check her out.

Let's ask the questions and look at the facts around how horses fare in the weather we are currently experiencing here in the South.

In the absence of wind and moisture, horses tolerate temperatures at or slightly below 0°F. Now if horses have access to a shelter, they can tolerate as low as -40°F. Imagine that. That is reassuring to horse owners in northern states but can challenge the mindset of some in the South. However, horses are most comfortable at temperatures between 18°F and 59°F, depending on their coat. The wind is a factor for the safety of your horse because strong winds can ruffle the horse's hair and disturb the insulating layer of warm air trapped beneath it.

How can you check to see if your horse is warm enough? Place your hand

up under the horse's rug and feel his shoulders and chest area, you can get a quick reading of body warmth.

What signs would indicate to me my horse is too cold? Shivering! Horses, like people, shiver when they're cold. They are working to try and keep warm but need help. A tucked tail can also indicate that a horse is trying to warm up. Like stated earlier, direct touch is a good way to tell how cold a horse is.

Keep in mind that horses acclimate to winter conditions extremely well but need to escape the bitter winds and moisture. This is a statement worth repeating. In cold temperatures, however, horses prefer and are better off outdoors. Important facts: (1) Provide water at a temperature between 45°F and 65°F to encourage adequate water consumption. (2) Feed extra hay. Horses often need extra energy to keep warm.

Let's look at horse blankets. A horse blanket or rug is a blanket or animal



coat intended for keeping a horse or other equine warm in the midst of wind, moisture, and colder temps. Examine the coat of ONE specific horse. If this particular horse has lost its hair coat, it is harder for that one to keep warm. The blanket will act as healthy coat hair, trapping in heat from the body. What signs do I look for to tell me my horse needs me to remove

the blanket? Is the horse sweating? This can be under the blanket, along the neck, or behind the ears. Other signs the blanket needs to be removed are if the horse is breathing heavily, there is a change in behavior, or if the horse is rubbing the blanket to try and remove it. Notice your horse. He may be whispering or shouting, but he is expressing to get your attention.

Recently, my granddaughter came down to spend some time with Grandma and horses. A moment I shall treasure forever is when we were going to check the mail together after we had spent some time with the horse in the barn and round pen. Out of the clear blue, she said to me, "Grandma, when I was on Ruie's back with my eyes closed, I told him, 'I trust you, I trust you, I trust you.'" I nodded. Then she broke the silence and said, "But I NEVER KNEW horses talk back." You have

no idea what was happening in this grandma's heart! We had never talked about this subject. Never! I had no words, just simply nodded my head in my granddaughter's discovery. After more silence, she said, "He told me, 'I trust you, too, Emma.'" Writing about horse blankets brought this tender moment to my pen with such gratitude and thanksgiving towards Emmanuel (God with us) who bring such revelations. Even to little people.

We see the value and importance of the horse's coat. Do you see the value and comfort of your coat? Your coat is a robe with many pockets, a robe of righteousness! Jesus who knew no sin became sin that we might BECOME the righteousness of God. Enjoy your horse, enjoy your robe.

*Your NEIGHbor,  
Deb Kitchenmaster*

256-426-7947

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





## 256 Youth Sports Spotlight

# Youth Wrestling Program Impacting Kids Beyond The Mat

## Mondell Hunter And North Alabama Elite Continue Shaping Youth Of 256 Area

by Adam Dodson - 256 Sports Radio

When Mondell Hunter moved from Kentucky back to his hometown of Athens, he had a vision of mirroring the success he found in The Bluegrass State with making a difference in the youth of the community through wrestling.

As his North Alabama Elite Wrestling program continues to grow on a yearly basis, so does his impact on the youth of the 256, the wrestling community, and the growth of wrestling at his alma mater – Athens High School.

According to Coach Hunter, what started with as a smaller group of participants local to Athens has branched out year-by-year to cover multiple portions of the 256, as well as across the state border into Tennessee.

“We have more kids – probably 65, 70 kids. We have kids on the waiting list, (parents) saying, ‘Hey, we want to join.’ A lot of people are saying, ‘Can we work with you all in the summer?’”

Coach Hunter was the everyday wrestling partner for Athens High’s current wrestling head coach, Andrew Campbell, during their time together in high school competing in the Golden Eagles program.

“Having that relationship with Andrew – he told me the reason he is into coaching is because of how hard I used to push

him in practice,” Coach Hunter said, who was twice a State champion during his run at Athens High. “He makes a lot of sacrifices for us – he stays around, makes sure stuff is open for us. There’s not too many things we have asked for where he has told us, ‘No.’”

In a previous interview with 256 Sports Radio, Coach Campbell emphasized his trust in Coach Hunter in running youth wrestling programs that directly benefit the qual-

ity of talent he puts on the mat for the high school level, where State championships are on the line.

“He’s crushing it. It’s a kind of family thing, because we have this big wrestling family that grew up together that has been doing it for years now,” Coach Campbell said.

However, the motivation for both Coaches Hunter and Campbell goes beyond the mat and into the real world – where manners, respect, and hard

work can get an individual far in life.

