

Janet's Journal

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April 2022

Spring Is In The Air....

Dear [FirstName],

I hope this month's newsletter finds you and your family safe and healthy. This month's newsletter offers excellent tips for Spring, ways to rethink your career, and a heartwarming story called The Mustard Seed.

A classic theme for April is Spring cleaning. Sometimes that means a clothing dump to the nearest donation center, and sometimes, it means a fresh start. If you or a loved one are considering to buy or sell your home, do think of me. I would love to help!

If there is anything I can do to support you, please let me know. You may have questions about the local real estate market that I can answer. And I'm here if you just want to reach out and connect.

Janet Browning

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The Professor

A professor was taking a boat across a wide river. The boatman, humming a happy tune as he rowed, was clearly no scholar, so the professor decided to test him.

"My man, can you read?" he asked.

"Nope." The boatman shook his head.
"Never had time to learn."

"Is that so? Then you've lost one quarter of your life. Can you write?"

The boatman said, "No, sir. Too busy making a living."

"Then you've lost another quarter of your life. Can you do arithmetic?"

"No. Never saw much use for it on the river."

"Pity, now you've lost another year of your life."

A silence fell between the two men for several moments until the boatman said, "Sir, may I ask you a question?"

"Certainly, my man."

"Can you swim?" Asked the boatman. The professor smirked, and chuckled. "No friend. In my learned profession, there was never any need for that."

"Well, that's too bad because this boat's leaking and we're going to sink."



April Question

Q: Which American state borders just one other state?

Mar Question

Q: What is the smallest country in the world?

A: Vatican City

How to Cure a Picky Eater

Most parents deal with picky eaters when their children are young. Here's how to encourage them to eat a healthy diet, from the *Times News* website:

- **Be a role model.** When you eat meals together, make a point of trying new and different foods yourself. This can teach kids that variety is enjoyable.
- **Be persistent.** When they reject something new, keep offering it to them. Give them time to get used to the idea of trying something different. When they get used to seeing it, they'll eventually try it and may decide they like it.
- **Involve your children.** Include your kids in planning and preparing meals. If they're actively engaged in the process, they'll be more likely to pick foods they'll eat and try foods they haven't.

Changing Your Career? Consider This!

Is it time for you to make a career move? The question can be nerve-wracking, but to get ahead you have to be ready and willing to shake things up sometimes. Ask these questions from the *Harvard Business Review* to decide whether you should take the plunge:

- **How fulfilled are you?** Ideally, your work and career should have purpose and meaning. You may not feel energized 100% of the time, but if nothing about your job makes you look forward to accomplishing its goals, you're probably not going to succeed in the long term, and you're likely to burn yourself out over time.
- **Are you learning and growing?** If you're not mastering new skills, encountering fresh challenges, and going through new experiences, you're in danger of stagnating. You don't want to repeat the same tasks year after year until retirement. Look for roles where you're in a position to explore new opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- **Do you like the direction you're headed in?** You may not yearn to become a CEO, but you should have career goals that excite you. Where do people in your position usually go? Does that appeal to you? Can you make a course correction? If not, you could be destined for a dead-end career that doesn't fulfill your needs.
- **What can you do right now?** Chances are you can't automatically shift to a new career at the same level of responsibility (or salary). Start making plans for the future. Sign up for classes that address your ultimate goals. Connect with people who are doing what you want to do. Read up on what's out there so you can decide the best steps to take.
- **What relationships should you build?** Look around at the people in the profession you want to enter. Get in touch with them and learn all you can about how they reached their position of success. The more people you know, the more advice and assistance you can get as you navigate your way to a new career.

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"Success is the doing, not the getting. In the trying, not the triumph. Success is a personal standard, reaching for the highest that is in us, becoming all that we can be. If we do our best, we are a success"

—Zig Ziglar

Dealing With Spring Fever?

Spring fever's symptoms usually appear during the onset of the vernal equinox. In the northern hemisphere, people begin to feel more energetic, enthusiastic, and amorous because of chemical changes in the body, in part, produced by increased exposure to daylight. Scientists cite a number of factors that contribute to spring fever. It starts with increased light that sends a signal to the brain's pineal gland, which then reduces its production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates our body clock and controls our mood and energy levels.

