

# Janet's Journal

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August 2022

## Summer Fun!

Dear [FirstName],

We've got a fun one for you this month! August's Newsletter brings a heart-warming story about elephants, some extremely dry and hilarious "anti-riddles" sure to get a laugh (or an eye roll), and some helpful communication tips for the workplace!

I hope you know how much joy sending these fun anecdotes, fables, and tales brings me, and I can only hope it brightens your day, too! Isolation is all too easy these days, and right now, we have to stay connected, reach out, and reaffirm our relationships.

As you go about your life and come across anyone who could benefit from my help in buy or sell, their home, please give them my information. I'd be more than happy to help.

Best,

Janet Browning

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### The Elephant's Tale

A man was visiting the zoo one day. As he was passing the elephant enclosure, he suddenly stopped. The majestic creatures were restrained by only a small rope tied to their front leg—no chains, no cages. It was obvious that the elephants could, at any time, break free, but for some reason, they did not.

He saw a trainer standing nearby and asked why the elephants did not attempt to get away.

“Well,” the trainer said, “when they are very young and much smaller, we use the same size rope to tie them.

At that age, it’s enough to hold them. As they grow up, they continue to believe they cannot break away. They think the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free.”

The visitor was amazed. These enormous beasts could break free from their bonds whenever they wanted, but they felt they were stuck because they thought they couldn’t.

Like the elephants, how many of us go through life hanging onto a belief that restrains us simply because it held us back once before?

## August Question

**Q: How many hearts does an octopus have?**

## July Question

**Q: What country has the most natural lakes?**

**A: Canada**

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## Communication Tips

Communication is at the heart of good leadership. Here’s some advice from *Forbes* on what kind of obstacles to look for and how to overcome them:

- **Insufficient communication.** Employees need information to do their jobs effectively. Keeping them in the dark about what’s going on in your organization and industry prevents them from serving customers efficiently and making good decisions about priorities. Some information is confidential and proprietary, of course, but you should generally strive to share as much as possible.
- **Too much information.** On the opposite extreme, employees can feel overwhelmed if you communicate too much. Don’t send dozens of emails to your entire workforce. Target information to the right people, and keep them short so people can find the point quickly and easily. Make more information available for people who want it instead of dumping everything into one huge message.
- **Difficult communication structures.** Don’t place too many rules on how people communicate. Requiring employees to reach out to other departments only through their managers can slow or even strangle the flow of information. Encourage open communication in all directions throughout your organization.
- **Not listening to employees.** Communication shouldn’t be a one-way street. If you’re doing all the talking, employees will tune out. If you’re not asking questions and listening to people, you won’t know what’s going on in your organization. Get feedback from all levels and pay attention to what people are saying, or you’ll miss important news and developments from the front lines.

## August Round-Up

**World Elephant Day, Aug. 12.** The elephant is loved, revered, and respected by people and cultures around the world, yet we are on the brink of seeing the last of these magnificent creatures.

**National Nonprofit Day, Aug. 17.** Nonprofits help awareness, research, and aid to the people who need it most.

**National Nonprofit Day, Aug. 19.** A day to honor humanitarian personnel for their efforts and to raise awareness about the crucial humanitarian work that is happening around the world.

**Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26.** Commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote and calls attention to continuing efforts toward full equality.

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## Summer Skin Health

With summer here, you're probably wearing lighter clothing and spending more time out in the sun. *The Health Site* website offers these do's and don't's for keeping your skin healthy:

- **Do hydrate.** Water is important for good health in general, and it's essential to healthy skin, helping to clean out toxins from your body and opening your pores to give the skin a healthy look.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking can accelerate your body's aging process and decrease the amount of necessary vitamins and nutrients needed for healthy skin.
- **Do wash and moisturize.** Cleaning your skin in the morning and evening will remove dust and oil that clogs your pores. Use a moisturizer with an SPF of 30 or higher after washing.
- **Do use sunscreen.** It's not just for going to the beach. Apply sunscreen every day if you're going to be outside at all. Choose one that has 30 SPF or higher for good protection from UV rays.
- **Do eat a healthy diet.** Lots of green vegetables and fruit can help your skin stay fresh and young. Raw tomatoes and fruits can brighten your skin.