“We try to teach good sportsmanship,” Coach Hunter said. “Be that same person in the mat room that you want to be in the community. We have more than wrestling to offer.”

Congratulations to Mondell Hunter, North Alabama Elite Wrestling, and Athens High School for aligning in a way that can impact the youth of the community on a daily basis.

To find out more about North Alabama Elite Wrestling, visit their website at [naelitewrestling.com](http://naelitewrestling.com).

*Adam Dodson is the founder of 256 Sports Radio, which focuses on podcasts, radio shows, articles, & highlight tapes of the talented athletes & coaches of the Northern Alabama area. 256 Sports Radio can be found on their three major platforms of Spotify, Facebook, & Instagram.*



*Kid practicing wrestling move on Coach Hunter*





## The Alternative Approach

# The Silica Secret

by Roy Williams

In the Bible we learn that God created man from the dust of the earth. Ever wondered what dust actually is? After talking to a natural medicine expert, I learned that dust is a mineral called silica.

Silica is one of the trace minerals that is in sand, crystals, and some foods such as brown rice, cabbage, whole wheat, and one of the best sources for consumption is sugar cane. At one time the state with the least cavities, tooth loss, receding gums, and gum disease was Hawaii. In fact, gum disease, and tooth decay were so non-existent that there was practically no dentist in that state.

What was the secret? Almost the entire population chewed on sugar cane, which is very high in silica. Unfortunately, when it comes to the foods that are high in silica, such as those mentioned above, the absorption rate is so small that you would have to eat those foods with at least two meals every day just to get the amount your body requires. As a result, almost every American is deficient.

What does a silica deficiency look like? There are eleven levels of deficiency. A zero means you have no

deficiency at all. Level 1 – 5 deficiencies can cause hair loss, weak or brittle fingernails, and thinning of the skin to receding gums, tooth decay, varicose veins, spider veins, joint tenderness, and arthritis. Levels 6 - 11 your health is severely compromised, which may include irregular heartbeat, extreme fatigue, cognitive disorders, and autoimmune issues including psoriasis, Crohn's, rheumatoid arthritis, and even Hashimoto disease.

In order to help address a silica deficiency, some people choose supplements like horsetail. The problem is absorption. Most studies show that only about one percent of any of those supplements are actually utilized by the human body. That means you would have to take 100 tablets or capsules to absorb just one.

Back in 1958, a company called Positive Power Nutritionals developed a liquid called Super Silica that when added to water delivers 60 times more silica at a cellular level than any other silica product on the market. After 63 years, Super Silica is still their number one selling product and for good reason.

Drinking at least a half-gallon of water every day is now recognized as a must



do for anyone wishing to maintain hydration, support softer, healthier skin and help with detoxification. Using Super Silica is as simple as putting 12 drops in 16 ounces of clean water four times a day to support better health. It gives your water a really clean refreshing taste, almost like drinking water with a squeeze of lemon added.

Burt Golding has become a regular on our radio show called *Today's Health Update*, which can be heard on WKAC 1080 AM Monday – Friday from 9 to 9:30 a.m. in the Athens area and on WBTG 106.3 FM from noon to 12:30 p.m. in the Shoals. Burt is the go-to man when it comes to Super Silica, with over 20 years' experience. To hear him talk about this life-changing product simply go to [www.nhcherbs.com](http://www.nhcherbs.com) and scroll down to the microphone and click on the

program titled "Silica."

In today's world many people are suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia, bipolar disorder, and other cognitive diseases. One of the problems with brain function is flexibility. As we age and are exposed to heavy metals such as aluminum and unchecked calcium our brain becomes rigid.

Think of a jellyfish swimming in the ocean. It moves and pulsates in order to travel. A healthy brain functions in much the same way. Yes, believe it or not your brain must pulsate in order to function as God intended. Without enough silica, the brain, just like arteries, can become rigid, which leads to many disease related problems.

The same is true of ligaments, tendons, and joints in the body. When those parts of the body become rigid you will experience inflam-

mation and pain called arthritis.

It is now well understood that following the instructions given above, your silica levels will increase fast enough to reverse the deficiency by one level each month. In other words, if you are a level 5 with wrinkles, weak fingernails, and hair loss it may take five months to acquire enough silica to reverse those symptoms.

By supporting your health at a cellular level with Super Silica, you can be confident that your body can and will over time heal itself. To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herb Shop in Killen. Super Silica, so easy, and so affordable. Start today for a better tomorrow.

