

August 02 - August 15, 2024

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information & inspiration

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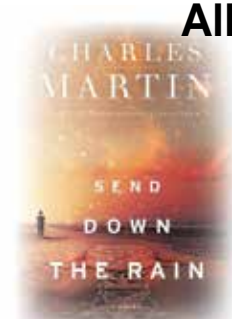


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## All Things Soldier

**For 'Nam Vets - Send Down The Rain...**  
I have been writing Soldier since March of 2011, and of all the nearly three hundred that I have penned, this is hands down the hardest one, ever...  
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## Savie Café: Innovative And Inviting

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

These days, the term "experience" has taken a front-and-center position in the language of our culture, whether it's referring to something as varied as a restaurant all the way to re-inventing oneself. In Deborah Thomason's case, it means both. Deborah got a degree in kinesiology, and traveled widely in the lower 48 while helping in her

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Savie Café, 7991 Hwy 53 in Toney

## Special Feature

**A Little Hope... Please?...**  
The last few days have had me running the gamut of emotions. From the attempted assassination of a former president to the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics...  
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## Cooking With Anna



**My Cup Is Empty...**  
I have an incredibly hard time resting. On top of not being a good sleeper, I feel guilty if I need to rest. As a woman and a Christian, the need to say yes and be available at all times is overwhelming...  
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Christie Smith of St. Paul School  
1900 Hwy 72 in Athens

## St. Paul Catholic School PreK-4 And Kindergarten

By Janet Kenney

St. Paul Catholic Church is expanding its ministries to offer quality Christian education for children ages 4-6 by opening St. Paul Catholic School this August. The school will begin with PreK-4 and kindergarten classes, gradually offering higher grade levels.

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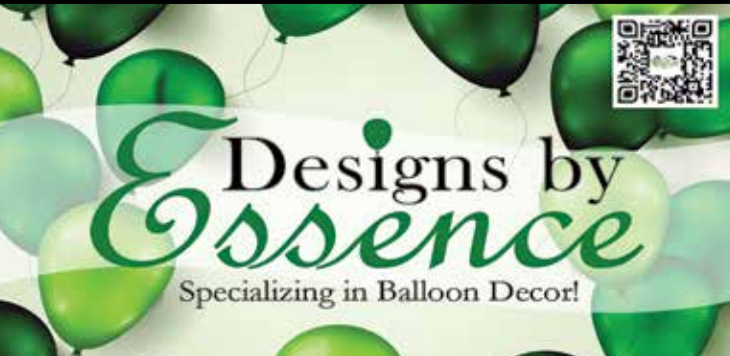
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**Publisher's Point**

*Olympic "Values" - Excellence, Respect and Friendship?*

This edition of *Athens Now* is understandably "Olympics-centric," as Paris 2024 has had a considerable amount of "the good, the bad and the ugly," and it ain't over yet. Phil Williams's column on the horrific opening ceremonies says it all, and by contrast the American women's gymnastic team, led by the resilient Simone Biles took the team gold essentially by a landslide. In every Olympic Games, there will always be stories of triumph and often tragedy. However, let me tell you why I am spending time praying for the athletes and the spectators at this year's Games.

When I came home from Iraq in the spring of 2007, I went through Europe, and learned something disturbing. There

were whole portions of Paris where the police *would not enter* because they functioned separately under shariah law. Kids wore T-shirts that said, in French, "2030, we take over." Now, I am not saying that none of this was addressed in the subsequent years leading up to Paris being chosen for the current Olympic Games, I am simply saying that it was an issue that needed to be addressed, and I pray it has been.

I remember all too well the Munich Games of 1972, when the terrorist group Black September killed 11 Israeli Olympians. It was mind-boggling then, and continues to be. No one in the West understood that there were those who truly believed such an act was

righteous, let alone that it was their sworn duty to wipe Israel off the map. Set against the backdrop of an athletic event that is supposed to transcend politics, and you have confusion of the highest order.

There was an attack on the rail system in Paris, and allegedly came from those of the far-left persuasion. Some think Russia was to blame, and apparently there is a goodly amount of evidence found in an apartment to suggest that there would have been further events designed to "destabilize the Olympics."

However, there are two other things that have occurred that have caused me concern. The first being that a man "identifying" as a woman got in the boxing ring and beat

the snot out of a female Olympic athlete in the name of transgender inclusion. How in the world does one justify this in an era where it is no longer acceptable for a man to beat a woman in or out of the ring, in the name of sport or not. Supposedly, nothing was caught ahead of the match for the simple reason that the passport used by the man who was a man at birth said "female." This guy was banned in 2023 for "competing" against women, but was allowed to compete as a woman in the Paris Games.

The second is that a Muslim judo competitor, when competing against an Israeli, finished the match with the famous saying "Allahu Akbar," which in most people's book was at the least, in poor taste. Interestingly enough, in the next match he suffered a dislocated shoulder, and was hollerin' in pain from the mat. All of this brings us to the title of this article, "Olympic Values - Excellence, Respect and Friendship." Will they ultimately prevail? Let us pray that they do.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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# For 'Nam Vets - Send Down The Rain

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



I have been writing *Soldier* since March of 2011, and of all the nearly three hundred that I have penned, this is hands down the hardest one, ever. I wrestled through tears because of knowing that I needed to write it, but having that knowledge and following through on sending this all over the planet are two entirely different things. You might be tempted to ask, "Why is this such a big deal?" Because it has to do with stolen valor, and while that singular disgrace happens in every generation, the stolen valor that occurred during the war in Viet Nam was particularly damaging, and nearly a half-century later, people are still crippled by it. And, for my part, I am wholly uninterested in causing pain. I've done enough of that, and "she that hath been forgiven much, loveth much."

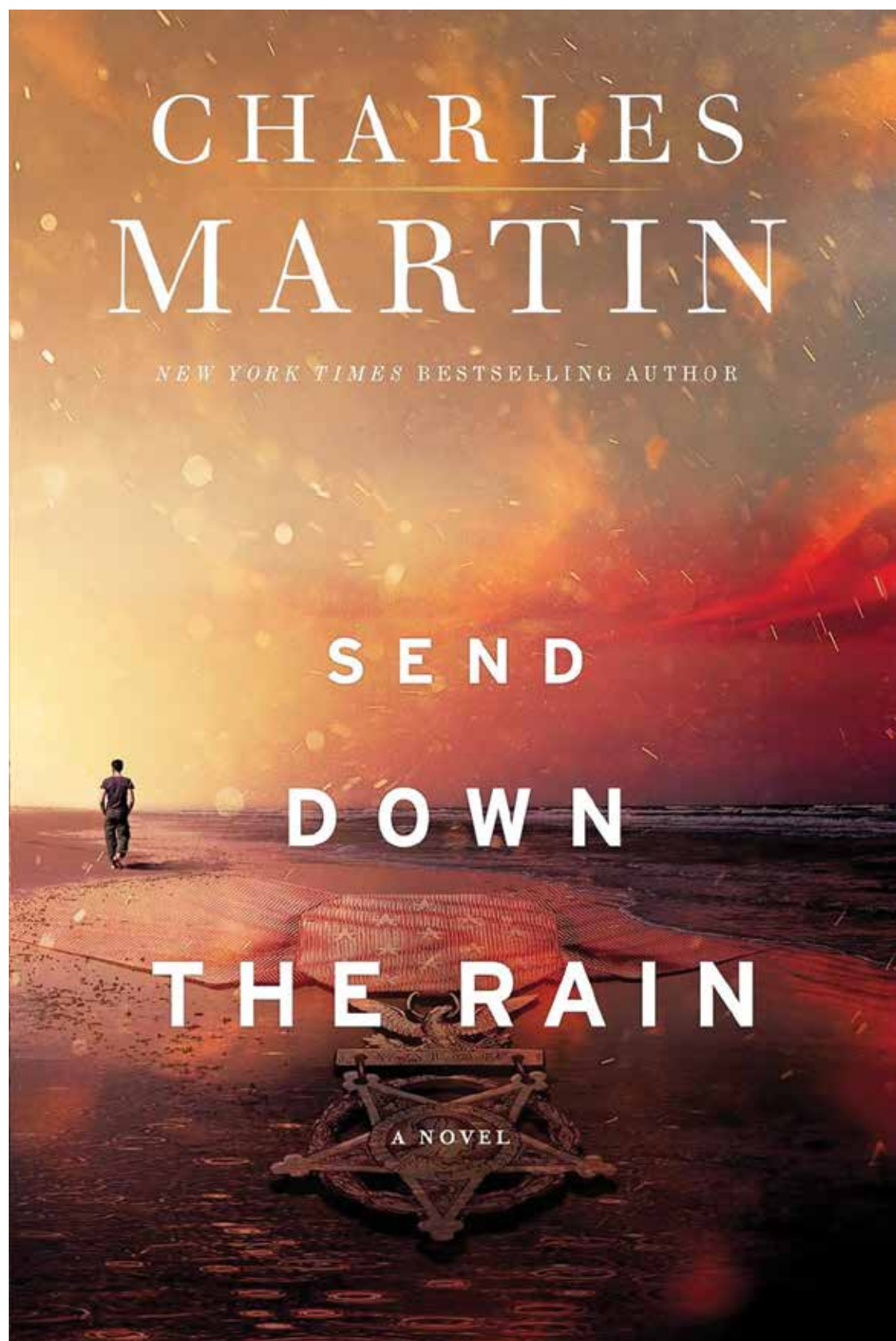
There is a marvelous and nearly maddeningly well-written novel written by one of my favorite authors, multiple New York Times best-selling author, Charles Martin. It is called *Send Down The Rain*, and in a word, it undid me. Martin is one of the best when it comes to juggling plots, sub-plots, and characters with colorful and complicated pasts. In addition, through each of his books, Martin weaves the gospel into what becomes a masterful tapestry. What is especially remarkable is how he

manages to do so in a compelling way that is also entirely human.

