

Everyday *Life*

REJOICE

Rejoice
in
the Lord

Psalm 33:1

Featured Articles:

Tragedy to Triumph

I Say Rejoice

Planning Ahead

Rejoice Always

Rejoice In His Great Salvation!

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

Always Hope

Dear Readers,

I have an exciting word that God has given me regarding this issue of Everyday Life.

Let's take a look at this wonderful word: Psalm 5:11, *"But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You."*

The word "rejoice" is referred to three times in this bible verse. You see God is very clear when He tells us that we must rejoice in the midst of trials. He says, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say rejoice!" There is nothing to suggest that we are only to rejoice in the good times. It does not say except in your bad situations. It says to rejoice always, meaning constantly regardless of your circumstances. As a matter of fact, it goes on to say, "Again, I say rejoice!" This should make us clearly understand the Lord means business when He tells us in the Word to rejoice. We understand that it is difficult to rejoice when everything around seems to be collapsing in on us and the walls come tumbling down. The waves may be crashing against us, trying to drown us. The battle is fierce and we're surrounded by the enemy; the heat seems too much to bear as we are engulfed in it. However, God says, "Rejoice always. Again, I say rejoice!"

I don't believe that anyone of us who are not going through the fire can understand how difficult it is to understand when all hell seems to have broken loose in our lives. Wouldn't you agree?

I'm here to say, "Stand strong!" Stand courageous and unmoved, filled with strength, moving in the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in you.

How do we do this?

It is clearly outlined in this bible verse, "But let all those rejoice who put their trust in Your; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name Be joyful in You."

Let's look at the three points below:

1. What we need to do is put our trust in Him. Why do we put our trust in Him? Because we know He is the Warrior who brings about victory. We can stand



**GOD SAYS,
"REJOICE
ALWAYS.
AGAIN, I SAY
REJOICE!"**

strong knowing that the Captain of Heaven's Armies is the Lord Jesus Christ. He never loses a battle. Because He is the winner of every battle, our trust and hope must be in Him even when it looks bleak... even when we are on the ground... even when we feel we cannot go on, the Captain of Heaven's Armies picks us up and carries us through victoriously. Again, I say rejoice!

It is not about your circumstances; it is about rejoicing in battle because we know we will come forth rejoicing.

2. We are to always shout for joy because He is our Defender. This is probably the most powerful statement in this verse. We shout for joy because we know that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah will come to our defense. Have you ever heard a lion roar? I have spent hours and weeks and months studying lions with my daughter Ellianna. We have heard the lion roar. Did you know a lion roars so loudly that it can be heard five miles away? When the lion roars, the other animals shudder.

Any animal in the kingdom who is doing something it shouldn't be doing will freeze at the roar of the lion. The animals around the vicinity of the lion will run for their lives. That tribe that was with the roaring lion are not afraid because they trusted the lion's protection over them. We are children of God, and when we are close to Him and we trust in Him, even if the hyenas surround the lion, one roar will send them running. They are no match for the lion who is the king of the jungle.

No trial that comes against you, the little cub, will stand because of our Father the Lion of the Tribe of Judah is doing the roaring.

3. Clearly, this promise is for those who love the name of the Lord. We recognize that Jesus Christ has been described as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Do you want to know why you should be rejoicing? Do you want to know why we are using this powerful bible verse? This is God's message to you during this Holiday season, "Because he loves Me, I will deliver him; because he knows My name, I will protect him:" says the Lord. Rejoice for the Lord Jesus Christ was born to deliver us. Even the angel proclaimed, "Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."

That's our Lion of the Tribe of Judah who roars passionately on our behalf.

On behalf of my family and I, the Staff of Everyday Life, and the Board of Thread of Hope, Inc., we wish you and your family a Merry Christmas.

Rejoice!

Rev. Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro
Editor in Chief, Everyday Life

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REJOICE

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FROM OUR FAMILY TO YOURS, MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We wish you a wonderful holiday season, and a happy and prosperous New Year!

Our favorite time of the year is the Christmas holiday season. Our celebration of the birth of our Lord begins with putting up our manger and Christmas tree. And it ends in a big traditional Italian dinner of 12 fish.

These are a few photos of our decorating and our favorite holiday foods.

God bless you and Merry Christmas!

The Citro Family





Tragedy to Triumph

BY TIAAN SWART

**LIFE CAN
REALLY
CHANGE WHEN
YOU FACE
DEATH IN
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CONTEMPLATE
YOUR LIFE
LIVED.**

It can make you assess your calling and whether you moved closer to it by the choices you made, or whether you drifted away from it.

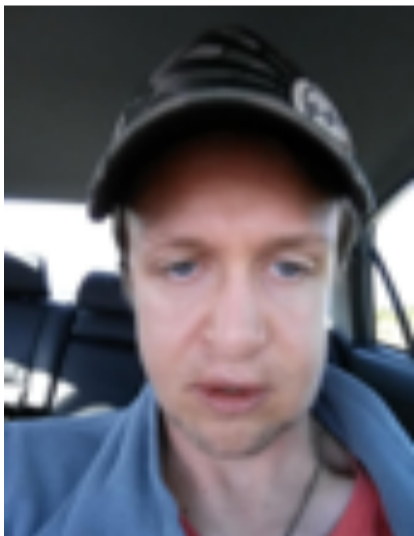
I was born with a severe cleft pallet and lip and had to get multiple surgeries even before I was two years old. I spent much of my life going in and out of the hospital as a kid; my first and earliest memory in life is one of being caged up in a hospital bed as shown below (see pic) and the drugs given to me in these phases afterward while going for more surgeries got so much, I had liver poisoning by age of 11.





I had a massive surgery failure at the age of 16 that eventually led to me being bedridden for most of two years from 2013 to 2014 – and then I got diagnosed with cancer as well, all related to this.

On top of that, at the age of 21 I was in a near fatal car crash where people say I should not have come out of alive: A thought kept coming up in my mind as I was staring death in the face:



“HOW DOES ONE TRULY KNOW WHAT YOUR CALLING IS?”

What if your calling isn't explained in the manuals of the “get a degree so you can get a job” world? Do you try to be an entrepreneur and risk everything you have to make that work?

DOES YOUR CALLING ALWAYS TRANSLATE TO BOTH YOUR WORK AND YOUR PERSONAL LIFE OR CAN THEY BE SEPARATE?

My experience with being diagnosed with cancer made me think of this, it made me wonder how much of what we think we want or what we think we need to be is bombarded onto us by what is popular and already done before. No wonder some people call it the “rat race”.

I learned that it is very challenging to make some tough calls that go against what mainstream



advice there is for my health issue, for example. It seems like in everything we look at these days there are already many different options right there to choose from – but what if none of these are what we are truly called to do by the hand that guides our life?

When it came to my health there are things, I have become aware of that most doctors I consulted were not aware of, it made me realize that sometimes no matter how hard you study, wisdom on what to do in a unique situation often comes from looking forward and not looking into the past. It is not like the past doesn't matter at all, the past gives us a framework and it is essential – but the future can be uncertain and requires thinking outside the box especially as an old season ends.

One thing that is also true is that everyone is moving through different seasons at different times and what is relevant for one is not necessarily for the other. But when it comes to health and wellness, I can, after traveling the road less travelled while still observing everything the mainstream had to offer (and its effects on loved ones I lost who followed it), that there are evergreen principles we all have an opportunity (not so much a responsibility) to make part of our life in order to reap the harvest (blessings) of the seeds of hope we sow for our own future, and thus the future of our loved ones who get affected by what we choose and do.

Seasons & Reasons

There is a season for everything in life, and when you suffer, it happens in seasons and for different reasons. Same as blessings, they also come in seasons and for different reasons. I believe life fluctuates like this in order to help us learn what God wants to teach us while we are in this life.

EVERY CHOICE WE MAKE HAS CONSEQUENCES.

Some are short-lived, and some change our course of life forever.

My message today is one that I pray is relevant to you today as you read it. My life was almost lost a few times and because I can write this to you today, it means God must have a purpose for it to reach you or someone you love.

I believe that every human has a unique calling to follow, but, that there are fundamental pillars to support you in your ability to fulfill your calling and its tasks along the way. I believe the one most important thing you could focus on as you see a new season unfolding, is how you can invest into your health now in order to be blessed by the seeds you sow a season or two later.

Do you believe and trust God has a plan for your life? Are you seeking out what this calling is and waiting on God to reveal it?

Then let me be so bold as to tell you what I learned about this process you are in, or at least what God taught me out of taking me through this process...

The number one thing you can do if you are awaiting revelation for your true calling is to trust that it will be revealed to you if you are truly searching for it. "Seek and you shall find" is the promise made to you.

Stop fearing and doubting if it will ever come to you, rather have faith and accept already that it will, but manage your expectations so you don't fall by the way on the way if you know what I mean. Realize you can't see and know every variable that needs to line up for God's timing to work out for your calling. If you try to force it by your own hand, you won't get it, but if you surrender it to God and trust it will happen – start acting like it and prepare for it to come (even if you don't know exactly what it is).

I carry a message to you today that the primary way you can prepare universally for whatever the future holds is to invest in your health.

We are what we eat and what we surround ourselves with most of the time. Your body and mind are constantly absorbing and recycling what it is fed – and the product is what you are today.

Scripture tells us that we must guard what we put in front of our eyes, this is because it fills our hearts and minds with it, and what the heart is full of, the mouth will overflow with. We cannot be a spring with water that is both bitter and sweet, so if you are waiting to bless the world with what you are called to do, start putting a guard in front of it so that you start guarding the purity of that which you will be imparting in future by not mixing it with the impure.