As the days grow longer, the chemical disappears and leaves people feeling more energized and confident. Increased light also affects the hypothalamus, the section of the brain that regulates eating and sleeping.

Our other senses—sight, smell, and hearing—also wake up as blossoms and spring breezes assault them. Such stimuli can trigger strong emotions, from euphoria to sadness.

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Caffeine for Better Mental Health

A cup of coffee or tea helps many people wake up in the morning, but they may also have health benefits later in life, according to recent research reported in *Scientific American*.

One project by the National Institutes of Health studied the relationship between different kinds of beverages and depression, and found that coffee consumption was associated with slightly lower rates of self-reported depression.

A Chinese study found that adults who drink tea on a regular basis had a smaller risk of depression. Other research suggests that caffeine may play a role in preventing cognitive decline, but the evidence remains inconclusive.



Healthy Tips for Spring

How about some spring cleaning for your health? Follow these tips from the *Everyday Health* website for cleaning up your health habits as the weather turns warmer

- **Eat Well.** Fresh fruits and veggies start coming into season during the springtime months. Visit your local farmer's market when it reopens and look for organic produce in your grocery store. Mushrooms, bell peppers, zucchini, berries and more will become more plentiful as the year goes on.
- **Stay Hydrated.** As temperatures grow warmer you may be outside more, exercising, running errands, and doing chores. You can easily sweat away moisture from your body without realizing it, so make sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day to ward off the fatigue, headaches, and low energy that can result from dehydration.
- **Get Moving.** Take advantage of the milder weather to get outside and get your blood pumping. Even light exercise can do your body good after a sedentary winter. Take a walk or do home gardening to improve your muscle and bone health.
- **Enjoy The Sun.** Sunshine boosts your skin's production of vitamin D, which is good for bone health and increases serotonin levels, which elevates your mood. Just remember to protect your skin from UV radiation by covering up and using sunscreen when you're outside.
- **Watch For Allergens.** Unfortunately, springtime is allergy season for many people. Aside from pollen outdoors, many allergens can be found indoors like dust and mold. A thorough spring cleaning of your house can eradicate many of them.
- **Get a Spring Checkup.** Schedule an exam with your doctor. An annual physical can alert you to potential problems before they grow out of control. Review your medications and overall health history to make sure you're on the right track for good health throughout the year.



Diversity & Inclusion

The words we use at work matter. If you want to be inclusive and welcoming, you need to use language that doesn't alienate people. *The Human Resources Director* website has some advice for encouraging inclusive language throughout your organization:

- **Practice Empathy.** Think before you speak. Ask yourself how you'd like to be addressed or treated in another person's shoes. Think about what other people confront daily and use language that focuses on them as individuals, not members of a group.
 - **Pay Attention.** Look at the world outside your organization to understand what's going on. Explore issues that can deepen your understanding of different groups, their struggles, and the best language to use when communicating with them. The more you learn, the more inclusive your language will become.
 - **Point Out Non-Inclusive language.** You don't have to be confrontational. When you see or hear something problematical, take the person aside and calmly point out how their words might be sending a potentially offensive message. Most reasonable people will listen with an open mind if you're diplomatic, and will adjust their language accordingly.
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The Mustard Seed

Long ago a young mother lost her only son to a fatal illness. She was so distraught that she began asking her friends to somehow restore her child to life, and refused to accept their insistence that nothing could be done.

Finally they sent her to a wise man for guidance. The master saw her tears and listened to her story. Finally, he said he would help her, but she had to bring him some special ingredients for a medicine. The most important item: a mustard seed from a house where no family member had ever died.

The grieving mother went from house to house searching for the mustard seed needed for the medicine. Every person she spoke to very gladly offered a seed in the hope that it would help end her sorrow. But every time the mother asked whether anyone had died in the house, she found that every single family had suffered just such a loss. At the first house she stopped at, it was the husband who had died. At the second house she stopped at, it was a daughter who had died. And at the third, it was an old grandmother.

She could not find one household that had escaped suffering. Feeling very sad, the mother returned to the wise man and said, "I understand now what you and the others were trying to tell me."

He nodded. "You thought you were alone in your pain, but it is the nature of life that no one can escape the suffering of impermanence."



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Janet's Journal

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