I promise that I will not give away much, but there is more than one character that looks like they could be the stolen valor "perp." And, in each case, the idea that they could have engaged in such a high level of betrayal of those who served honorably in a highly unpopular war is aggravating, to say the least. That being said, whether or not you served in 'Nam, this book is for you. If you were alive in the era, this book is for you. If you have a dad or an uncle or a grandparent that never has been able to say a word about the topic, this book is for you. And, if you know absolutely nothing about the times or the trauma that is uniquely attached to it, this book is for you.

If I were going to thrust a book into the hands of any 'Nam vet that may or may not be struggling with stuff that still isn't resolved, *Send Down The Rain* would be what I would use to open the discussion. And, it's not just 'Nam vets. I know guys who came back from Iraq and they are still broken. I would want them to read it as well, because the issues are timeless.

Charles Martin is in his early fifties, and could not have experienced any of what is in *Rain* first hand. I don't even know how he could have



listened to the stories of others, or researched deeply enough to be able to make you want to stay up all night and read in bed like a kid

with a flashlight. The book makes you want to get saved all over again, forgive everyone who has ever hurt you, and forgive yourself. Get it,

check it out, devour it, and then, go back and read it again. You will never be the same, and I think for most of us, that is a good thing.

# A Little Hope... Please?

by Donna Clark



The last few days have had me running the gamut of emotions. From the attempted assassination of a former president to the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics. I'll be honest, I've felt sorrow, shock, anger, disgust, and then feelings that I don't even know how to describe with words. What in the world is the world coming to?

Some of the past events really hit home when just a few nights ago my 7-year-old grandson came for a spend-the-night with Gigi and Pops. He shared with me a horrible nightmare that he had just a few nights prior. In his dream, an intruder had broken into his family's home and had killed his dad, mom, and himself. The only survivor was his baby brother. You might automatically think his parents should be mindful of the television programs he's watching or the video games he's playing but that reasoning doesn't apply in this case. This fellow's mind is on baseball, fishing, deer hunting, and beating me in a hand of Skip-Bo. Not from his surroundings at school either, his mom has made the choice and sacrifice to homeschool, for which I am so thankful. No, the thoughts that drove that horrible night came from the shooting of Donald Trump, and there was no way to shield a child from all the attention of the action from someone in a very dark place.

I watched a recap of the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics. A beautiful event with so many

talented athletes who have worked so hard and sacrificed so much, and this was the choice to begin the days of gold, silver, and bronze? I can't say with certainty that this was intended to be offensive to the Christian community, but sadly it was received as such and my heart grieves. BUT...I was reminded with all the evil that seems to be growing at an exponential rate, there is hope! And we are not to lose heart or faith! So, if you've been like me, felt a little like the wind has been knocked out of your sails from all the latest happenings, let me encourage you as my God encouraged me. In His word, He teaches us to "think on the good things" and that's exactly what I've attempted to do -- take a 180° turn and instead of worrying, wringing my hands over the worst, to look at the good!

On July 13, I had the honor of participating in a National Serve Day through my church. Our campus, along with 26 others and over 22,000 people, reached out to those hurting in our communities. As a national effort, over 2700 churches participated to bring hope to their needy ones also. Convoy of Hope partnered with us, and trailers filled with food and essentials were delivered. Those items were then unloaded, bagged, and distributed to those less fortunate. Widows, veterans, the elderly were helped along with lawn care and cosmetic touches to our schools as they prepare to begin the new school year. Letters of hope were written to inmates in our correctional facilities and care packages, including Bibles and words of encouragement, were prepared for women escaping abuse.

Our church was able to accomplish so much, and the feeling of helping others is beyond words. And while we were serving in all the areas and opportunities we were given, I heard about one of our local Limestone County churches that gathered on a Sunday afternoon and packed 70 backpacks with school supplies for less fortunate kids and 25 bags for teachers. Whether it's on a huge scale or smaller, it doesn't matter. People seeing a need and helping others is what matters. According to God's Word, isn't that what we are to be doing? Can I encourage you to do the same?

From July 25-27, our church hosted the Motion Conference in Birmingham, AL. Over 12,000 kids participated from thirty-two states and several countries. This younger

generation was there to learn about the relationship they can have with Jesus Christ and many accepted Him as their Savior. Their life is forever changed, and now they begin a relationship with a God who loves them immensely, understands heartache and pain, and is always present to guide and direct. Some of these kids are not in good places, the home life is less than perfect, and they've experienced hurt on many different levels. I was so excited to hear the report of the weekend...there is hope! A generation following us that will have the truth of God's Word active in their lives!

All the good that is happening, the work that is being done, helps me to focus on the positive things and not lose heart. I pray it does you too.

- Donna



# 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.

## 32nd Annual American Farm

### Heritage Days

### August 2 & 3

Limestone Sheriff's Rodeo Arena, 18032-18098 Buck Island Rd, Athens, AL. Tractor Ride, Fish Fry, Camping, Flea Market, and more! \$5 admission. Children 12 and under are FREE.

## Red Cross Blood Drive

### August 3

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Unit 51 will have a Red Cross Blood Drive at 25396 Airport Rd in Athens. There will be a health fair with food trucks. Vendors are needed for indoor spaces 8x8 for \$20. Free haircuts for veterans. For more info contact: Kasey Naves 256-729-5280 or kaynaves@ymail.com

## Barn Quilt Class

### August 3

9:00am - 3:00pm. Always wanted a barn quilt but not sure where to start? Join us for a fun day with Angie Thurman Barn Quilts. Participants will choose the size of their quilt, pattern design, and color scheme and Angie will lead us through how to create our barn quilt. To register, call 256-232-5510.

## Monthly VVA 511 Meeting

### August 5

The monthly VVA 511 meeting will be held at the Alabama Veterans Museum at 6 pm Monday, Aug. 5. Pizza will be served at 5:30. Door prize drawing.

## 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.

## Gettin' Dirty At The Library:

### Hummingbirds

### August 13

Limestone County Master Gardeners. Athens Limestone Public Library, 603 Jefferson Street, Athens. 11:00 AM-12:00 PM. Free and Open to the Public. Presented by Alabama Master Gardener Melissa Kirkindall

## FREE Saturday Workshop

### Fall Vegetable Gardening

### August 17

10 am. At Limestone County Extension Office, 1109 W. Market St., Athens, AL. Presented by Limestone County Master Gardeners. Find out everything you ever wanted to know about growing a fall vegetables: timing, preparation, care, best fall plants, and planting steps. Taught by Master Gardeners Owen and Allyson Hofer

## Summerfest 2024

### August 24

5:30pm - 8:30pm. Eastside Steps of the Limestone County Courthouse, 150 S Marion St, Athens. Join us for our 3rd annual summer concert on the square in downtown Athens. Bring your lawn chair and friends to enjoy a night of bands while we raise money for a great local charity. This is a local benefit honoring our community. Food trucks will be on the square and all the local brick-and-mortar businesses will be open. Our 2024 beneficiary is The Stacy Wolfe Breast Cancer Foundation. Please check out their website or facebook to find out more information about their mission. <https://www.swbcfoundation.com/about> We look forward to raising money for a great cause. - with Stacy Wolfe Breast Cancer Foundation.

## 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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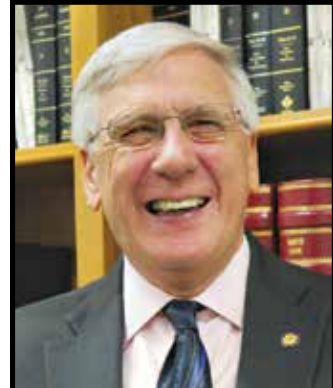


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## What Makes Ronnie Roll

# Not Getting “Tired,” And Taking The High Road

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



It was in August of 2011 that I first interviewed Mayor Ronnie Marks, and he agreed to be in *Athens Now* every two weeks in order to inform the people of Athens-Limestone County about what was going on, why it was going on, and more importantly, what made him tick as both the mayor as well as a man. And, it has never been a ploy or just a religious exercise to always include the fact that we pray at the end of our interview times. Both of us believe it is the most important part of the interview process, and many, many times I have asked God to protect Ronnie and his family.

Well, it seems that God heard, and the photo shows it. Ronnie, City of Athens Communication Coordinator Holly Hol-

lman, and the Chamber of Commerce’s Executive Director Pammie Jimmar were coming up I-65 from Birmingham after having attended an Alabama State Tourism event, when all of a sudden, the car began to shake terribly. Ronnie looked in the rear-view mirror, could tell that the tire was in trouble and pulled over in the far-left lane where there was not a whole lot of room. The illustration to your right shows a “terminally ill tire” that could have easily terminated everyone inside the city’s car. AAA came to the rescue, and everyone got home safe and sound. They were grateful and aware just how easily it could have been their last trip, anywhere. Just to be safe, because it appears that the tire



was faulty, all four tires are going to be replaced, and I am sure this is an expenditure over which there will not be any objection!

For this edition of Ronnie, we actually met right after the most recent Legislative Update held in ASU’s Sandridge Hall, and which was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, Morrell Engineering, Martin and Cobey, and Athens State University. We both felt it was one of the best of these types of gatherings in a good while, and time well spent for all involved. One of the prevailing themes was the concern

of each legislator that the citizens of their district have the right information, and all of it, for that matter, so they can make choices that make sense. It was interesting proof that people don’t have to agree on everything in order to work together well.