The same counts for what you eat and drink. Cut out the bad as fast or as slow as you feel lead to do, make it part of your prayer life to ask God

to teach you how to prepare for the blessings he wishes to impart through you.

If big steps scare you, start making small steps, but try to make them daily. Try to map out how you can best guard your body and mind so that when the calling comes, you are ready. Don't be asleep when the bridegroom arrives, be ready. Be fit.

A fruit tree can only carry an abundance of fruit if fed & watered well and the old & unnecessary is cut away to make room for the growth and blessings that always lie ahead in its season.

If you're not investing in your health, then the sanctuary/temple (your body) you are hoping will house your God isn't ready for Him to reside in. You have to then ask yourself, how can I expect God to dwell in me and to empower me to work for Him if I am not preparing my temple for that work?

This doesn't mean you should starve or punish yourself. Fasting is a good idea to start doing if you have never tried it, just remember to start small and work your way up, and always consult a health practitioner before fasting if you have health issues of course. But don't damage yourself, take care of yourself by teaching your body new habits that can lead to blessings for you, your loved ones, and for your community. Start to volunteer if you have never done so.

These suggestions are all in line with investing in your health and the health of those around you. God made us to contribute to others, and this calling is universal!

So, I guess what I would like to say is that if you don't know what your higher, individual calling is yet, start stepping into universal callings that you already know God wants for all of his children... Create health, happiness, and purity for yourself and for your community.

**THOSE WHO
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HELP OTHERS.**

But with reference to your personal, higher calling, what I learned is that getting your body and mind ready for the responsibility is always first. If you don't do it, you are asking life to bring tragedy your way to bring you to a fork in your road. Believe me, reaching that fork with health and vibrance is VERY challenging. In fact, its totally overwhelming.

You don't have to look far to see the stats of dreaded disease and disabilities due to poor health reaching everyone around you. Prepare to be part of the change you wish to see. Pray and be vigilant for God's direction to where you should go, what you should do and what you should avoid – He prefers to “speak in a still small voice” rather than to thunder down from mount Sinai! (1 Kings 19:12)

God says in Ezekiel 36:26 that he wishes to give us a new heart and to remove our heavy hearts

of stone that we walk around with. Seeing that fall has come, did you know the best time to cut away the old branches is now? The fruit farmer will tell you, the best time to cut the old branches away is right after harvest.

God is teaching us in His nature what we are to learn about our body, mind and soul in terms of blessing and carrying an abundance of fruit.

Watch the season change and prepare yourself so that the oil in your lamp can be filled. Make the decision in line with what you know is best and don't let the enemy tempt you to fall into a pattern/habit of doing the wrong things, no matter how small they may appear.

Prepare for a new season of harvest by what you do during the fall.

My battle with cancer

I found it really interesting that God lead me to find answers on how the human body works and how it has the ability to heal itself when guided by the principles of living a holistic health based life.

I found it shocking that most of our “modern world” teachings around the body don't consider the body as one, holistic being – and that what happens in one area affects the rest. God surely made us up whole, and if he did, it means that what enters the temple anywhere, changes it everywhere.

What I learned from fighting death through nutrition and lifestyle was that our amazing bodies all work the same, even though each human is unique. Yes some people are allergic to certain foods, which means that even though a food can be touted as a powerful health building food it can be poison to some. But this concept must also be challenged as I have seen people who were allergic to things that, through lifestyle changes, they were able to reverse – traveling the road less travelled.

With God, anything is possible within the character He has revealed to us through His son Jesus Christ. There are limits to this, but within these limits the possibilities are limitless.

For example, how can we be healthy and pure if we fill ourselves with garbage? We cannot, it will catch up with you.

I believe God is waking us up to the opportunity of investing into our health and wellness, for the healing ministry is the right hand of the gospel.

Cut away the old branches, grow the new ones and see what fruit God wants to bear through you by:

Reading Scripture holistically, not just a verse here and a verse there, read one book from the beginning to the end over however many sessions your schedule allows. Try see what the author was trying to say to the original audience that time and grab the principles of the lesson to apply them into your life. Enrich yourself beyond the one sermon a week and eat daily the bread that comes from only God.

Guard what you consume, with your eyes and with your mouth. Every bite you take with either will either turn your well more bitter or sweet, but never both at the same time

Bless others with whatever you can. If you have a lot, choose where God wants to use you to bless – and if you don't, volunteer when you have time and watch God bless you for it.

At all times, remember and be grateful for what God has done and what He still wants to do in your life. If you don't trust Him and build an intimate relationship with the Almighty who refers to you

as His "bride", how can He lift you up out of your circumstances? Bask in His love.

Act with confidence that He will do what He set out to do with you, no matter what the world tells or shows you. The world and the enemy and your flesh all work together to make you blind to God's purpose for your life, break the cycle through your faith and act upon the still small voice of God speaking through your conscience to lead you to the truth so you can be set free.

I walk the same struggle as you every day. Some of you reading this may have stared death in the face like I have, some of you not. Some of you may be about to, unfortunately. Which ever it is, realise that you are not alone, and that Christ will be there with you.

**GOD SAYS "I
KNOW THE
PLANS I HAVE
FOR YOU, PLANS
TO PROSPER
YOU AND NOT
TO HARM YOU,
PLANS TO GIVE
YOU HOPE AND A
FUTURE."
(JER 29.11)**

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EL Is Proud to Showcase the These Gorgeous Works of Art Designed by Salim Kataya



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FASHION INDUSTRY BY
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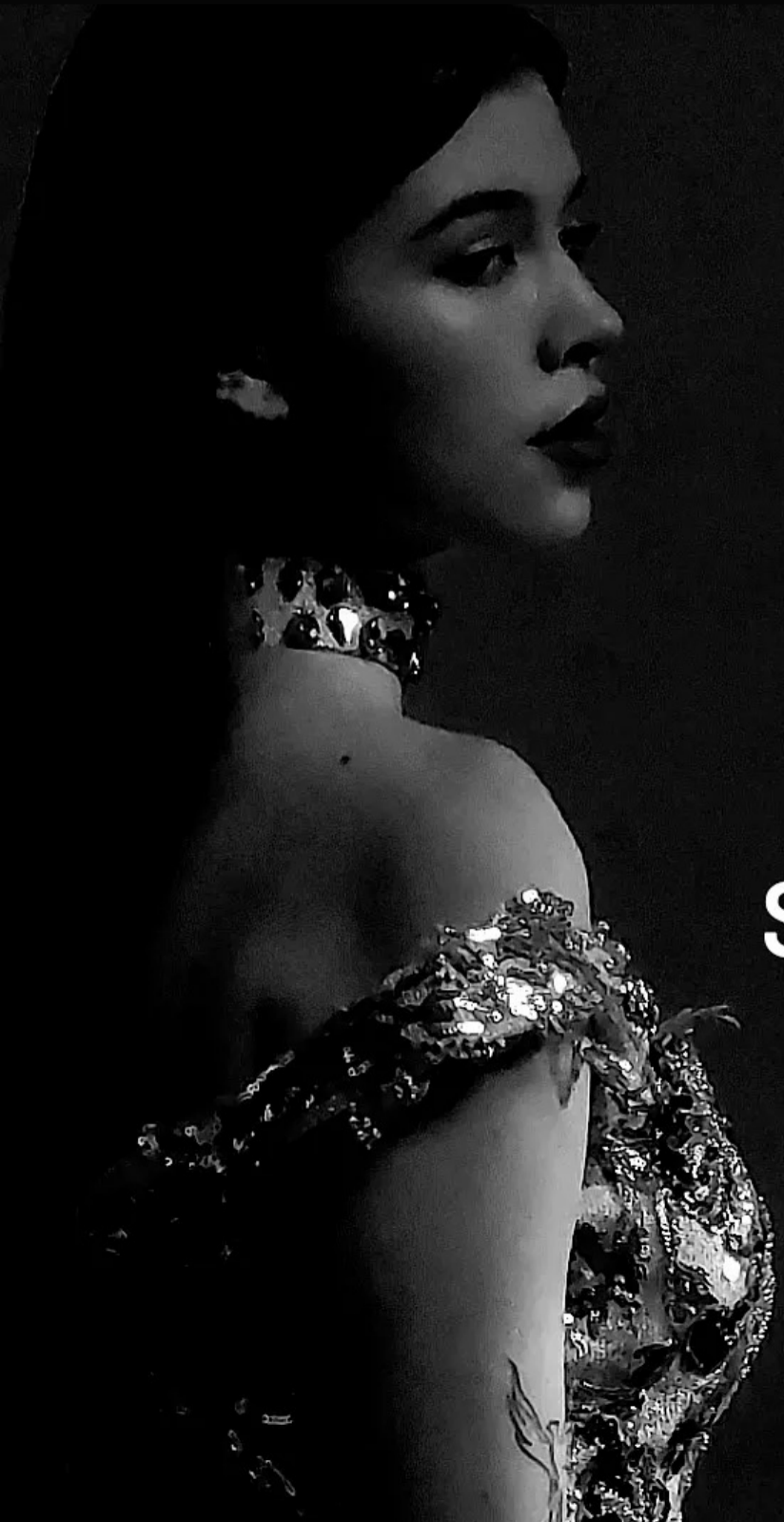




SALIM KATAYA

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SALIM KATAYA

FALL WINTER 2022-23

WHAT MAKES YOU REJOICE AT THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR?

AN INTERVIEW WITH EVERYDAY LIFE STAFF

It truly is the most wonderful time of the year as we look forward to the holidays and all that it entails, but with everything that comes with the holidays such as all the hustle and bustle, there is something that we look forward to more: Remembering what God has done and how He has been full of grace, mercy, and compassion to the point of sending His son Jesus Christ to be born, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And He shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," (Isaiah 9:6).