## Health Benefits of Selenium

Selenium is a nutrient necessary for good health. It supports reproductive health, the thyroid, DNA production, defense against infections, and more. Selenium deficiency can lead to heart disease, infertility, and arthritis and may be related to cardiovascular disease, cancer, and cognitive decline.

*The Medical News Today* website advises eating these foods that are rich in selenium:

Brazil nuts, tuna, halibut, sardines, shrimp, turkey, beef liver, chicken, cottage cheese, brown rice, eggs, whole wheat bread, and baked beans.

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**See Page 7**

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## Reconnect with Creative Habits

All of us are born with creative minds, but some of us lose the habit. *The Entrepreneur* magazine website offers these tips for getting your creative mojo back:

- **Practice mindful observation.** You look, but do you really see? Make a practice of observing and appreciating the details of your surroundings. You may see, hear, smell, or feel things you never noticed before, giving you new ideas and insights.
- **Rev up your curiosity.** Make a point of asking questions about everything you see and do, even if you think you already know the answers. Exploring situations more deeply can yield fresh insights into everyday problems.
- **Free your mind.** Forget limitations. When you brainstorm, think beyond boundaries and conventional wisdom. Don't accept the tried and true—instead, teach yourself to look at what seems impossible. You could find a way to make the impossible come true.
- **Practice being creative.** Don't wait until a problem erupts to flex your creative muscles. Your mind will be in better shape if you look for opportunities to be creative every day. Imagine a small problem and spend a few minutes thinking of new and different ways to solve it. You'll be ready when you really need a spark of inspiration.

## Success Tips from Female CEOs

What advice would you give to your younger self? The website of the *World Economic Forum* shares these insights from some successful female CEOs:

- **Ellison Anne Williams**, CEO and founder, Enveil: “Careers are nonlinear. At each step, choose opportunities based more on what you think you will learn from it than on where you think that it might take you. A diverse set of experiences is invaluable in building a rich career.”
- **Netta Korin**, co-founder, Orbs: “Above all else, dare. Do not let fear get in the way of your success or of your choices. Do not look at your role models and wonder if—or fear that—you are not enough, or that you do not have what it takes.”
- **Jennifer Holmgren**, CEO, LanzaTech: “Be positive. See the potential for good outcomes, while still being aware of the risks. Focus on the prize—if you fail, course correct, learn, and move on!”

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## Anti-Riddles

Some jokes can be funny precisely because they’re not jokes. It’s a paradox, but these riddles prove it.

What do you call a joke that isn’t funny? **A sentence.**

What did one Frenchman say to the other Frenchman? **I don’t know, I don’t speak French.**

How is a laser beam like a goldfish? **Neither one can whistle.**

What’s the one thing in life you can always count on? **A calculator.**

What did one ant say to the other ant? **Nothing, ants can’t speak.**

Do you know what makes me smile? **Facial Muscles.**

How tall is the Empire State Building? **One Empire State Building tall.**

Do you know what’s odd? **Every other number.**



## What Does That Mean?

The origins of some figures of speech are obvious—putting the cart before the horse, for instance. Others are a little more obscure. From Jeff Rovin’s book *The Unbelievable Truth!*, here’s a look at the explanations behind three common expressions:

- **Pulling the wool over their eyes.** In the 17th and 18th centuries, thieves and robbers would yank their victim's wool wigs down over their eyes so they couldn't see who was attacking them.
- **Blackmail.** In 16th-century England, mail meant “rent” or “tribute.” Debts that had to be paid in silver were called “whitemail.” A debt that could be paid in any other way—from livestock to property—was called “blackmail.” Because blackmail did not have a set value, the person collecting the debt could extort any amount or anything they wished from the debtor.
- **Red tape.** For centuries, it was British custom to seal important documents with red wax and red tape. Cutting through it was the only way to get at the documents and read them.

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## The Kite Cloth

A Zen master once gave his student a piece of silk fabric that had been twisted and tied into many knots. Yet he told the student it was a beautiful kite that he should fly in the garden.

The student took hold of the mess he’d been handed, unsure what to make of it. Then he carefully began to undo each knot and twist. With the fabric smoothed out, he attached the frame and tether.

He released the kite, and the wind carried it high into the air. The student admired the ease with which the kite sailed through the air.

At that moment, he understood that for his life to be as light and free as the kite, he would need to undo the problems that kept his heart knotted up and tangled into a hard lump.



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# Janet's Journal

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