The excellence of each representative’s presentation moved easily into our second discussion, which was part two of John Maxwell’s most recent book, *High Road Leadership*. In it, Maxwell spends a goodly amount of time talking about the necessity of “High Road Leaders” possessing, devel-

oping, and improving both skills and values. One without the other will cause a distortion in the leader and potential devastation of those being led. “John Maxwell is an important read for ANYONE, especially if you are in a leadership position,” said Mayor Ronnie.

And then, for what has only been a handful of times throughout the years, we did not get the chance to pray together before it was time for Ronnie to roll. And I for one am convinced that God has heard the rest of our prayers, and I don’t take a one of those answers for granted.



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# The Power Of “Oh, Well...”

by Detri McGhee - CLU, ChFC



Looking back upon this week, I am reminded that there are times that it is harder to be a kind, thoughtful, patient, and cheerful person. Stress and fatigue are two of those triggers.

Stress comes from so many directions, and just as some stress is good, necessary, and profitable like the stress of the guitar string properly applied, when it is present in over-abundance, we can find ourselves acting in ways we wish we did not. Sometimes it can be embarrassingly bad, other times, just a cross or careless word that caused hurt where we meant none to be. That is where our level of *emotional intelligence* begins to become apparent to others.

I am helping a non-profit distribute over 2,000 books to children in grades 2 and 3. Reading levels among children are at dangerously low levels in nearly every school. This little book helps promote nutrition, good manners, thoughtfulness, friendship, and much more. We were supposed to have them delivered before school was out in May, but all 2,000 were delivered in damaged, torn-open boxes, most water soaked and muddy, as though they had been tossed in a shallow ditch before being thrown around from truck to truck before reaching my doorstep. All this in mid-May. The printing company blames UPS. UPS says the boxes weren't the right kind. So they won't pay the claim.



(I'm wondering what kind would survive such treatment!)

The publishing company I contracted with for the books won't reprint or compensate anything until/unless UPS pays up. So we are left with all the debt – everything pre-paid, of course -- and no books, and no replacement funds. Over 2 months now of being very patient, then moving to begging, pleading, speaking with attorneys, and placing numerous phone calls and messages that are never returned, we are now waiting to see if the state Attorney General's Office can help us. After that, only a lawsuit

remains. (BIG SIGH!)

So, my friend...WHAT does a truly emotionally intelligent person do? How would/should they respond? What response will guarantee that they are not later embarrassed or ashamed of how they chose to act? One very beneficial tool for becoming more emotionally intelligent is to remember to ASK and ANSWER that question *before* we act/react.

I chose this response: I looked at all my copious notes, asking myself, “If I were a very wise counselor and a client asked me how to handle this situation, what would be my great, wise, beneficial re-

ply?”

Well, the State Attorney General's Office asked me to allow 30 days for

them to get a response. So, I saw that I do have another few days on that potential source of help. And, a friend who lives out of state is ill and needs help moving. So I packed up my ditty-bag and off I went to spend about a week under even more stressful circumstances – but a much DIFFERENT kind of stress. I realized that sometimes helping others frees our energies and mind to creatively and patiently deal with our own problems.

It's almost time to return home, and see if the AG has been able to talk some sense into someone...and if not, then we take the next logical step, which is a lawsuit and the pain/delay/frustrations there. Oh, well...While this “mess” will cause me a few minutes of frustration each day I have to deal with parts of it, I am thankful that I have learned the power of “Oh, well...” It will not ruin my day! Or even hours. Because, I choose to not let it.

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# *God Will Not Be Mocked*

by Phil Williams

CNN was flustered and giddy, gushing that the 2024 Olympic Games “promised an opening ceremony unlike any other and it delivered.” “A Paris party on a Friday night.” Is that what it was?

Or was it a dystopian pagan nightmare on the Seine?

Olympic opening ceremonies are typically lavish and designed to inspire. They go all in celebrating on the world stage as premier athletes come together to compete on behalf of their nation. Legends are born at the Olympics with such famous moments as black American Jesse Owens defying Nazi ideology, or the 1980 “Miracle on Ice” when the U.S. hockey team beat the Soviets. Names like Mary Lou Retton, Sugar Ray Leonard, and Michael Phelps went from gold medals to Wheaties boxes.

The traditional parade of flags has been a staple since the 1908 Olympic Games in London. Athletes march together carrying the flag of their nation and celebrate their years of training culminating in one of the grandest of celebrations. France was not to be outdone for 2024.

And then it got weird.

This year’s parade of flags floated down the Seine River in pouring rain. Eighty-five boats carried the athletes and

their flags for the onset of the nearly four-hour montage of post-modernism. Then a single faceless rider on a pale horse seemed to ride on the water. Shades of Revelation 6:8 came to mind.

In what may have been a harbinger of things to come, the Olympic flag itself was then inadvertently raised upside down. But the night had only just begun.

The show shifted to the Palais de Justice where a heavy metal band played from various balconies while a convincingly be-headed Marie Antoinette sang to the crowd. When I say convincingly, I mean it. Her bloody head sang while being held by her headless body while faux blood fell in streamers on the crowd.

But the coup de grace came with the march of the transgenders. In an event that rivaled any scenes from The Hunger Games 18 drag queens performed a parody of the Last Supper. You read that right.

With the Eiffel Tower in the background, an odd assortment of writhing, bizarrely clad figures gathered behind a long table. A bearded dude in lingerie and large breasts sang a seductive song because, well, that just made sense. At the center of the disturbing mosh was one ornately clad figure wearing a large silver halo making the heart sign with his/her/

its hands while the rest of the gaudy disciples struck poses reminiscent of da Vinci’s portrayal of Christ’s Last Supper in the upper room with the actual disciples.

They weren’t done. A large gold-plated serving tray came to rest in front of the mockery of the Last Supper and when the cover rose ceremonially the world was treated to a man, naked but for the slightest of foliage, painted blue with dustings of gold, and a bright yellow beard. The naked Smurf man sang a song...sort of...in what is already being referred to as the “Blue Scrotum” performance.

The whole thing was cringeworthy. Bizarre. Tasteless. The focus was never once on the athletes who had trained for years and traveled from afar for the honor of competition. It was instead on hedonism, with every effort made to shock the sensibilities and offend the faith of billions.

Who came up with this? What planning sessions were given to devising this gawkish, pretentious assault to the senses? What were the discussions that led to it? Can you imagine being in that boardroom? “So here’s the plan, let’s do something where we capture a scene from the Christian faith but let’s do it with half-naked fake people snaking around in a visual acid trip and we’ll call it art.

Everybody good with that? Don’t worry about those Christians... It’s going to be magical!”

Thomas Jolly is the artistic director for the Paris Olympics. He effusively stated, “Above all, I want this ceremony to include everyone. We must all celebrate this diversity.” Somehow, he missed the mark, given the deliberate effort to offend the majority of the known world and the followers of the world’s largest religion. I’d say that Friday evening failed to qualify as a means to “include everyone.” By the way, Jolly is also in charge of the closing ceremonies.

Elon Musk posted on X, “This was extremely disrespectful to Christians.” I believe that was the purpose. Let’s just imagine what it would have been like had a group of transgender influencers decided to do a B-roll mockery of Mohammed, or Buddha. Paris would be on fire right now. But this one thing I do know: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” (Galatians 6:7)

Am I just not artsy enough? Do I lack a certain bon vivant existentialism that blooms from my inner self into expressions of preternatural wonder and self-expression? Dang right I do. And I’m good with that.

Let’s be clear. This was

not art. This was certainly not the Olympics. This was designed to be an in-your-face affront. But really, it was more than that. It was a spit-in-eye to Christianity. It was an assault on the senses, designed to shock, and to flagrantly denigrate the faith that makes us whole. Christians the world over should make their thoughts known about the sham that was the 2024 opening ceremony. But in the end, it was the portrayers and not the portrayed who will be at a loss.

God will not be mocked. Rest in peace Olympics.

*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

# Become The Expert In Your Life

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)*



Our thought process is detrimental to the quality of life we have. Whether our lives are good or bad, it all depends upon how we choose our perspective. Our thought process plays an integral part in everyday living, and your thoughts could be holding you back from living the life you desire to have. It is no secret that it is much easier to think negatively and to be negative than it is to be positive. It takes work to be a person not bogged down by the negativity of the world.

If you can control your thought process, then you can control the outcomes you get. I did not realize this aspect until later in life; and I wish I had had someone, anyone, who could have taught me this when I was younger. I believe we do our youth injustice by not allowing them to think for themselves. When they are in a difficult situation, instead of allowing them to figure it out for themselves, we too often want to jump in to help get them to the final result. Sure, they get to where you wanted them to be, but they have no idea how or why they are where they are.

I want you to think about the last time you faced a challenge but did not know what to do. Did you give up?