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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

## *Sweet Surrender*

by Anna Hamilton

*we are raised in a Christian household, we are taught from a very young age to be self-sufficient, to truly rely on no one but ourselves, that if you want a job done correctly, you do it yourself. So, how do you truly surrender to God? How do you fully trust in God's will? How do you let go of the reins and allow God to move freely in your life?*

*Those are all wonderful questions and ones I don't have the answers to. It is a constant battle for me to surrender control to God in my life, shoot, it is a battle for me to surrender control in any aspect of my life. Maybe it is a first-born problem, but learning to let go and let God is extremely difficult for me. I want to have my hands on everything that may be coming my way and in some way control when it happens. As a Christian that is not the way true Christianity works. God has taught me many valuable lessons over the years and that I am not in control, no matter how much I may think I am. I do know that God's plan is always better than mine, however, and I take comfort in that fact.*

*"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7 I have read this verse so many times but never fully let it sink into the wrinkles of my brain. Submit yourself...surrender yourself...and then the devil will flee from you. It doesn't say become a Christian and the devil will flee it says once you are fully surrendered*

*to God the devil will flee from you. The devil will know he will have zero power in your life if you are fully surrendered to God. Once you let God have complete control, once you are going to Him in prayer before every major decision and are fully submersed in His word every day, the devil will have a much harder time tripping you up. You will not fall victim to the tricks the devil will try in your life.*

*Full surrender to God is something you must do constantly. It is a work that you must continually do in order to stay in complete submission to God. I am truly working on complete surrender this year and invite you to join me on this journey of submission. God will reward you for your trust in Him and your life will be truly blessed.*

*This week's recipe is a super yummy take on salmon. A salmon filet can become a boring protein to throw into your weekly rotation of dinners, but this Honey Mustard Salmon is a winner for even the pickiest eater at your supper table. We enjoy this over a bed of rice and a simple side salad. Enjoy!*

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." Romans 12:1*


# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

**Mondays at 10am  
1080 AM WKAC**



# *E Is For EFT*

by Lisa Philippart,  
*Licensed Professional Counselor*



As a counselor, I make an attempt to be familiar with many forms of therapies. The more tools I have in my toolbox, the better chance I have of matching helpful techniques to the individual. So, today I would like to introduce you to an amazing healing technique that is easy to learn and can have profound effects. EFT, or Emotional Freedom Techniques, is based on the belief that the cause of all negative emotions is a disruption in the body's energy system. EFT works by tapping with the fingertips on various body locations. The tapping works to balance energy points, which become disrupted when the client thinks about or experiences

an emotionally disturbing event. The memory stays the same, but the charge is gone. The proponents of EFT believe that a negative emotion is caused by a distressing memory creating a disruption in the body's energy system, which then produces a negative emotion.

EFT is sometimes referred to as EEFT because it is a meridian energy therapy, like acupuncture. But instead of needles, we stimulate the major energy points by tapping on them. Tapping then sends kinetic energy through the energy system, clearing blockages, and allowing energy to flow again, removing negative emotions. To begin, take a

rating of the intensity of your distress on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being extreme distress. Now let's take a look at the process in 5 stages:

1. The Set Up: In this stage, you will either rub the lymphatic drainage point or tap the "karate chop point," while saying your set-up phrase out loud three times. The set-up phrase is a description of your issue in this format - "Even though (problem), I deeply and completely accept myself."

2. The Sequence: While holding the problem in mind, you'll tap 7 times in succession on each of the meridian points, and at each point, you'll repeat a shortened remind-



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er phrase of the problem.

3. The Gamut Point: The gamut point is located on the back of the hand between the knuckle of the ring and little finger. Tapping continuously on this point engages the two hemispheres of the brain and sets your system to working on the problem.

4. The Sequence (again)

5. Adjustment Rounds: If you do not achieve com-

plete relief in a single round, you can repeat the process, adjusting as follows - "Even though I still have some of this (problem) I deeply and completely accept myself."

At the end of the process, scale the problem again. Has its intensity reduced? For EFT to be effective, you have to learn the correct location of the tapping points. Rather than describe them here, I recommend doing a search for EFT tapping points' diagrams. Try to keep in mind that your issues are like puzzles. A problem may have many different aspects attached to it. So in some cases, collapsing just a few of these pieces can resolve the entire problem, by discovering the core issue.

The information on EFT is extensive, but I hope I have piqued your interest to further explore this technique on your own.

*Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor, providing mental health services through her own private practice in Madison, Alabama.*





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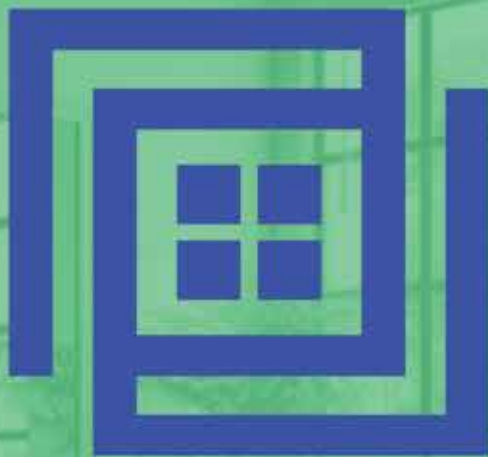
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	5	6		3		7		



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## ANSWER KEY:

1	2	7	6	3	4	9	5	8
9	8	2	8	7	5	1	6	3
4	2	7	8	1	6	5	9	3
1	4	5	7	9	8	6	3	2
2	7	8	6	4	3	9	1	5
9	6	3	1	2	5	4	7	8
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