WHAT OUR STAFF HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

—”

"It is all of the traditional things we do as a family, like putting up the decorations. It is an entire weekend affair. We're singing, dancing, and laughing as Christmas music is playing. Then afterward, it is sitting quietly with the lights sparkling as I am praying and worshipping God and thinking about the splendor of Heaven. We watch Christmas movies, enjoying time together. We also enjoy our traditional Christmas Italian foods. The most incredible part about the holidays

is that God always gives me a Bible scripture for the upcoming year. So, I always look forward with excitement to what word He is going to give me for the upcoming year."

— Rev. Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro

—”

"What makes me rejoice in the holiday season is reflecting on everything that God has done in the past year; the fellowship with family; resurrecting traditions like the traditional Italian Christmas dinner, the 12 different types of fish (and every year, my mother forgets the 12th fish); and remembering that Christ is the reason why we get to do this each year."

— Rev. Dr. Justin Noah Citro

—”

"My favorite part of the holiday season is the atmosphere. There is something so special about stepping out into the snow, climbing into the car, and listening to Christmas music as we browse the local neighborhood's Christmas lights displays. This is the time of year when families are reunited, smiles are shared, and the aroma of special holiday foods fills the air. Finally, I enjoy thinking and reflecting on the true meaning of Christmas, and how the birth of our Savior is the reason why we get to experience this splendor each and every year."

— Ellianna Destinee Citro



"Isaiah 61: 10 "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels."

This scripture encapsulates my appreciation and joy as I celebrate the amazing, priceless Gift that Father God gave us when He gave Jesus Christ! He who became flesh, bore all our sins, sicknesses, and diseases when He died that terrible death on the cross so that we can be set free! Through His death and resurrection, we are restored back to God. As we accept Him as our Lord and Saviour, we still get showered with more beautiful gifts: garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness! Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us and I am waiting in anticipation for the day when He will fetch us as His bride, never to be separated from Him again! I cannot but rejoice as I ponder on the greatest Gift of all, Jesus Christ! Come Lord Jesus Come!"

– Rev. Rika Griffiths



"There is one bible passage that sums up the holiday season for me, Luke 2:8-11, And there were shepherds residing in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Just then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid! Behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord!' When this time of the year comes around, I'm reminded even more of God's faithfulness to offer us so great a salvation that we find in Christ whom He gave to us that we might have eternal life."

– Rev. Dr. Linda Agnes Knowles



"My favorite thing about the holidays is family. It just feels like everything slows down for a little while and we are together, making my heart smile."

–Dusty DiStaulo

As you celebrate the holidays with family and friends, remember that Jesus is the reason for this season we are entering. We give glory and thanks to God for family and friends. We thank God for the provision He has made for us. Most importantly, we come before God with hearts filled with gratitude for giving us Jesus Christ through whom we have redemption.

God bless you all this holiday season.

The Everyday Life Staff

I Say Rejoice

BY REV. DR. JUSTIN NOAH CITRO

"Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!" -Philippians 4:14(NLT)

The topic of rejoicing in the Lord is an exciting one because it is an action word; rejoicing is lifting our voices up to the Lord and praising him in his presence no matter the situation we face in our day-to-day lives. Rejoicing is also a choice we have to make and the reason why it is a choice we have to make is because it is all about our attitude whether or not we will rejoice in the happy times or in the bad times but we have been command by the Lord to rejoice in all things but again it is up to us if we are going to rejoice in compliance to what the Bible says for us to do. In this life, there are many things that will try and rob you of your joy but remember this true joy comes from praising the name of the Lord and singing the praises of the One who truly does lift our heads when we are down and sometimes out.

When we rejoice, we are acknowledging the joy of the Lord in our lives we are being thankful unto the Lord for the great things he has done and what he will do, The Lord wants us to rejoice because He is still at work in the world he has not forgotten His people and he wants us to lift us our voice in praise knowing that He is still at work that is a huge reason alone to rejoice. Rejoice knowing that the Lord has overcome all things that have prohibited you from rejoicing!

Unfortunately, in this world, there are things that will cause us to grieve and suffer but the bible says

in Romans 5:3-5 (NLT) "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. When we face problems, we should not complain because we are building ourselves to endure whatever is thrown our way and it is for that reason alone that we should rejoice!

If we want to know an example of rejoicing, then we cannot ignore the life of one of the greatest Kings of Israel, King David. Everything King David did he did it in with an attitude of joy and praise unto the Lord, King David embodied the example of putting the Lord first with the attitude of joy, King David showed us that is it better to rejoice to the Lord than it is to complain to Him. Seventy of His Psalms were about praise and rejoicing before the Lord, therefore, setting the prime example that rejoicing in the Lord is better

than admitting defeat. King David's Psalm 118 embodied the principle of rejoicing, giving thanks to the Lord, and worshiping. David in this Psalm is outpouring his heart to the Lord. Psalm 118 (NLT) "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. Let all Israel repeat: "His faithful love endures forever."

Let Aaron's descendants, the priests, repeat: "His faithful love endures forever." Let all who

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-PHILIPPIANS
4:14 (NLT)**

fear the LORD repeat: "His faithful love endures forever." In my distress, I prayed to the LORD, and the LORD answered me and set me free. The LORD is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Yes, the LORD is for me; he will help me. I will look in triumph at those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in people. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes. Though hostile nations surrounded me, I destroyed them all with the authority of the LORD. Yes, they surrounded and attacked me, I destroyed them all with the authority of the LORD. They swarmed around me like bees; they blazed against me like a crackling fire. But I destroyed them all with the authority of the LORD. My enemies did their best to kill me, but the LORD rescued me. The LORD is my strength and my song; he has given me victory. Songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly. The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things! The strong right arm of the LORD is raised in triumph. The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things! I will not die; instead, I will live to tell what the LORD has done. The LORD has punished me severely, but he did not let me die. Open for me the gates where the righteous enter, and I will go in and thank the LORD. These gates lead to the presence of the LORD, and the godly enter there. I thank you for answering my prayer and giving me victory! The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. This is the LORD's doing, and it is wonderful to see. This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. Please, LORD, please save us.

Please, LORD, please give us success. Bless the one who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD. The LORD is God, shining upon us. Take the sacrifice and bind it with cords on the altar. You are my God, and I will praise you! You are my God, and I will exalt you! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever."

David rejoiced for everything the Lord did for him, setting numerous examples along the way for us to learn and imitate his actions and the major thing that we as Christians can take away from this is this, rejoice in all circumstances, in all trouble, in all happiness and everything else in between we rejoice! Choose joy and not anger, choose to rejoice in the Lord rather than turn to anger and sin, choose happiness and not sadness, and if trouble does indeed come your way, lift your voice with a shout of praise rejoicing knowing that the Lord has overcome!!!!

My Prayer, for you all today or whenever you find time to read this article is for you to praise and rejoice in the Lord for He has done great things and He will continue to do great things no matter where you find yourself in life. Remember that it is always best to rejoice in the Lord than to focus on bad things that come.

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Rejoice In His Great Salvation!

BY REV. DR. THEREZE CATHERINE BARNARD

John 2:1-11

1. On the third day there was a wedding at Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
2. Jesus also was invited with His disciples to the wedding.
3. And when the wine was all gone, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no more wine!"
4. Jesus said to her, "[Dear] woman, what is that to you and to Me? My time [to act and to be revealed] has not yet come."
5. His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."
6. Now there were six waterpots of stone standing there, as the Jewish custom for purification (ceremonial washing) demanded, holding twenty to thirty gallons apiece.
7. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." So, they filled them up to the brim.
8. Then He said to draw some out now and take it to the manager of the feast [to the one, presiding, the superintendent of the banquet]. So, they took Him some.
9. And when the manager tasted the water just now turned into wine, not knowing where it came from - though the servants who had drawn the water knew - he called the bridegroom.
10. And said to him, "Everyone else serves his best wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves that which is not so good, but you have kept the good wine until now!"
11. This is the first of His signs (miracles, wonderworks), Jesus performed in Canaan

of Galilee and manifested His glory (by it He displayed His greatness and His power openly), and His disciples believed in Him [adhered to, trusted in, and relied on Him].