Just tossed your hands up in the air and walked away? Or did you try to figure out the situation? What was your thought process? I am a firm believer that too often we say to ourselves, "I cannot figure it out," and our brain says, "Okay, you cannot figure it out," and thus you cannot. However, instead of saying we cannot, we need to say we can. For instance, I recently had a friend looking to buy a particular brand of car. As he was getting closer to purchasing, he noticed this brand everywhere. It seemed as if everywhere he went, this car was there. Have you ever bought something, say perhaps a specifically colored shirt or a particular brand, and then afterward you started noticing the same item everywhere? The fact is that before

you made the purchase, your brain was tuning it out, but afterward, your brain was telling you to pay attention. Our thought process is no different. Instead of thinking you cannot figure something out, just ask yourself, "If I knew how to solve this, what would I do?" Amazingly here, your brain will allow you to find the answer. Now, this cannot be forced and, yes, I understand you can easily try to disprove this method, but remember, when you are trying to disprove this method, your brain is doing exactly what your thought process is telling it to do. You do not want it to work, so your brain will show you why it will not succeed. But change the thought process, and your brain will show you why it will succeed. Have you ever met

someone you knew you were smarter than, you knew you had more upstairs than they did, you knew you offered more than they brought to the table, yet they were further ahead in life? I guarantee you that their thought process is different than yours. The next time you face a difficult situation, instead of playing the victim, you need to play the expert. Ask yourself what the expert would do and then do it. Many times, we stand around scratching our heads reaffirm-

ing our disbelief that we cannot make something happen, and if we would change the mentality around, we would be actively changing our lives.

If we want to see a change in the success/failure rate, we need to change the way we view our thoughts. Instead of the victim mentality being accepted and taught, we need to teach our youth how to be successful. We need to teach them how to think instead of trying to dumb things down for them. I have learned a lot through the school of hard knocks, but the most important thing I have learned is controlling my thought patterns. I cannot determine the obstacles that will arise in my life, but I can make a clear decision about how I will respond.

The next time you are faced with a challenge, will you tell yourself you cannot, or will you allow your thought process to show you the way? Start thinking like an expert and watch your life change.

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## Clean, Green And Beautiful

# The Group “W” Bench

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

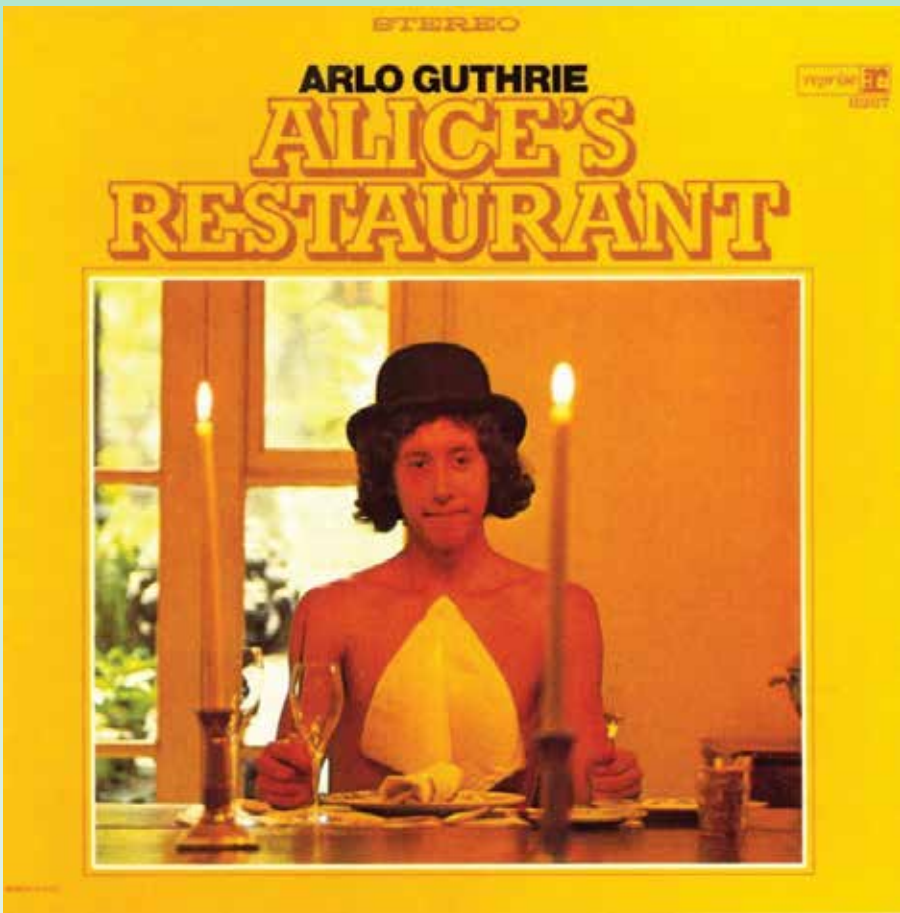
I wanted to take the chance to clear up any confusion from my last article. I referenced a song that told an amusing story involving littering. Arlo Guthrie wrote “Alice’s Restaurant” as a protest against the Vietnam War in 1967. So, what exactly does a song protesting the Vietnam War and the draft have to do with littering? This song is a quite satirical and exaggerated account of a true story of Arlo Guthrie’s experience. It’s also a rather long song -- over eighteen minutes of folk rock, talking blues.

This song begins with a Thanksgiving gathering of friends at their friend Alice’s who lives in the church. She has a large trash pile. So the friends, in their VW Microbus, decide to take Alice’s trash with their own to the dump, which is closed on Thanksgiving. They see another pile of garbage at the bottom of a cliff off a side road and decide to add their garbage to that pile. Being a slow day in a small town, this was portrayed as a major criminal act, they even took “twenty-seven eight-by-ten color glossy photographs with circles and arrows and a paragraph on the back of each one explaining what each one was, to be used as evidence against us. Took pictures of the approach, the getaway,

the northwest corner the southwest corner, and that’s not to mention the aerial photography!”

Arlo Guthrie and his friend were immediately arrested by Officer Obie because this was the biggest story in the town in many years. They were detained, but Alice bailed them out, and they went back to her house for another Thanksgiving feast. When they appeared in court the next day, the judge walked in with his “seein’ eye dog” -- he never looked at the “twenty-seven eight-by-ten color glossy photographs with circles and arrows and a paragraph on the back of each one explaining what each one was, to be used as evidence against them.” They were fined and ordered by the town judge to pick up the trash. I’m sure you’re wondering what in the world this has to do with the draft by now.

When Arlo Guthrie received his draft letter, he was sent to the Army building on Whitehall Street in New York City for his pre-war physical examination. He arrived hungover, and pretended to be homicidal so he would be found unfit for service -- his methods proved unsuccessful. After a while, he was asked if he had ever been convicted of a crime. He



explained the VW Microbus and the “twenty-seven eight-by-ten color glossy photographs with circles and arrows and a paragraph on the back of each one explaining what each one was.” He was sent to the “Group W Bench” with other criminals. When explaining his littering charge to the hardened criminals, he had to add “and being a nuisance” to be accepted on the Group “W” Bench.

When Guthrie saw one of the questions on the paperwork asked whether he had rehabilitated himself enough to join the Army since the crime, he highlighted the irony of having to prove himself reformed from a crime of littering while sitting on the Group “W”

Bench. Which is where we are -- Is a charge for dumping or littering worth tarnishing your record? Do what is right and put small litter in the trash can and take large loads to the dump. It is not expensive at all...

And just a tidbit of neat information, the church where Alice Brock lived was sold after a movie was made and it earned unwanted publicity. It changed hands several times but was

purchased by Arlo Guthrie in 1991. He converted it to the Guthrie Center, a nondenominational, interfaith meeting place. In later years, the Guthrie Center became a folk music venue, hosting a Thursday evening hootenanny as well as the Troubadour Concert series annually from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The Troubadour series helps to support the church's free community lunch program which is held at the church every Wednesday at noon. On Thanksgiving, the church hosts a "Thanksgiving dinner that can't be beat" for the local community. The annual "Garbage Trail Walk," retracing the steps of Arlo and folksinger Rick Robbins, raises money for Huntington's disease research. The disease was the cause of death for Arlo's father, famed folk musician Woody Guthrie, and two of Arlo's sisters.



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**Cooking with Anna**

## *My Cup Is Empty*

by Anna Hamilton

*I have an incredibly hard time resting. On top of not being a good sleeper, I feel guilty if I need to rest. As a woman and a Christian, the need to say yes and be available at all times is overwhelming. I know some people are great at being able to balance taking care of themselves and taking care of others. I feel deep guilt if I take time for myself, especially when I know someone needs my help. It is easier to continue to put myself on the back burner than actually stop and take care*

*of what I need. Just writing that out seems ridiculous.*

*I have a picture of a quote saved on my phone from American author Elanor Brownn, “You can’t pour from an empty cup. Take care of yourself first,” I know all of this to be true, so why is there so much guilt associated with taking time for yourself? That guilt you feel, the guilt I feel, is not from God. God wants you to be the absolute best version of yourself,*

*continued on page 23*

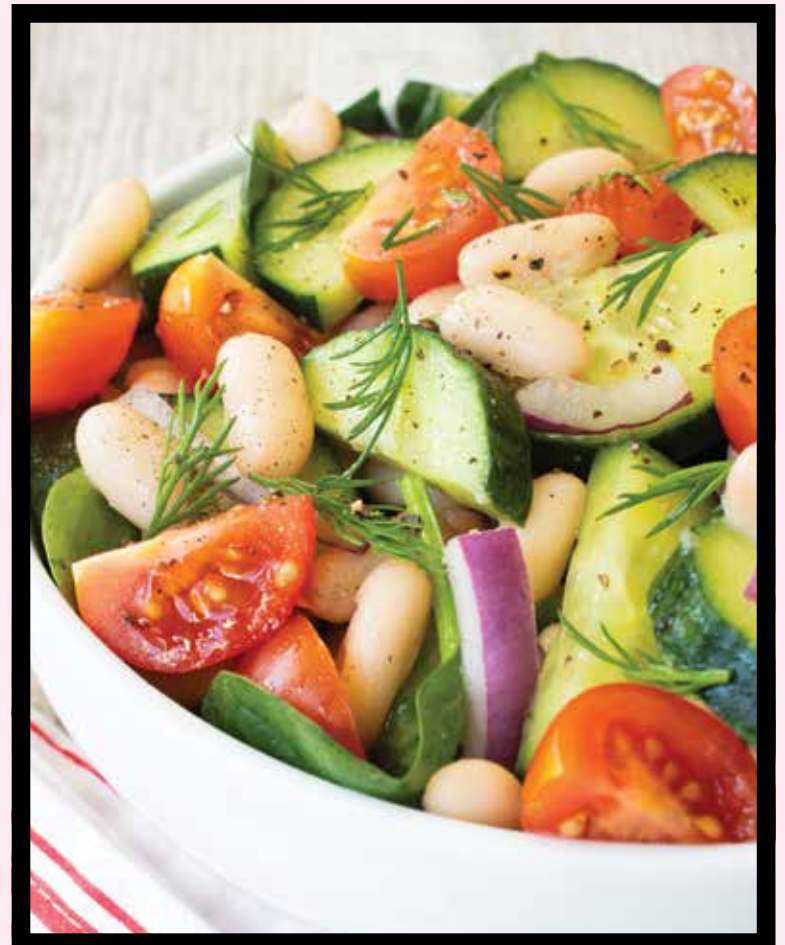
## *Dilly White Bean and Cucumber Salad*