It was a sunny and beautiful day in Canaan. It was a perfect day for a wedding. Excitement filled the air as family and friends, servants and the wedding planners all played their part in getting everything ready for the wedding banquet. Everything was done to ensure this day was memorable for all that would attend. The setup created a place where one would be captured into another world, the food prepared and presented in a manner fit for a king, and most importantly the wine they requested was the best wine they could lay their hands on to ensure the day would be one of celebration, dancing, and joy for all. Satisfaction was the word for the day! The day started off perfectly as everything was in place. Guests started showing up for the feast and compliments were received on every side. Everything was perfect from the setup, the food, and even the wine. The wedding ceremony began as music could be heard in the background to alert the guests to take their seats. Guests held their breath as they gazed upon the breath-taking beauty of the bride who came walking down the aisle. Dressed in the most brilliant white, she looked like an angel wrapped in light. The groom could not hold back his tears as he looked upon the one who captured his heart, the most beautiful he had ever seen, his perfect bride. He reached out and gently took her hand in his as he promised to love her until his dying day. The ceremony would be remembered for a long time as people could not stop speaking of the unique love these two shared. The ceremony ended and the celebration began as guests started indulging in the food and the wine. But as the day progressed, suddenly they realized they were running out of wine. How could this be? The wedding planner and the servants became anxious as they realized that not having enough wine could cause this day to

end in embarrassment for the bridegroom and the bride. They were faced with a situation that required a miracle. Mary the mother of Jesus was one of the guests, and so were Jesus and His disciples. When Mary heard the word miracle she smiled. Mary looked for her son, which was no difficult task. He was always surrounded by a crowd as people everywhere were always drawn to Him and desired to receive from Him. Mary got His attention and called Him from the crowd as she took Him aside. Explaining the situation to her son, knowing Him, she asked Him to save the day and to do what she knew He was able to. Jesus not willing to say no to His mother, whom He loved, agreed to come to the rescue of the bridegroom and the bride. Jesus being full of compassion would in no way be able to walk away and ignore their plight when He knew He was the only one able to create more wine. His mother instructed the servants to do exactly as He instructed them, which they did. As requested, they filled six waterpots to the brim with water. Jesus walked up to the waterpots overflowing with the water and gazed at the pots of clay, looking up to heaven He prayed, "Father it is time to make known the joy of Your salvation and to make known the new wine. It is time for men and women to REJOICE as Your greatness and power are openly displayed. They might not understand it now, but the time will come that they will know that salvation has visited mankind as their vessels of clay will be filled with Your Spirit. It is time to make known that the blood to purify has been provided. Is this not the reason I came?" As soon as Jesus stopped praying every pot was now filled with wine! The disciples stood amazed at the miracle they beheld with their own eyes, and they were filled with faith. Jesus instructed one of the servants to draw some of the wine out and to bring it to the manager of the feast. When the manager of the feast tasted the wine, he was amazed. He could not remain quiet regarding this gracious act of the bridegroom who kept the best wine for last. He commanded silence in the banquet hall as he called the bridegroom to his side. The disciples stood attentively, and the servants and the wedding planner held their breath, as the manager of the feast looked at the bridegroom and said, "Everyone else serves his best wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves that which is not so good, but you have kept the good wine until now!" The

silence was broken as the manager of the feast raised his glass and the hall was filled with shouts of joy, laughter, and celebration. This miracle was recorded as the first and the greatest miracle Jesus ever performed. Generations after would hear about this day from those who witnessed it.

**IT IS TIME
FOR MEN
AND WOMEN
TO REJOICE
AS YOUR
GREATNESS
AND POWER
ARE OPENLY
DISPLAYED**

There is a great truth to be found in this story, but for the longest time, the story of this miracle had been made into something God never intended it to be. The true message had been hidden from the hearts of men, not because of God's doing but because we read this story through the eyes of our flesh, instead of seeing the truth through the eyes of the Spirit. This story reveals a miracle that gives us a reason to REJOICE! The first miracle done by Jesus on this day, speaks about the greatest miracle, the first in line before any other: the miracle of salvation!

Jesus came for the purpose of purification. Jesus came with the purpose of purifying many vessels through His blood, to be able to present many vessels pure before the Father. This is the picture of a new and better covenant one which the law could never offer us. The law declared us guilty, but the sacrifice and blood of Jesus declare us no longer guilty as we have been acquitted of all charges. In His mercy, He brought unto us a better covenant full of grace and truth, the message of the good news, the salvation of our souls that came unto us in the form of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Matthew 9:16-17

16. And no one puts a piece of cloth that has not been shrunk on an old garment, for such a patch tears away from the garment and a worse rent (tear is made.)
17. Neither is new wine put in old wineskins; for if it is, the skins burst and are torn into pieces, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are ruined. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.

We have been made pure vessels through the blood and death of Christ as to be made vessels worthy to carry this new wine, the anointing of the Holy Spirit. His body was beaten and broken, He suffered the most severe affliction and suffering that any man could bear, He even bore the shame of the cross and became a curse for us, bearing upon Himself the sin of the world and He did it all for each of us. Because of this sacrifice, we have every reason to REJOICE!

Jesus displayed His greatness and His power openly on this day as He performed His first miracle in the same manner, He openly displayed His glory and His power in the first in the line of all miracles that He had performed, through His death and resurrection, through which we receive the greatest miracle ever the salvation of our souls! The only begotten purified many vessels and brought many sons unto God.

2 Corinthians 4:7

7. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, not of us.

Let us REJOICE and be glad for there is One to be found worthy to deliver us from this earthen vessel which in no way is worthy to carry the

new wine. But Jesus! The Son of God, our Lord, and Saviour, the only righteous One. He willingly offered up His body unto suffering and death to declare and present us righteous before a holy God. He satisfied God's judgment against sin when He offered up His life. My heart rises in praise, like the manager that tasted the wine provided by Jesus, and before all the guests he proclaimed with joy that this wine that he had now received was better than the previous. In the same manner, we have tasted the new wine of a better and a new covenant only found in Christ Jesus our Lord! We have seen the miracle of salvation! We have received the Holy Spirit sent from God! We have been given a reason to REJOICE and be glad! That day in Canaan they did not understand or perceive the significance of the water turning into wine, but in time it was revealed to them and now to us.

Matthew 26:28-29

28. This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
29. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father's kingdom.

The disciples were unable to see what was playing out in front of them, it was as if they were taken forward into time unto that day that Jesus, the Bridegroom, will drink this fruit of the vine with His bride who has prepared and made herself ready for Him. It will be the greatest wedding banquet ever to be recorded in the history of the world and we will REJOICE with joy everlasting in the Kingdom of our Father!

REV. DR. THEREZE CATHERINE BARNARD IS FIRST OF ALL A BONDSERVANT OF CHRIST, CALLED BY GOD WITH A MANDATE TO PREPARE THE END TIME CHURCH FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST. SHE HAS SERVED IN MINISTRY FOR THE PAST 16 YEARS. SHE IS ALSO A CO-HOST OF *LIGHT OF THE WORLD*.



Planning Ahead

BY BISHOP MICHAEL ABOAGYE GHANSAH

Dear Readers:

I had an amazing insight when I was reading through the word of God. Sharing it with our wonderful readers will help all of us in this moment of economic crisis and challenges.

Let us consider Luke 14:28–30 (ESV)

28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

As people created in the image of God and in His likeness, we have all been commanded to have a fruitful and blissful life.

In order for us to become what we have to be in the will of God, we have to have a relationship with God who is the author and finisher of our faith.

As Christians, when it comes to Finances, business, and our personal life, truly we have to depend on God for all our provisions, but it doesn't mean that we are not to plan ahead in everything we do and want to become in life.

It is very important for us to mix faith with planning ahead in order for us to achieve the desired life intended for our lives by God.

It is clear that anyone who plans well will foresee dangers and avoid them. In this economic moment where things are hard, many companies and businesses are folding up due to inadequate planning ahead in everything concerning life.

The Bible teaches us to take a close look at the habits of the ants and how we could learn from their way of planning ahead and making provisions so that when the season changes, they will be in safety and not lack.

Proverbs 30:25(NIV)

25 Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer;

Here we see planning ahead and making provisions for the future helps us in our daily lives so that we can fulfill the will of God concerning our personal life and destiny.

In this economic crisis, we have to understand the value of preparation and planning ahead. The difference between abundance and scarcity is a lack of planning ahead.

Unfortunately, many believers are living in lack and poverty because they fail to mix faith with planning ahead. God in His infinite wisdom blessed mankind to be fruitful and multiply.

In Genesis 41:1-36 Which I would like you to read through. We saw how Pharaoh had a dream and was troubled with the interpretation. And we saw how God used Joseph to help Pharaoh understand the meanings of his dreams.

IN ORDER FOR US TO BECOME WHAT WE HAVE TO BE IN THE WILL OF GOD, WE HAVE TO HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WHO IS THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.

Let us consider verses 25-36 how Joseph with the wisdom of God explained to Pharaoh his dreams and gave counsel of what they needed to do.

I personally love this advice and counsel from God to Pharaoh through Joseph. So as believers, we should learn to plan ahead and make provisions for the future so as changes and challenges occur we shall be on the safer side and not get frustrated and doubt the power of God.

God bless you for choosing Everyday Life Magazine.

BISHOP GHANSAH IS THE FOUNDING BISHOP OF CROWN PRAISE FAMILY CHAPEL AND THE GENERAL OVERSEER OF ACHIEVERS CHARISMATIC MINISTRIES. HE IS ALSO A WRITER FOR THE LIVE TALK SHOW LIGHT OF THE WORLD, AND A CONTRIBUTOR TO EVERYDAY LIFE. BISHOP GHANSAH IS ALSO THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AT MANDA UNIVERSITY AND IS A CANDIDATE FOR A PHD IN CORPORATE LEADERSHIP.



TOH HOPE COLLECTION: 1ST PIECE IN THE COLLECTION

This exclusive beautifully custom-designed is the first piece of jewelry released from THE THREAD OF HOPE COLLECTION, called Rahab's Thread of Hope, with the inspiring Thread of Hope Logo which represents hope and reminds those who wear it that no matter what they're going through there is hope. The bracelet is available in silver, white and yellow gold, platinum, and stainless steel.. All proceeds go to help women and children who are victims of sex trafficking. When you receive your purchase, it will come in a jewelry box. Don't forget to order yours today for your loved ones. You can purchase Rahab's Thread of Hope at www.threadofhope.org.



REJOICE ALWAYS

BY REV. STEVE ALANI

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." -1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Life is far from easy. We can carefully plan things out, take precautions, save money and try to balance all the responsibilities life throws at us, but things just happen. We can lose a loved one, watch a hurricane wipe out an entire city, or be laid off from a job. Suffering surrounds us and there's really no way of avoiding pain completely.

But, regardless of what is swirling around us, we can always make the choice to rejoice.

WHY REJOICE?