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 garlic clove, minced*
- Juice of 1 small lemon, about 2 Tbsps.*
- 2 Tbsps. extra virgin olive oil*
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard*
- Salt and pepper to taste*
- 2 (15 oz) cans of white beans, rinsed and drained*
- 2 Persian cucumbers, thinly sliced*
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved*
- 3-5 radishes, cut into thin strips*
- 2 Tbsps. fresh dill, stems removed, finely chopped*
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced*

### *Directions:*

*Add garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, mustard, salt, and pepper to a small mixing bowl. Whisk well and set*



*aside while you chop the remaining ingredients.*

*Add beans, cucumber, radishes, dill, tomatoes, and green onions to a large bowl. Add the dressing to the bowl and mix well until evenly incorporated. Season with additional salt and pepper if needed.*

# The Sickness-Wellness-Fitness Continuum

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

The sickness-wellness-fitness continuum is a conceptual model that illustrates the spectrum of human health. It ranges from sickness through wellness to optimal fitness, emphasizing that fitness is not just about being well but represents an elevated state of health. This model is particularly relevant in the context of CrossFit, a fitness program that combines various elements of high-intensity interval training, weightlifting, and functional movements.

### Understanding the Continuum

The continuum can be visualized as a straight line: **Sickness — Wellness — Fitness**

**Sickness:** This end of the spectrum represents poor health, characterized by chronic diseases, obesity, lack of physical activity, and overall poor quality of life. Individuals in this state often require medical intervention to manage their conditions.

**Wellness:** The middle of the continuum represents a state of being free from disease and maintaining basic physical and mental health. People in this category might engage in regular exercise and eat a balanced diet but may not be pushing themselves to achieve peak physical fitness.

**Fitness:** At this end of the continuum lies optimal health and performance. Individuals here have not only avoided sickness but have enhanced their physical capabilities. This state is marked by increased

strength, endurance, flexibility, and a robust immune system. They are less likely to succumb to illness and recover more quickly when they do.

### CrossFit and the Continuum

CrossFit positions itself as a pathway to move individuals along this continuum from sickness toward fitness. The program's philosophy emphasizes the development of functional fitness through varied, high-intensity workouts. This approach is designed not only to enhance physical abilities but also to improve overall health markers.

**Functional Movements:** CrossFit workouts focus on functional movements, which are natural, multi-joint exercises like squats, deadlifts, and overhead presses. These movements mirror activities in daily life, promoting better overall body mechanics and reducing the risk of injury.

**High Intensity:** The high-intensity aspect of CrossFit workouts is a key factor in driving fitness gains. This intensity helps to increase cardiovascular fitness, burn fat, and build muscle, pushing participants towards the fitness end of the continuum.

**Community and Support:** CrossFit gyms, known as "boxes," foster a sense of community. This support system encourages individuals to consistently engage in workouts, stay motivated, and adhere to healthier lifestyle choices, all of which contribute to moving along the continu-

um.

### The Broader Implications

Adopting a CrossFit regimen can have profound effects beyond physical fitness. The program often leads to improvements in mental health, such as reduced stress, better mood, and increased resilience. The focus on measurable progress (through track-

ing personal records and improvements) helps individuals see tangible results, reinforcing positive behaviors.

The sickness-wellness-fitness continuum serves as a useful model for understanding health as a dynamic state that can be influenced by lifestyle choices. CrossFit, with its emphasis on functional movements,

high-intensity workouts, and community support, offers a powerful approach to advancing along this continuum. By striving for fitness rather than merely avoiding sickness, individuals can achieve a higher quality of life, marked by enhanced physical capabilities, mental well-being, and a greater capacity to enjoy everyday activities.

**SICKNESS-WELLNESS-FITNESS CONTINUUM**

WELLNESS

Based on measurements of:

- Blood Pressure
- Body Fat
- Bone Density
- Triglycerides
- HDL Cholesterol
- Glycated Hemoglobin (HbA1c)
- Muscle Mass
- Etc.

SICKNESS FITNESS

At any point in your life, the state of your health exists somewhere on a continuum that runs from sickness to wellness to fitness.

**Sickness** presents a scenario where health markers demonstrate a pathway toward disease and low functional competency. When combined with functional capacity, **wellness** represents sound health markers and shows progression toward fitness. **Fitness**, or super-wellness, demonstrates optimal health markers and a high level of functional capacity. **Markers toward fitness provide a long-term buffer against sickness, disease, and decrepitude.**

The **CrossFit** stimulus of constantly varied, functional movements executed at high intensity, coupled with eating mostly whole, unprocessed foods in quantities that support activity and not excess body fat, provides a great margin of protection against the ravages of time and disease.

Fitness is and should be a state of "super-wellness." **Sickness, wellness, and fitness measure the same entity: your health.**

A fitness regimen that does not support health is not **CrossFit**.

**CrossFit**

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# Savie Café: *Innovative And Inviting*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

sister's business. Eventually, she built her own highly successful fitness training business. She made fitness videos, had a TV show, large corporate accounts where she would coach employees, and was sought after as a personal trainer. She married, had four boys, and became a stay-at-home mom who homeschooled, and personal fitness training continued to occur occasionally and intentionally while she raised her kids.

Then Deborah found herself in the position of becoming a single mom, and had no desire to "go to work" and have someone else raise her boys. So, prayerfully she moved to the Harvest area from southern Tennessee, found a house that had a garage, which she then re-purposed as a fitness studio. Business grew to the point that she needed to find another facility, and not far was a much larger place that had been everything from a biker bar to a sales center for tornado shelters, located in Toney. Once again, after a great deal of prayer, she and the boys (along with some friends) cleaned up the place, hung out the Total Transformation Training shingle, and she was back to building fitness and changing lives.

However, the day came when, as much as she loved it, she just felt "done" with doing fitness fulltime. COVID had hit, business had dried up, and as always, she needed to consider the needs of her sons. Deborah happened to love Taziki's Restaurant and knew the owners well. She told them how when was younger she had thought about owning her own restaurant, and the folks at Taziki's invited Deborah



***Some of the Savie Café staff, left to right: Traci Taets, Callie Campbell and Deborah Thomason, owner.***

to come and apprentice. She learned everything from prepping vegetables to cooking to "all things restaurant business," and while she was not planning on opening a Greek restaurant, she wanted a menu that was fresh, and friendly, and a place that was "Cheers-like" and clean like "Monica-in-Friends-type" clean.

For a full year, Deborah researched names, and finally came upon the stylized spelling of "savvy" in the form of "Savie." Savvy can mean knowledgeable, wise, and in the Urban dictionary, "a girl who seems to have everything figured out, loves life, is adventurous, and flexible." Deborah will be the first to tell you that she does not have everything figured out, but she has a charming café by the name of Savie, located on Highway 53 in Toney. They opened in 2023, and besides the restaurant, she has a catering business, an event center, and is doing a bit

of fitness as well.

The menu has home-baked items, all kinds of coffees, frappes, smoothies, and kombuchas. There are muffins, bagels, croissants, and waffles. Flatbreads range from cheese to veggie to BBQ pork. Sandwiches and melts have exotic names such as Cuban, Sicilian, Phoenix, and good old-fashioned grilled cheese. Wraps range from turkey bacon and avocado to basil pesto along with hummus, the latter two being vegetarian. There are a lot of gluten-free options. And, as the menu promises, "any wrap can be a sandwich, and any sandwich can be a wrap."

Ahhh...and let us now talk about the desserts. Tiramisu cake, chocolate ganache brownie cheesecake, and for folks like me who can't do the gluten, there is Chocolate Dreamin' Cake, and that's just the beginning.

Deborah has a heart to train up young people as part of her staff, and she has high standards. First of all, I will tell you that the restaurant kitchen is so clean that it looks like it is brand new and has never been used. Everyone who works there adheres to what Deborah calls the "Savie Sparkle Policy," and it shows. When she hires staff, (and she is currently looking for a kitchen manager) she runs them through what she calls her Four Pillars of Success. They are 1. Be a good worker, 2. Be prepared to clean, 3. Have a positive attitude, 4. Be respectful of self and others. Deborah describes herself as a leader, not a boss, and while she requires her staff to address her as ma'am, she returns the favor. If they say, "Miss Deborah, I need you to help with XYZ, please," her response will be, "Yes, ma'am, I

am on it." If prospective hires are good with high standards, then everyone benefits, including the customers.

It must be working, because they have gotten more than 90 five-star reviews, and have only been open a little more than a year. It is worth the drive, and you will love everything from the "food to the friendly." Deborah describes it as the "Savie Experience," and it is my kind of place. You need to make it yours as soon as you can.

## ***Savie Café***

**7991 AL Hwy 53  
Toney, AL 35773**

**Mon-Fri 6 a.m.-2 p.m., Sat-Sun 8 a.m.-2 p.m.**

**256-836-2940**

**Saviecafe53@gmail.com**

**Facebook and Instagram**

**Savie Café**

## Trail Me

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



Some of the things I love most about Athens-Limestone (besides all y'all!) are the trails.

We have trails for just about any interest, hobby, time, and ability. I'm going to take the next few articles to outline some of the awesome trails we have, and I hope you take advantage of them. It's been such a rainy July, but that's actually fine—the weather is cooler than normal during these breaks in the summer weather AND we have plenty of “indoor trails” to do when the clouds just won't quit.

Firstly, though, let's go over some safety. I want you to enjoy the trails for a lonng... time. Oh, I know you are safe. You NEVER EVER say, “Hold my extra sweet Milo's and watch this!” But you can share these tips with other folk who maybe aren't as wise as you. The life you save

might be your friend who thinks they're immune to lightning and has a deep emotional connection with venomous reptiles.

1) Let someone know where you are going and how long you are going to be. Yes, you are an adult. Yes, this seems weird. But it really isn't. Even Special Forces guys on a mission have someone who knows where they are. Hiking round the Square is less remote than hiking barefoot to the Tennessee border on the Richard Martin, but it still couldn't hurt.

We once found a lady who had been with friends, took a bad fall, and broke her thigh. She was incredibly tough (serious props—not one tear, not one ounce of panic), but I hate to think what would have happened if she had been alone and no one had come down the trail for an hour or more.

2) Make sure you're outfitted for the trail, even if it's “just for an hour”: Water, charged phone, hat, sunscreen, medications you might need are the bare minimum, even if you're just strolling along Swan Creek after a fabulous supper.

Of course, if you're on our Biking Trail you need water, helmet, and a flashing light. If you're on our Antebellum trail, you need water, our Columns and Cultures map, and the link to our SoundCloud descriptions. If you're on the Antique Trail, you need water (getting the hint?), good shoes, a cleaned out car trunk, and enough room on the card for all the treasures. Maybe take 2 cards, you know, just in case. And some cash. And a check or two.

Regarding water: Bring it every time. Each person should have their own full bottle. Water

is good for everything from hydration to cooling down to rinsing a scrape.

But don't drink the water from ponds, lakes, rivers, or creeks. It seems so au natural, but so is giardia.

3) Be a good trail guest: If you're on a walking/running/biking path, remember -- “Heels over wheels.” That means things with wheels (bikes, etc.) have to give way to things with heels (people, horses). (Really, everything needs to give way to horses from a practical and safety perspective. My dad used to say “Tie goes to the big truck” and that's the same with horses on trails—you can try to not give way to a horse, but it will end badly.)

If you're on a bike, PLEASE get a bell and use it a good 30 feet away and keep on using it until you pass folk. I know you might feel weird, but weird feels better than traction. I can't tell you the number of times I almost caused a biker to wreck because they didn't announce themselves in time for me to comprehend. Please don't wait until you are right beside folk and scream, “ON YOUR LEFT!” It gives riders a bad name, and I love you 2-wheeled speed kings! I want us all to share the trail well!

4) If you're on any trail that might go through private property, remember to stay out of people's space. No one likes

strangers cutting through their yards. And peering through people's windows just makes things awkward for everyone. If you want to see the interior of an antebellum home, wait till the Parade of Homes or hang out at the Houston Library—they would LOVE to see you, and they have a super cool story about an upstairs window. Tell them I sent you.

5) Don't pet the wildlife, even if you really (think you) are a Disney princess. Don't stick your hands or feet where you can't see. Watch where you sit!

6) Don't eat the plants. Okay, some of us know edible plants, but save your grazing for a) where it's legal and b) when you ABSOLUTELY know what you are eating (I highly recommend UG White's candy counter for the consummate grazing experience). Too many experts end up getting their stomach pumped in the ER because they misidentified a mushroom or berry.

7) Watch the weather. Getting struck by lightning won't give you abs (a reference from The Flash for those wondering). In fact, getting struck by lightning will ruin your whole day. If you can hear thunder, even if the sky is bright blue above you, you can still get hit—lightning can go sideways from a cloud really far.

Okay, I think that covers the safety stuff for now. See you on the trail(s)!





## St. Paul Catholic School PreK-4 And Kindergarten

by Janet Kenney

*continued from page 1*

Many in the Athens community may only be familiar with St. Paul from the huge yard sale the church's women's group holds on the first Saturday in October. However, the "red brick" building on Highway 72 just south of Lucas Ferry Road has been there since 1992 and the Catholic community much longer.

Early in the 20th century, Athens' Catholics, composed of members of 18 families, worshipped in a small chapel at the corner of Coleman and Brown's Ferry. This was closed in the late 1920s forcing Catholics to travel by ferry to St. Ann's in Decatur. In the late 1940s, the S. Clinton St. home of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hatchett became a worship space on Saturday mornings with an altar set up in the dining room. After Mass, breakfast was served. This tradition of feeding spirit and body continues today through social ministries including an active and vital Hispanic Ministry, prison ministry, and participating in LCCI food ministry.

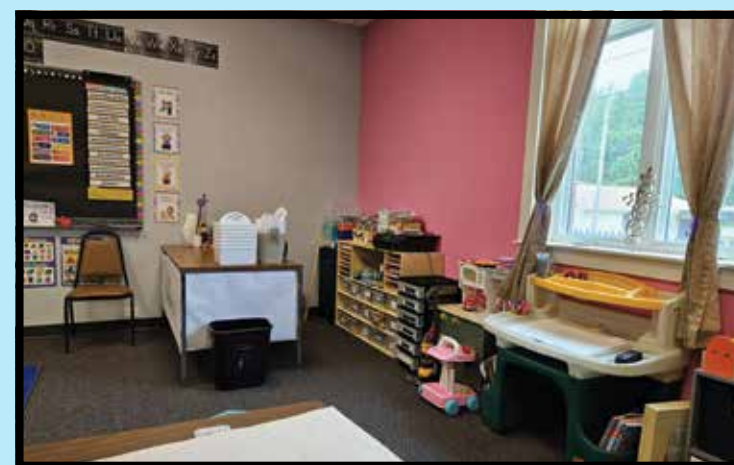
A mission church was constructed in 1959 on an acre of land on Highway 72 sold by the Charles W. Spencer family. This is now the current chapel, the small building next to the church. In early 1970, the actual St. Paul's parish was established under Pastor Timothy J. Hill. As the congregation grew from the original 18 families, various pastors began building programs culminating in the dedication of the current church in 1992. Architect Edward Arnold combined elements old and new in the church design, and since its dedication, each subsequent pastor has added to the church with items such as the Stations of the Cross, stained-glass windows, and beautiful pictures and statues. So, why is the church starting a school now? On August 26, 2012, the final piece of the St. Paul campus, the education building was dedicated. This red brick building faces the chapel. It has two stories and 13 classrooms. These classrooms are primarily occupied when religious education classes are held. Such classes serve upwards of 200 students

annually. With the Limestone County population expanding, as well as the congregation of St. Paul's Church, it seemed an opportune time to also expand the Church's educational ministry as well.

A pilot program was conducted during the 2023-2024 school year serving three preschool students. Now, a full day PreK-4 class and kindergarten will be available. St. Paul Catholic School will follow the Athens City school schedule with school opening on August 7. Kindergarten students will benefit from the 40 years of experience of teacher Mrs. Patsy Kobs, who is excited to be back in a kindergarten classroom. "I absolutely love kindergarten students. We will be starting classes by reading the Creation Story. Each student will create an art booklet with one page for each day. Each page will use a different art technique." PreK-4 students will enjoy the enthusiasm and humor of Mrs. Christie Smith. Mrs. Smith and her husband, Matthew, who is former military and works at Redstone Arsenal, have two girls ages 4 and 8. She received her degree



Veteran kindergarten teacher, Pats Kobs



from St. Petersburg College in Florida. Mrs. Smith's excitement in starting a brand-new class in a brand-new school can be seen in the classroom she's developed. "My students will enjoy the colors and different learning spaces as well as a variety of activities to keep them learning but also having fun. For young students, associating learning with fun is essential."

The new school will serve not just Catholic families but also families looking for a whole-child, Christian education in a small setting. "Our goal is to educate the whole child -- academically, spiritually, and socially," director Dana Wolfe declares. The maximum class size will be 12. Seats are still available. Small classes and dedicated regular teachers will

be supplemented by reading specialist Dr. Sue Whitcomb, who was the teacher for the pilot program. Dr. Whitcomb has years of experience and multiple degrees in teaching reading but also will offer other enrichment activities.

There will be an open house and blessing of the classrooms on Sunday, August 11, at 1:00PM. All are invited. Inquiries concerning the school may be directed to [dana.wolfe@stpaulcatholic.school](mailto:dana.wolfe@stpaulcatholic.school). 251-978-6759.