As Christians, God promises to provide care and blessings, but he does not promise to shield us from the possibility of being hurt. Instead, he tells us that he will stand with us through everything we encounter and we are never alone (Joshua 1:9). There is a purpose for our suffering, and he finds a way to bring everything together for his glory (Romans 8:28). Our suffering is always temporary. He tells us that when we accept his gift of salvation, we will rest in heaven with him for eternity (John 10:27-28).

That's a lot to celebrate. We can rejoice in hope that God is taking care of us and there is more than our current pain or predicament. We can delight in the peace that he protects us and will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." – Romans 15:13

Our hurt and suffering as Christians is a bit different than the rest of the world. This is because we can find joy in what's to come, regardless of any suffering that may be going on presently. He has already fought and won our battles for us. We rejoice in hope by trusting him and finding peace in his victory.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO REJOICE?

There are plenty of reasons to celebrate God, but how, specifically, do you rejoice? When you think about the act of rejoicing, you probably imagine jumping for joy. But, from a biblical standpoint, what does it mean to rejoice? What does Paul mean in 1 Thessalonians when he says to "rejoice always?"

The term "rejoice" was commonly used among early Christians. It was a call to joy and often used as a salutation. Sometimes, Jesus would walk into a room and immediately call people to joy instead of using the standard "hello." Joy is more than just happiness. Jesus wasn't calling people to dance and laugh or have fun. He was asking them to choose joy instead of hopelessness. Jesus encouraged his disciples to take heart and have peace because he had already overcome the world.

"For you will go out with joy. And be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands." – Isaiah 55:12

Rejoicing does not always look like happiness. You can be hurting and still choose to delight in the Lord. You can choose to see the bigger picture and be grateful for what God has done, and is doing, with your life. Put simply, rejoicing is a choice. As Christians, we are called to joy, not to hopelessness and negativity. We should focus on what God has done for us instead of dwelling on our current suffering and pain. We are called to share that joy and hope with others.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE REJOICE?

Just like every other command in the Bible, we benefit from rejoicing. People often think of God as a demanding being who makes our lives boring with rules and commands. In reality, his commands are always for our benefit.

Obedying God's commands comes with huge benefits. Choosing to obey God brings you closer to his heart and his peace. Obedience is a true gift, but choosing to rejoice, in particular, comes with special benefits.

When you get bad news, it is very easy to slip into a negative mindset. For example, you lose your job. You can decide how you want to react to this development. You can choose the path of negativity, which comes with the belief that you will never recover and that your life is ruined. Or you can choose the eternal perspective of hope and joy. In other words, you can choose to see that God has a purpose and that he will protect you. You can choose to believe that this suffering is temporary and that heaven is coming up next.

You may have lost your job, but maybe God has something bigger in store for you. Maybe God knew you needed time to rest and be with loved ones. God always has something better in mind, you just have to trust Him and adopt the right mindset.

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." –Colossians 3:1-2

Even if you don't feel happy about something, tell God – out loud – that you trust Him. Thank him for what He has done and what He is doing. Ask Him for joy and an eternal perspective. Paul doesn't just say to rejoice always, but to also pray continually and give thanks in all circumstances. Just being in a conversation with God delivers so much peace and joy.

No matter what is happening, choose to rejoice. Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances.

You'll be amazed by how you feel.

Learn To Rejoice Always!

**When you get
bad news, it
is very easy
to slip into
a negative
mindset...**

**...Or you
can choose
the eternal
perspective of
hope and joy.**

Triumph Over Doubt!

BY DUSTY DISTAULO

I have a smile on my face and my heart is rejoicing as I sit back and look at my 'new' coffee table! We have carried this antique steamer trunk around for over 15 years, with a plan to one day turn it into a coffee table. I inherited this trunk from my Grandma K. When I look at it, I think about all the places this trunk has been and all the stories it could tell! My grandma's family immigrated from Italy to start a new life. I am sure they were both excited and scared to leave their country for a new home in America. How their hearts must have rejoiced as they stepped off that boat, with all the hopes and dreams that this new adventure

would bring. I think about the moves our family has made over the years, they too were full of excitement, worry and hope, and yet we were not leaving behind all that we knew to start a new life, like Grandma K did. Her courage paved the way for the amazing blessings we have now! Many years have passed since Grandma K walked this earth and times have certainly changed. Good times and bad times existed in 1922 just like they do today in 2022. I now see the beauty that comes when times of hardship, sadness and disappointment blend with times of rejoicing, gladness and victory.



That special blend of sadness and joy captures many moments on the journey of life. The truth is, sometimes we forget to rejoice in the little things as much as we do the big things. It's so easy to rejoice when things are going great, or prayers are being answered. Been there, done that. It is an entirely different thing to rejoice when things are not going as planned, or when it feels like our prayers have not been heard. As I encourage my heart to remember the small things I hope it encourages yours too. A note left on your computer that just says, 'I love you mom', or the smiles on your family's faces when they are enjoying a meal that you prepared. Or rejoicing over a project that is finally finished! These can be treasures we keep locked in our hearts, which can be brought to mind when challenges come. We remind our heart to rejoice, even when the big prayers that we have been hoping and believing for are still not answered, because our hope is not in circumstances, but our hope is in the One who sees and knows. We REJOICE in HOPE!

So as I sit here at my new coffee table reading and praying over my family, while enjoying a cup of coffee my heart rejoices. I have a smile on my face as I think of all the new stories this table will be able to tell! This trunk that once traveled the country will now hold our family's treasures. It will hold our tired feet at the end of a long day. It will hold some yummy food for a family picnic night. It will hold a cup of coffee as we sit and dream together for our family and our future. It will be a reminder of memories past and memories to be made!



Gingerbread Cookie Recipe

BY DUSTY DISTAULO

As the holidays approach I can't help but think about the smells and tastes of Christmas! One of our family traditions is to bake several different types of cookies to not only enjoy but to give to our friends and neighbors as gifts. One cookie that is always a favorite, and just smells like Christmas, are gingerbread cookies! Sometimes we ice them, and sometimes we just enjoy them as is. They are perfect with a hot cup of tea or cocoa. The holidays make me think of family, traditions and wonder. When our children were little they loved to put cookies and milk out for Santa, with a note reminding him that they had been good. We were just as excited as they were to see their little faces on Christmas morning, when nothing was left but cookie crumbs and presents under the tree! Hope you enjoy this holiday cookie recipe and some new traditions with your loved ones, as much as our family does.

Ingredients Needed:

- 5 Cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 4 teaspoons ground ginger
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup unsulfured molasses

Directions:

1. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Set aside.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, cream butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in spices and salt, then beat in eggs and molasses until combined. Reduce speed on low and gradually add flour mixture until combined. Divide dough into two disks, cover with plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes to an hour.
3. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Remove dough to let it warm up a little before rolling to prevent cracking of the dough.
4. Roll dough on a floured surface to ¼-inch thickness and cut with your favorite holiday shapes.
5. Place cookies on parchment lined baking sheets and bake for 10-13 minutes, depending on size of cookies. (golden brown around edges).
6. Place cookies on cooling racks to cool.



Hutch Redo

BY DUSTY DISTAULO

I found this hutch at a thrift store for \$65.00!! It was in perfect condition and still had the key to open and close the upper glass doors. I brought this home, removed the hardware and wiped it down. I purchased a quart of chalk paint for \$40.00 and painted it and did some distressing. I kept and reused the original hardware. With a little vision and 'elbow grease' we now have this beautiful hutch that holds family keepsakes, dishes and china. Next time you are out, think twice before you pass up that dated piece of furniture because it might be your next treasure!