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## Learning As A Lifestyle

# *The Essential Fusion of Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, and Ethics in Today's Organizations*

by Eric Betts, Assistant Professor | Course Developer, Hampton University School of Religion



Leadership and emotional intelligence are increasingly recognized as essential components of effective management and personal development, not just in corporate settings but also within the clergy and religious community leaders. Emotional intelligence—the ability to recognize, understand, and manage our own emotions while empathizing with the emotions of others—is crucial in these contexts as well. Leaders who possess strong emotional intelligence can connect with their team members and congregants, understand their feelings, and foster an

inclusive and supportive environment. This emotional acumen builds trust and respect, vital elements in any ethical relationship, whether in a workplace or within a spiritual community. Emotional intelligence can be cultivated through self-awareness, active listening, and disciplined practice in emotional regulation. According to Daniel Goleman, a leading expert in the field, leaders—especially in the religious community—can harness these skills to create positive environments and increase engagement, leading to improved productivity and morale. To develop the discipline of emo-

tional regulation, one can practice mindfulness to recognize and understand emotions as they arise, set personal boundaries to manage emotional responses, and engage in regular reflection to assess emotional triggers and responses. By incorporating these strategies, individuals can enhance their emotional regulation and contribute to a more supportive and engaged community. It is worth mentioning that the phrase "emotional intelligence" was popularized by Daniel Goleman in his 1995 book.

Ethics also play a pivotal role in leadership, closely intertwined with

emotional intelligence. Ethical leadership involves being aware of one's values and demonstrating integrity in decision-making and interactions. Leaders who exhibit emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate ethical dilemmas, as they can assess the emotional impact of their decisions on various stakeholders. Michael E. Brown and Linda K. Treviño, researchers in the field of business ethics, emphasize that leaders who prioritize ethical standards and demonstrate emotional insight foster a culture of ethical behavior within their organizations.

Misinterpretations and stereotypes can significantly hinder effective leadership, resulting in toxic workplace cultures. When leaders fail to exhibit emotional intelligence, they risk alienating team members, leading to misunderstandings and a lack of cohesion. Research indicates that emotionally intelligent leaders can break down stereotypes and foster a sense of belonging among diverse teams. According to a study by John D. Mayer and his colleagues, emotional intelligence training can mitigate biases and enhance interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

In conclusion, the intersection of leadership, emotional intelligence, and ethics is critical for cultivating personal relationships in any setting. Leaders equipped with emotional intelligence not only achieve better interpersonal dynamics but also promote a more ethical and effective organizational culture. As organizations continue to embrace the importance of these attributes, they are more likely to succeed in today's diverse and rapidly changing environments. The perspectives of noted experts in these fields provide valuable insights into the ongoing discourse surrounding these vital skills.



# Space For What's Important: *Prevent Paper Piles*

by Sonya Fehér

We've been talking this summer about how to declutter paper in "Say Goodbye to Paper Clutter" and we covered how to opt out and go paperless in "Keep Paper Clutter from Coming In." But paper will come -- mail, school assignments, artwork, and bills.

So, your next step is to prevent these from turning into paper piles on your counters, dining table, and any other available flat surface.

Believe it or not, you can prevent paper piles in three simple steps:

## 1. Pick the time to process mail and paper

While you might need to check mail daily, you get to choose when to process it. Place an inbox near your main entry so paper has a place to live until you have time to deal with it. Set aside time to process mail and take follow-up action. This could be once a day, once a week, or even once a month if you've got your bills on autopay. Remember, going through the mail and acting on it are different steps.

## 2. Set up a space for paper processing

Create a space in your entryway, office, or another convenient spot for processing papers. You'll need an inbox and a desktop file box for action files.

Besides an inbox to hold the paper until you process it, you'll want a desktop file box for ac-



tion files. Part of what creates paper piles is the need for follow up. To keep from building up those piles, your desktop file box is a place for those action items to live until you act on them.

A desktop file box is a mini filing cabinet, which you can easily transport. I recommend a box with a lid, so the paper is out of sight when you're not actively dealing with the mail. Find these in office supply stores, at Walmart, Target, or on Amazon in an assortment of colors and materials to match your décor.

Set up your file box with folders for actions you need to take, such as:

- **To Process:** If you don't need a separate inbox.
- **To Mail:** For stamps, envelopes, address labels, and a checkbook.
- **To-Do files by action:** Create files with specific types of to-dos like To Pay, To Call, To Go (for errands), To Read, To Write, To Buy, etc.

- **To File:** For papers you need to reference, stored separately.

You'll also want a trash can, recycling bin, and a shredder or shredding bin nearby.

## 3. Process your paper

To keep paper from piling up on surfaces or in your new handy dandy desktop file box, you actually need to process it. You might do this all at once or pick separate times to complete each step.

First, you'll check the mail when you have time to process it. If you can't process it immediately, place it in an inbox or the "To Process" file in your file box.

Next, sort through mail and other papers into recycle, shred, and trash. Place any remaining paper into action files or take the required action immediately.

The key is realizing that different actions take distinct types of energy and time. They might even require you to be in various places. The point

file and log into payment portals or put checks into envelopes. You might make phone calls and set appointments.

By organizing your actions this way, you can streamline your paper processing and keep piles from building up.

Next up, we'll talk about the paper you need to keep in reference files and how to create and maintain a filing system.

If you have questions about how to handle any part of your paper decluttering and organizing, send your questions to [sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com](mailto:sonya@spacewiseorganizing.com) and I'll answer them in our next column.

*Sonya Fehér*

*Organizer, Coach, Author, & Speaker*

<https://spacewiseorganizing.com>

# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

## Mondays at 10am 1080 AM WKAC

# Snake Bite!!!

by Joel Allen



Hello, folks and how are you? Years ago, I had a Dane named Reagan and yes, he was named after President Ronald Reagan. He lived with me for a year or two until he decided he loved the McNeals more than me and wanted to go live with them. They loved my boy Reagan and took great care of him. One day he got sick and they took him to the vet. The vet discovered he had been bitten by a snake, so they searched the yard but never found the snake. That's what most of us do when we think that a snake has bitten one of our dogs or children, and the likelihood of the

snake sticking around is never good. But they treated Reagan and he seemed to get better at first, and then he passed suddenly. All I could guess, because I have seen dogs do this, is maybe Reagan had eaten the snake and possibly the poison from the snake's head had gotten into his body. I am not a vet, so I don't know. It's just a logical guess on my part because we never found the body of the snake, and I have seen dogs eat snakes.

So, why do I share this story? Yep, you guessed it; my boy Felix, was just bitten a couple weeks ago by a snake. I learned a few things

from the vet I had no idea about. First was that a poisonous snake bite will swell up at the bite location depending on how much venom they give. A poisonous baby snake will give more venom off than an adult, so they can be more lethal. I learned that a nonpoisonous snake bite will not swell unless due to bacteria, and that antivenom is more costly than the slower treatment with antibiotics and cream. Because of my budget we had to choose the steroids, antibiotics, and cream.

The vet told me what to expect and described everything in detail.

He stated that it would be a couple of days before the swelling would subside and the bite area would open up and drain, not to panic. He told me that once this started happening, Felix would start to heal. Well, everything happened just like he stated, and I worried but he is on the mend. He lost his appetite for a bit but he has that back, and he kept drinking water which is always a good sign.

The part that convicts my heart is this could have been avoided had I paid more attention to my back yard. I let the grass grow a bit and gave the snake

a place he should not have been. Felix's right back leg was the bite location, so all we could guess is that he stepped on the snake. The vet said that most snake bites on dogs happen on the face or chest area because they are usually facing them. A bite like Felix showed that he most likely stepped on the critter and got "what for" as a result. "No steppy on the snakey!"

I want everyone to know, you should spend the couple of dollars in gas to keep your yard up to prevent something like this, and you might not have to spend an additional \$300 plus like I did. Besides, your dogs will love a clean, open place to play, and it will keep your family safe too.

All right, folks, I hope you all have a safe ending of the summer. Back to school is coming and those canine family members are going to start missing their kids soon enough. Be safe and see y'all next month.

*"Remember to love your dogs because they love you. Maybe not the way you want them to, like chewing up your favorite shoes or what not, but that is just love chewing. Be thankful for the time you have with them always."*

**Joel Allen**  
**ABC Certified**  
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## The Alternative Approach

# It Had To Be This Way

by Roy Williams



Why didn't Trump force a count to prove that he got more votes than Biden? Today I will explain why "it had to be this way." Our freedoms are, and have been for some time now, under attack by the deep state. The deep state is a group of elites, evil, immoral people whose goal is and has been to destroy life as we know it in America.

All the information is finally coming out about the 2020 election showing that the outcome was a complete fraud. The election was manipulated to fool the American public into believing that Biden actually received more votes than Trump did. The evidence is overwhelming to the contrary. Millions of fake ballots were manufactured, counting was stopped and postponed for hours giving them time to cheat. Voting machines tampered with to show Biden votes, when in reality they weren't. News media groups reporting false information.

So, that brings us to the question, why didn't Trump fight to stop the elections and demand a recount? Believe me when I tell you this. Trump did not prove the elections were rigged because he had to prove to the American



public just how corrupt the entire political system has become. As an example, imagine that you have been educated by a very large and prestigious school. You have your diploma and it has helped you land a very impressive job with a reputable company. One day someone tells you about some of the egregious things that goes on at that college.

Of course, your first response is you find it hard to believe what they were telling you. A few months go by and they continue to show you more and more proof that the college was definitely involved in things that were against everything you stand for. You still cannot find it within yourself to believe what you are hearing. Fi-

nally, they begin to bring you proof that's easy to see and slowly you begin to understand. The pieces of the puzzle begin to come together. Then another source begins to report about the illegal and immoral activities going on at the university showing absolute proof of their involvement.

Even though it was extremely hard to accept, over time and an onslaught of information you begin to accept the undeniable truth. It hurts your feelings; you are a little embarrassed how gullible you were but you finally accept the facts. You stop all your support for the college and the people running it.