CITRO

COLLECTION FINE JEWELRY

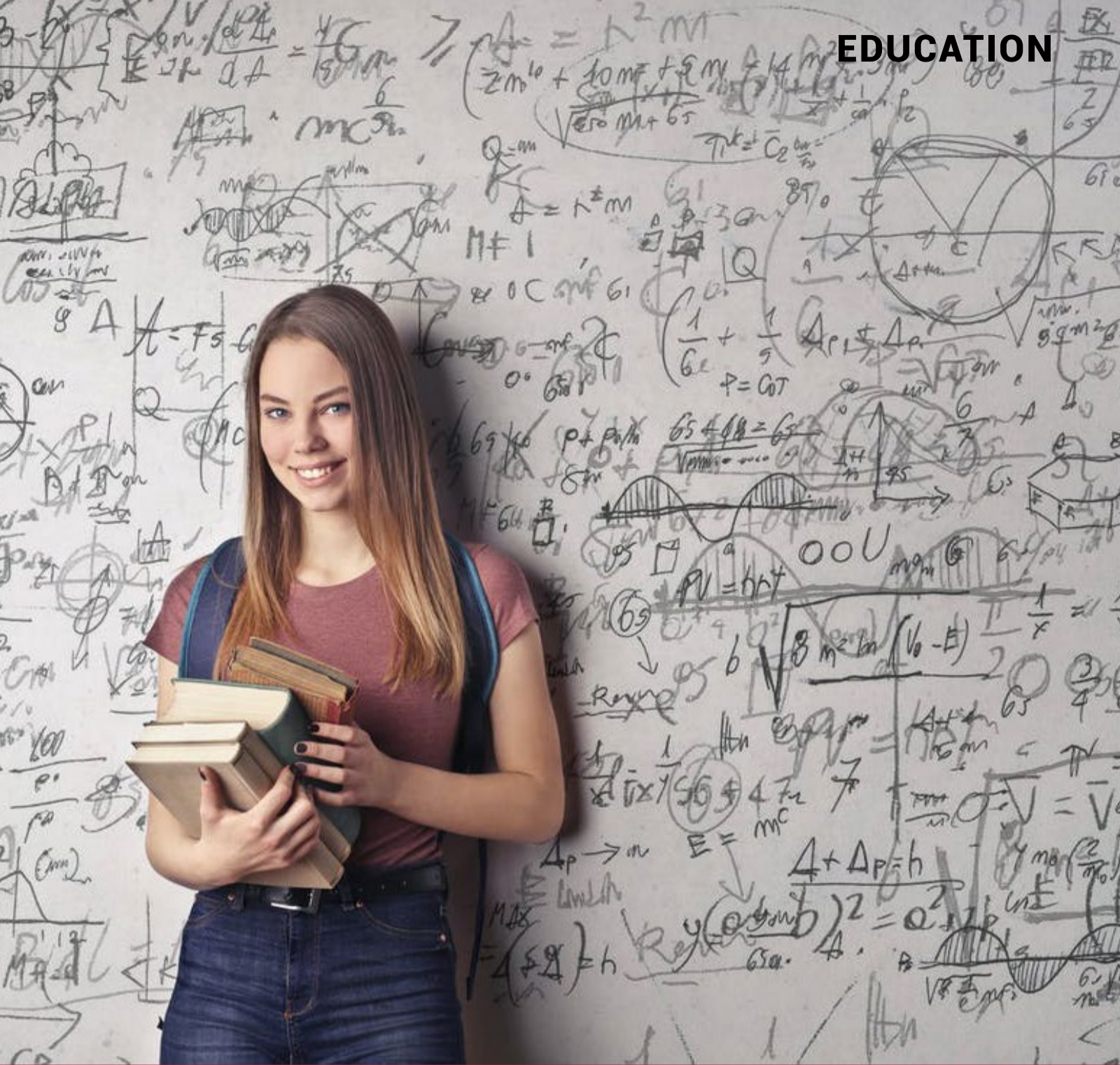
Citro Collection has expanded even during our lockdown. We have now designed a brand new necklace: two hearts combined as one. As believers, when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we become one with God. For anyone who struggles through anything, this necklace is a constant reminder that we belong to God and He resides in us. In addition, this heart necklace was designed with the intention of purchasing as is (no stones) or with stones to be given to mothers, grandmothers, fiancées or wives for birthday necklaces. You can place your desired stones to represent the months of children, grandchildren, and the one you love; or if you lost a loved one you can place the color of the birthstone as a reminder that your loved one is in Heaven.



The heart is available in silver, white and yellow gold, platinum, and stainless steel.

Prices of the jewelry varies according to which metal or stone, semi gems, gems or lab created gems and stones you choose. You can send an email to info@threadofhope.org for prices. All of the jewelry will be created and shipped all over the world by our jeweler Princess Diamonds. All of our jewelry will come in a jewelry box. Shipping charges will be applied in accordance to where you live. No taxes will be charged as all proceeds will benefit **Thread of Hope, Inc.**

This exclusive beautifully custom-designed bracelet is the first piece of jewelry released from THE CITRO COLLECTION FINE JEWELRY with the inspiring Thread of Hope Logo which represents hope and reminds those who wear it that no matter what they're going through there is hope. This bracelet can come engraved with initials or date of a special occasion or loved one. Please send us an email to info@threadofhope.org for prices.



This section on education is important to us and is there to help encourage parents for better communication between home and school for a successful academic career.

EVERY PRAYER ANSWERED!

BY REV. DR. CAROL DRAKE WHEATLEY

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT GOD ANSWERS EVERY PRAYER. DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT?

Everyone prays whether they believe in God or not. It is an innate response to pray in the midst of a crisis: "O God! Help me!" We pray when we need things, we pray when we're sick, we pray when we're in financial distress, and we pray when we are hurting no matter what the reason.

But does God really hear your prayers? And if He hears you, does He really answer your prayers?

Many people say yes, but most people say no... but let's see what the Bible says.

Let's take a look at 1 John 5:14-15 which says, "Now this is the **confidence** that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to **His will**, He hears us, and if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." You almost have to get help to misunderstand that sentence. The word is literally telling us that we can have confidence in God. Do you? Do you really have the faith to move mountains? Or the faith to receive healing?

How to gain confidence...

Our confidence in God grows when we begin to renew our minds by reading the Bible and spending time with God so He can reveal Himself to us. John 9:31 plainly tells us that God does not hear the prayers of sinners. He does, however, hear the prayers of people of faith but only when we pray according to His will. But how do we know His will? By reading the Bible and renewing your mind. Then we can ask Him anything and He will grant it. Period.

Anything? I can ask for anything? Yes, but remember who you are. You are a born-again child of God who walks (or should walk) in grace and maturity. Because you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, *you are free to ask anything, but wise enough not to!*

But my pastor says...

I can't tell you how many times I speak with people who adamantly deny the truth of what is in John 9:31. They defend their unanswered prayers by saying that "Sometimes the answer is yes, sometimes it is no, and sometimes God says not now." That is not what scripture teaches.

Many churches have put their own spin on unanswered prayer, using parts of scriptures and many Old Testament references to justify their error. But you are not Job! You are not required to sit somewhere in public and pour ashes over yourself. You do not have to cry out to God hoping He hears you. You are a New Testament child of the Living God, and you have the Holy Spirit living within you. You don't have to go to a mountaintop somewhere and fast and deny yourself in the hope that God might just somehow hear you. God lives in you! He's already there in spite of the fact that your pastor every week says, "We ask the Holy Spirit to come." When a child of God is in

the room, the Holy Spirit is in the room. Why pray such foolishness? Pray what the Bible says.

When it comes to the "not now" response to prayer, a person who walks in maturity understands why their prayers are not instantly manifested. A mature believer knows that God's plan follows a path, and the mature believer is patient on that path because he **knows** his prayer was heard and answered. It is the immature believer who pitches a fit because they did not get what they wanted when they demanded it. (By the way, God is an eternal being not constrained by time like we are!)

But scripture says...

The Bible, in 2 Corinthians 1:20 says that all of the promises (His will) are yes in Him and in Him amen. When Jesus tells us in Mark 11:24-26 that we can have anything we ask for, there is not a "no" in that response to prayer. Jesus makes it about as plain as it can be when He says, "Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

That's a pretty broad promise, but as you can see, it is not without condition. In fact, it has extremely critical conditions attached to it.

Reasons prayer goes unanswered...

The above scriptures give the person who is praying certain responsibilities to get an answer to prayer. Those responsibilities are to:

- **Be confident:** When there is something that you want that is scriptural (like healing), but you're not sure God wants you to have what you are asking for, you won't receive the blessing because of your doubt. I pray for lots of people who think God does not want them to walk in health or that God wants them to learn something from their illness. They "believe" that God is able to heal but they do not "know" confidently that He will heal them.

- **Ask according to His will:** If you know what the Bible says, it's easy to pray according to His will. If He says, (and He does throughout scripture) that "I am the God Who heals you." Then you can be confident that when you ask for healing that you are asking according to His will. But when you pray with uncertainty, saying something like, "Please heal me if it be Your will." That's a denial of what scripture says about our loving Father.
- **Believe that we already have our request:** If we want something from God, we have to believe that He grants it upon request. That way we can go on our way rejoicing in answered prayer before it actually manifests! But if we still see ourselves as not receiving, then we will ask over and over because we then come to Him from a position of lack, not from a position of victory.
- Forgive anyone against whom you hold an offense: God will not forgive you if you are holding any form of unforgiveness against another person. If someone has so much as offended you, you cannot hold a grudge. Forgiveness completely prevents answered prayer and it completely prevents God from forgiving you.

Any of these reasons will stop God's answers from manifesting in your life. God answers prayers, but your conduct, your thoughts, and your beliefs can prevent the answer from getting through.

God isn't magic...

Many (most) people believe that "God can do anything He wants to do." While there is some truth in that, when it comes to prayer, we need to look at it more closely.

God does not have the right to come along and mess around in your life. He gave you the authority to live a godly life and He won't intervene unless He is asked. It's like a landlord/tenant relationship. God owns the earth and all that is in it, but He has a blood covenant with you that gives you the right to live any way you choose. Just as a landlord can't walk into the house he owns without the renter's permission, neither will God "walk into"

your life without your permission. He is a God of miracles and love and compassion, but He is not a magician. He does not perform because you tell Him to. Remember this:

**God can do anything He
wants to do...BUT...**

**God can't do
anything you don't
want Him to do!**

If you've asked Him to help you lose weight, but every time you look in the mirror you remember how much you hate your body, you will not receive a blessing. How can God bless what you hate? If you've asked for a financial miracle, but you won't give the homeless lady on the corner a dollar but just scowl at her and tell her to get a job, you will not receive a blessing. How can God bless you when you are offended by and hold in contempt the very person He sent His son to die for?

The bottom line to prayer...

God hears your prayers, and He answers them. He wants to answer them. He wants to bless you. But it is your own heart that prevents the answers from coming. Paul the apostle tells us to examine ourselves. That's good advice.

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Family Devotion

BY REV. DR. JONATHAN DISTAULO

FAMILIES TEXT - Jeremiah 32:27

"Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too difficult for Me?"

DEVOTIONAL - Among the many lessons taught within the context of family is the lesson of equipping our children to hear challenging words without feeling disconnected to us, to respond to teaching without turning a deaf ear. Within today's text is the story of how God chose to deal with the children of Israel in their persistent refusal to obey God's teaching and abuse his patience. This serious moment of discipline, leveled against the children of Israel, ends with a reminder that nothing is too difficult for God, and that God's commitment to them remains unbroken. God even promises to "restore their fortunes," so what does this tell us about family exactly? When you belong to a family, there needs to be an understanding of who is in charge, with that comes times of rebuke and times of encouragement, times of discipline and times of reward. It's unpopular to talk about rebuke and encouragement, discipline and reward, and yet God models this with His own children.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I am your child. I submit myself to your authority and choose this day to honor you in what I say and do. Open my ears to hear you better. Help me to lead my family well, to show grace where needed and be approachable at all times. Amen.