Trump understood that if he had simply claimed what our nation's leaders were doing without proof and enough time for it to be accepted by the public, nothing would change. If, at the time of the election he had forced a lawsuit and told what was actually going on, most Americans would not have accepted it. He also understood that if over the first three years the Biden administration

was in charge, they could slowly leak the truth, show examples and finally expose the proof, that the public would accept it. That is exactly what he and the patriots have done.

Sometimes, getting in people's faces and yelling at the top of your lungs, even though it is the truth, they simply aren't ready to accept it. He realized that it had to be gradual exposure for the public to understand exactly what was going on behind the scenes. He knew that with enough time and exposure the truth would surface and the public opinion would change. And that is exactly what has and is happening. The Bible says, "Let those that have ears to hear and eyes to see know the truth." The true meaning of that statement is that, until our eyes are ready to see and our ears are ready to hear, the truth will not be accepted.

Over the last three and a half years, the public has been allowed to feel the pain, experience the results, and learn the cost of what the Biden administration has done. The pain and the price have given

us ears to hear and eyes to see. The results are becoming self-evident. Our borders are wide open costing the tax-payers billions of dollars, cost of living has almost doubled, inflation is through the roof, crime rates are unacceptable for most of us, our schools are failing, our children are under attack, child molestation is chronic, child trafficking has spread all over the world, healthcare costs are unsustainable, and we can't believe our own elected officials because they have either been paid off or are being blackmailed.

Just as sure as the deep state is trying to destroy our freedoms, big pharma and the medical establishment are trying to destroy your rights to select and use natural products that in many cases are more effective and less expensive than treating the symptoms of disease, which is all they offer. At NHC Herb Shop in Killen and Herbs & More in Athens you have access to the most effective supplements ever formulated. On top of that, we offer over 50 years of accumulated experience, and we do not charge for our time or instructions.

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Abbie Cooper



Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

## *My Cup Is Empty*

by Anna Hamilton

*and He knows that to do that, you must take care of yourself. That “run-ragged” feeling comes from Satan. It comes from a world that places unrealistic expectations on us. In order to take care of others in your life, you must take care of yourself.*

*In Genesis, the very beginning of the Bible, God created everything we know in this world and beyond. After His work was complete, God rested. He took the time to recover from work. “By the seventh day, God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day, he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.” (Genesis 2:2-3) If the creator of everything knew to rest, what makes me think that I can keep going without rest? How silly!*

*Jesus knew that taking care of himself was very important. He knew that he needed time to rest and reflect without the noise and distractions of the world. At the end of Mark 4, Jesus makes the decision to get in a boat and retreat to the other side of the lake, even when he knew the crowd was still wanting to hear him speak. During his rest, a terrible storm rained down on the boat he and his disciples were on. Jesus continued to sleep on the boat that was tossing back and forth. Everyone around him felt like they needed him to do something for them, but Jesus knew how important rest truly was. Once awakened, Jesus commanded the wind and waves to be still, and everything was calm once again. Everyone was then able to rest. God wants us to use the times of rest to draw*

*closer to him. When we rest properly, we can use the time for self-reflection. We can use that time as a time for prayer. We can use that time for sleep. We can use that time to strengthen our body with exercise so we will be fit to work for the Lord. We need to use that time to renew our mind. Romans 12:2 says, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test what God’s will is: his good, pleasing, and perfect will.” By taking the time to rest, your spirit is renewed and ready to serve God to your absolute best ability. When we don’t take time to rest, we will not be able to serve God with all our hearts and minds.*

*I am trying to make a mid-year resolution to take time for myself. To take time to rest and renew my body, mind, and spirit. To make sure I don’t run myself completely ragged. To know that it is okay to say no, and it is okay to sleep! I hope you will take time to learn to rest as well. Take time to renew your mind and spend time with God.*

*This week’s recipe is a spring and summer salad that will be on your menu rotation every week. It is packed with garden fresh veggies and makes the perfect meal on its own or pairs perfectly with chicken, steak, pork, or seafood. Give it a try; I am sure you will love it!*

*“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; for God’s temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.” I Corinthians 3:16-17*

# Unhealthy Relational Patterns

by Lisa Philippart,  
Licensed Professional Counselor



**“It’s better to be healthy alone than sick with someone else.”**

- Phil McGraw

Emotional attachment is one of the most important capabilities we possess. Emotional attachment is defined as an emotional bond we form with someone at any time in our lives. The most common concerns brought to my attention during counseling sessions revolve around the development of positive and negative attachments. Unfortunately, someone with meager attachment skills often has developed unhealthy relational patterns, which are characterized by poor boundaries, poor personal insight, and poor judgment. These clients ask me to explain what unhealthy relational patterns look like so

they can begin to understand how to “attach” in a healthy way. I believe there are five patterns or limitations that are common to those with attachment challenges:

1. Those who become too close too soon. This is part of setting up and maintaining appropriate boundaries. Have you heard or said anything like, “I know I’ve only known him for two months, but...?” Relationships take time to form and develop. It’s okay to connect with people and enjoy connecting with new people. But red flags should be raised when you or someone you know is too emotional or connects too fast with nothing but shallow interactions.
2. Those who go to great lengths to be close to anyone positive. Some people seek to enthusiastically connect with those in perceived power.

I’m sure you know people who love to be surrounded by authority figures, actors, politicians, supervisors, professors, doctors, or administrators. Their “power” causes individuals to either become romantically involved or believe they can receive some kind of love or affection, or even a transfer of that power. People with this skewed relational view taken to the extreme become stalkers.

3. Those who overidentify with strangers. These are people who attach themselves to others who show them the slightest amount of attention or affection. This leads to believing that all encounters are closer than they really are. As a therapist, I have had clients who desire a close relationship to a parent so much that they begin to see me as fulfilling that parental role. I have



had to maintain appropriate boundaries so that neither of us gets sucked into that emotional neediness. (Think: Bob in What About Bob?)

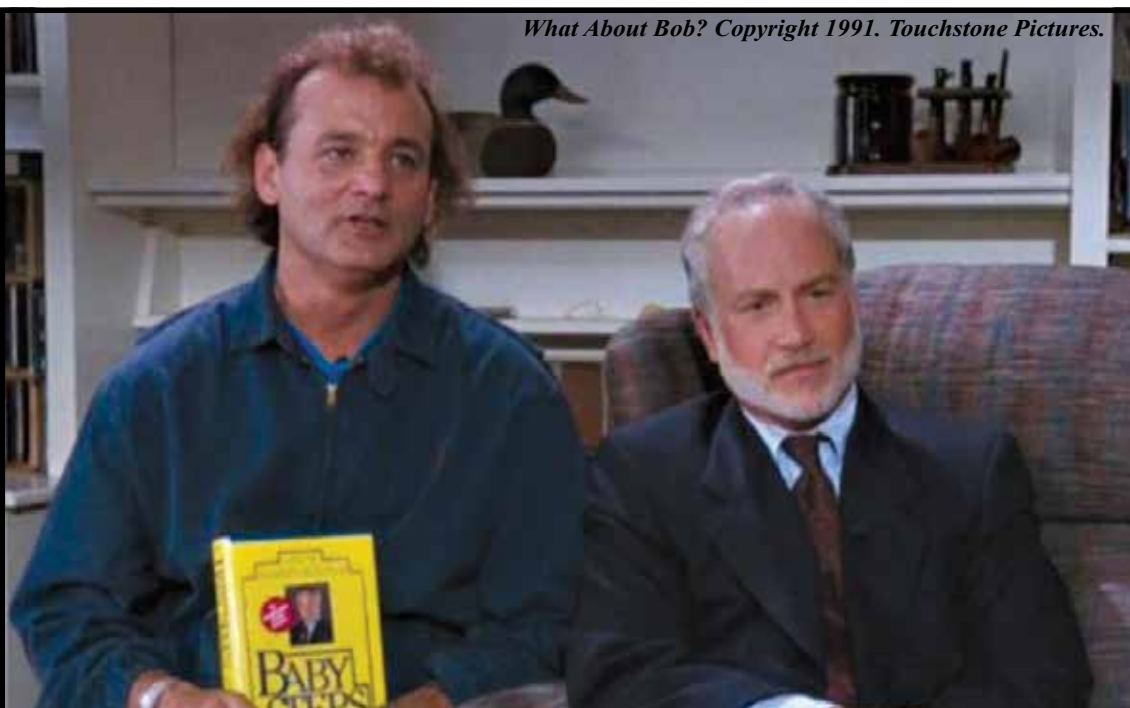
4. Those who become clingy. This is emotional attachment to the extreme. These are people who think they cannot live without a certain person, and that their connection is somewhat “divine.” There is a delusional element to their emotions, which tends to distort the reality of the relationship. A person who is clingy needs someone else to meet his or her needs in that relationship, which will never be enough. Sadly, these people are starving for a connection that they won’t be able to experience.

5. Those who get sucked into the status quo. If you lack an identity, or

a certain level of self-confidence, you will be forced to seek people to mimic or emulate. Such individuals might pursue ways to fix personal flaws or seek friends who are attractive. They make a lifestyle out of pursuing things that keep them attractive and current. But, what they are truly seeking is some sort of relational validation through shallow compensation.

As you can see, individuals with poor attachment issues can become needy and emotionally hungry. Look for my follow-up article on how to break the cycle of unhealthy relationship patterns through positive emotional attachment.

*Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor whose practice is in Madison, Alabama*



*What About Bob? Copyright 1991. Touchstone Pictures.*

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“Your passion is waiting for your courage to catch up.”  
~ Isabelle Lafleche



## ANSWER KEY:

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