JOURNAL PROMPT

Have I silenced God's voice of rebuke or His discipline in my life?

APPLICATION

Try communicating a moment of **A.W.E.** with a family member.

A - here's something I appreciate about you

W - here something I want for our relationship

E - here's how I feel about you

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LOOK INSIDE ↴



Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal

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Fluency Instruction for Adolescents: Evidence from Research and Practice

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This conceptual paper addresses fluency instruction and assessment for students with or at risk for reading disabilities. Although a multidimensional construct, fluency tests more often have been limited to measuring students' reading rate and accuracy. The reasons for this are explained as well as how fluency tests have influenced classroom instruction in ways not supported by research. Specifically, an argument is presented against using fluency scores to restrict the texts that students are assigned to read. Then, the basis for having students repeatedly read a single text is described along with literature suggesting this common practice may not lead to expert reading performance. Finally, the paper presents recommendations for forms of fluency instruction that are supported by research as well as a promising practice aligned to those recommendations, called Varied Practice Reading (VPR). The basis of VPR, its components, and the early results of implementation studies in Grades 4 and 7 also are described.

Keywords: Reading fluency instruction, reading fluency assessment, reading disabilities, Varied Practice Reading

INTRODUCTION

Fluency, particularly the rate at which a reader can process words accurately, has been associated with reading ability in the middle grades (e.g., Clemens et al., 2017; Sabatini et al., 2019). As first identified by LaBerge and Samuels (1974), reading words with automaticity frees cognitive resources that would otherwise be devoted to decoding individual words. Because working memory has a limited capacity (Baddeley, 2012), puzzling over multiple small units does not leave room for stringing together larger chunks of text to grasp their meaning. Although automaticity is important to achieving comprehension, rate and accuracy still are not the sum total of the fluency construct.

Rather, fluency comprises a number of component skills that are observable only when someone reads aloud and, thus, are related to oral language ability (Kuhn & Schwanenflugel, 2019). For example, a fluent reader groups words together into meaningful phrases, places emphasis on certain syllables, reads with a faster or slower pace to match the tempo of the action in a text, raises or lowers voice pitch to reflect emotion, pauses to maintain correct meaning in phrases and to add emphasis, uses intonation within sentences, and demonstrates expression across sentences. All of these qualities—collectively referred to here as prosody—are indicative of processing text fluently and with understanding, but they are difficult to measure because they largely require subjective judgements (Godde et al., 2020). Much like writing a text, reading a text aloud involves personal style that makes each individual's reading

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somewhat unique. Thus, evaluating prosody, such as with rubric ratings, can be more prone to opinion than when merely counting words read correctly.

This conceptual paper addresses the ways that students' fluency commonly is measured and taught in schools as well as the implications of the prevailing approaches. In addition, it identifies fluency instructional practices that are aligned to research and describes new directions in the field.

Causes and Consequences of Measuring Fluency Rate and Accuracy

A core principle of response to intervention or a multi-tiered system of support is that students at risk for reading disabilities are identified as early as possible so that they can receive preventative instruction and, if necessary, increasingly intensive instruction (Fletcher & Vaughn, 2009). Early identification necessitates testing children when they are still developing basic reading skills like letter-sound knowledge or single-syllable word reading (Ehri, 1995). These types of skills lend themselves well to being measured by rate and accuracy of identification and are indicative of children's future reading success (Solari et al., 2014). Yet, measuring oral reading rate and accuracy has been popular into adolescence for a couple reasons.

First, comprehension may be the primary expectation for reading in the middle grades and above, but measuring comprehension is time consuming (Petscher et al., 2017). Rather than the 30 to 45 minutes it takes to read several passages and answer questions on them, fluency tests would be considered more time efficient in that each student reads aloud for only 3 minutes total with a few additional minutes spent listening to directions and transitioning. Second, comprehension ability grows slowly in adolescence (Ricketts et al., 2020), so it is not reasonable to gather data frequently or within short timespans to monitor progress. Although rate and accuracy scores also do not change rapidly nor dramatically as students advance into the middle grades (Ecklund et al., 2015), fluency tests offer multiple forms of similarly short duration that allow a measure to be administered repeatedly so that student performance can be graphed to identify a trend and rate of improvement over time. This is beneficial for monitoring students' progress in interventions (Christ & Desjardins, 2018).

Despite the appeal of testing fluency rate and accuracy, the widespread use of these measures has been attributed to concerning instructional practices. In general, the approach has been to match the classroom activities to how students are assessed, as detailed in the sections that follow. These examples raise issues about the consequential validity of fluency rate and accuracy measures because the instructional practices described suggest the measures are influencing teaching in ways not intended in the test development nor supported by valid inferences that can be made with the test scores (Messick, 1995).

Limiting Access to Text

One way that fluency assessments have had disparate instructional consequences for students with reading disabilities is in the kinds of reading material to which they are given access. Specifically, accuracy scores—alone or in combination with comprehension scores—have been used for almost 80 years to match students to text deemed to be at the optimal level of difficulty (Betts, 1946). For example,

a common recommendation is that students practice fluency with independent- or instructional-level text, which is defined as text that can be read with 95-100% (independent) or 90-94% accuracy (instructional; e.g., Osborn et al., 2003). Similarly, teachers might apply a fluency assessment's proficiency cut score for reading automaticity as the expectation for how quickly and accurately a student should be able to read an assigned text. However, fluency assessment cut scores are not designed to be used for matching students to authentic texts that they would read for instruction or enjoyment.

That is because the measures are developed to reduce form effects by having specially written texts that control the vocabulary and syntax so that the different passages offered in a given grade level can be considered of equivalent difficulty (Santi et al., 2016). Thus, the cut scores for proficiency are not intended as thresholds for how quickly and accurately a student should read any text other than the assessment passages. Consider that the cut scores on many measures have increased over the last decade, raising the expected performance by 5 to 12 words correct per minute (Hasbrouk & Tindal, 2017). Yet, the updates to the Hasbrouk and Tindal norms were not made because the researchers determined that students just needed to read faster now. Rather, the updates came because schools changed from administering passages they self-selected from their textbooks to using commercially available, standardized oral reading fluency assessments with equated passages (Hasbrouk & Tindal, 2017).

Nevertheless, teachers may still believe that if students cannot read a classroom text at the rate their commercial fluency test suggests they are fluent, then the students should be given easier reading material (Northrop & Kelly, 2018). In fact, middle school teachers have reported that the primary reason they do not devote more time to reading texts or using their textbooks was the belief that students would have difficulty reading the materials (Murray et al., 2022). In schools that administer fluency tests, teachers conceivably would be using those scores among other potential literacy data to make judgments about what texts to assign or how much reading students should do in their course materials.

Using a test's fluency norms as the reason for denying students the opportunity to read complex texts carries unintended negative consequences for those students because they would have less exposure than their peers to the kinds of language and content for which all students may be held accountable on state summative assessments and need for advanced comprehension (Compton et al., 2014). This may explain why using leveled text has not proven useful for improving the skills of students with reading difficulties (Hiebert, 2017). To the contrary, multiple studies have suggested that providing students some degree of scaffolded challenge while reading complex or challenging texts is what helps grow their language and strengthen their skills (Brown et al., 2018; Lupo et al., 2019; Shanahan et al., 2012). This has included when specifically working on students' reading rate (O'Connor et al., 2010).

Repeated Reading

Perhaps the most common way that fluency rate and accuracy tests have influenced instruction can be seen in the proliferation of repetitive reading practice in classroom interventions (Zimmermann et al., 2021). For beginning readers, this may involve drilling with letter, word, or phrase cards. But by the middle of first grade on,

repeated reading typically is characterized by pairs of students timing each other as they read a single passage three times each and provide each other feedback on errors (Chard et al., 2009). Often, students only read for a minute, so they are not expected to finish the passage before starting back at the beginning again. Such an approach to practicing fluency skills is consistent with how students are assessed. That is, repeated reading focuses on tracking and increasing the number of words students read correctly per minute.

The theoretical basis of repeated reading activities is derived from motor-skill training for athletes, musicians, and dancers (Smolkowski et al., 2016). Referred to in the literature as deliberate practice with a goal of achieving a criterion level of expert performance, an individual may rehearse select subskills or components that are tricky or problematic and gradually build to exhibiting smooth integration and delivery of all parts forming the complex act (Ericsson, 2020). Compared to motor skills, there have been fewer applications of deliberate practice to achieve expert performance in cognitive skills, such as chess playing (Moxley & Charness, 2013), but its features are apparent in how repetition is used in classrooms to build the cognitive skill of reading fluently. Specifically, students are assigned to rehearse the words and sentences that make up a connected text to achieve a criterion level of rate and accuracy. Students with reading disabilities might even be asked to set a series of interim goals and chart their progress toward attaining the rate and accuracy criterion.

However, using this type of goal for instructional purposes risks communicating to students that expert performance is defined as reading quickly and automatically—to the exclusion of reading with any prosodic elements (Kuhn et al., 2010). Despite rarely being the focus of intervention research, prosody has been linked to comprehension across languages (Wade-Woolley et al., 2022). This is reflected in the fact that expert readers do not simply read fast all the time; they know how to moderate their reading rate as needed to maintain or convey understanding. Moreover, expert readers may re-read a portion of text to repair a breakdown in comprehension, but they do not read every text repeatedly.

In other words, expert reading performance reflects not only automaticity, but also conscious effort. Research on deliberate practice stresses that an expert has control over all the contributing skills and can call upon them to flexibly and efficiently respond to differing circumstances when performing the complex act (Ericsson, 2020). Repeated reading potentially might not foster this kind of control because students raise their rate and accuracy of the practice passage by becoming acquainted with it and being able to anticipate the words and when they will be encountered in that specific text. Thus, findings suggest that improvements in automaticity achieved from repeatedly reading one passage do not consistently transfer to unrehearsed passages more generally (Lee & Yoon, 2017).

Recommendations and Future Directions for Fluency Instruction

Because using fluency norms to match students to text and having students read the same passage multiple times under timed conditions are common in classroom interventions but not well supported by research, it is important to identify what teachers should be doing instead. This is especially true as students advance into upper elementary and middle school where weak reading skills affect students' learn-

ing in content area classes (Reed et al., 2017; Westrick et al., 2020). Recommended approaches to supporting fluency development in Grades 4-9 include demonstrating and practicing prosodic reading skills as well as providing opportunities for students to read a variety of texts (Vaughn et al., 2022). If students are asked to reread a text, they should be given a different purpose for doing so, such as to answer questions or identify unfamiliar words (Vaughn et al., 2022).

A new approach being investigated, referred to as Varied Practice Reading (VPR), incorporates these recommendations (Reed, 2019). In VPR, sets of three or four different passages are written on the same topic so that 85% or more of the unique words used in the first passage also are used in the subsequent passages (see sample passage set in the Appendix). This gives students with reading difficulties repeated exposure to a common set of words, as would be the case with repeated reading. But unlike repeated reading, the words in VPR passages appear in different semantic and syntactic contexts so that students cannot anticipate when nor how the words will be used. Rather, they practice reading the words across a greater variety of fictional and informational passages that gradually increase in difficulty. The approach draws upon statistical learning in which increasing the contextual diversity allows a student to identify regularities of the words' usage that help build knowledge while ruling out information that is irrelevant to understanding the words (Joseph & Nation, 2018; Rosa et al., 2017).

When students read the VPR passages, they are not timed, but their partners are asked to mark and provide feedback on any errors made. Error correction has been a common element of repeated reading interventions (Zimmermann et al., 2021), so it was applied in VPR for the similar purposes of (a) giving partners a reason for listening and (b) giving readers an opportunity to correct their use of the words before encountering them in the next passage. Research suggests that when statistical learning of the language is incomplete, directly pointing out patterns can improve word reading performance (Treiman & Kessler, 2022). However, the primary focus in VPR is on reading with prosody. The listener in the VPR pair is asked to tell the partner whether the reading sounded natural and like the partner was talking. Students also set and reflect on personal fluency goals that include reading with expression and reading in a way that helped with understanding the passage—as opposed to quantifying their words read correctly across passages that are not equated.

An initial study with fourth graders found that students randomly assigned to VPR statistically significantly outperformed students randomly assigned to repeated reading after 12 weeks of using VPR 3 or 4 times per week (30 total sessions; Reed et al., 2019). Although implemented as a class-wide intervention in the core literacy block, the students who benefited the most were those typically identified for a Tier 2 reading intervention. Teacher and student feedback on VPR was positive, indicating that there was greater interest in reading the different passages as opposed to repeatedly reading just one passage.

An expanded version of VPR is currently under development for Grades 6-8, with passages that focus on science and social studies concepts and associated vocabulary words commonly taught in middle schools. In this way, the reading intervention time will be leveraged to prepare students for accessing grade-level text in their content area classes. In addition to completing the procedures described for

fourth graders, middle school students independently will answer comprehension questions and a writing prompt about the passages after reading them with their partners. This provides a new purpose for students to return to the passages and review information. A proof-of-concept study with seventh graders found that, in one semester of implementation, students in the VPR intervention significantly improved their performance on standardized measures of science, social studies, and vocabulary (Reed & Aloe, 2020).

Summary

It is important to keep in mind that fluency measurement was designed to be an efficient means of detecting risk for reading difficulties—not as the model for fluency instruction. When used inappropriately, the consequential validity of the measures is threatened because they have a disparately negative impact on the students who are denied access to complex text or who lose precious instructional time focusing narrowly on their reading rate and accuracy. Expert readers are prosodic and can call upon all component skills to adjust to the reading demands of different texts. Helping students progress toward expert performance requires more than rehearsal of single texts. Rather, fluency practice can offer students repeated exposures to words in different contexts and a focus on reading naturally over reading quickly.

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Learning Disabilities:

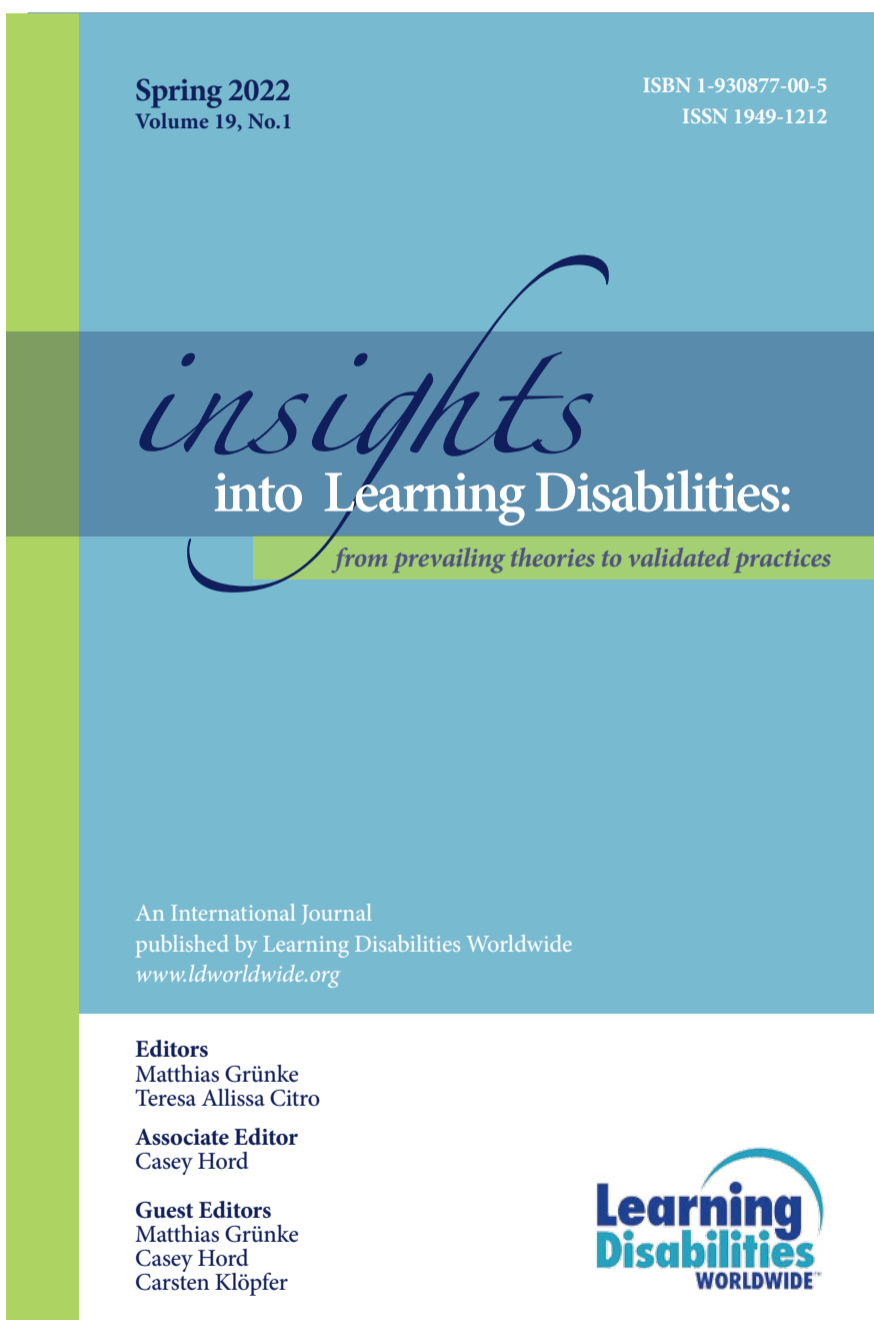
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Zimmermann, L., Reed, D. K., & Aloe, A. M. (2021). A meta-analysis of non-repetitive reading fluency interventions for students with reading difficulties. *Remedial and Special Education*, 42, 78-93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932519855058>

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The Effects of the PESTS Strategy on the Spelling Skills of a Third Grader With Severe Literacy Difficulties

Matthias Grünke

Isabel Skirde

University of Cologne

In this single-case study, we evaluated the effects of PESTS, a simple mnemonic strategy to help students remember how to spell difficult words. Our participant was a 9;6-year-old girl with a suspected learning disability in reading and writing. We applied a multiple-baseline design across word sets with one follow-up measurement two weeks after the end of the intervention. The dependent measure was the number of correctly spelled words from a list of 15 difficult nouns. After only a couple of days, the student reached a perfect score on the test and even after two weeks did not commit a single spelling mistake. Although this is only a small single-case study, the findings give reasons for optimism that PESTS can be a very effective tool in supporting students with learning disabilities to overcome their spelling problems.

Keywords: Spelling disorders, mnemonics, single-case study, learning disabilities, elementary education

INTRODUCTION

Being able to spell correctly is pivotal for several reasons with regard to both reading and writing. For example, proper spelling facilitates written communication. If universal conventions and rules concerning the correct order of letters are applied, understanding a text becomes much easier than if everything were left to one's personal discretion. The same goes for writing something intended to be comprehended by another reader. Moreover, spelling errors can have grave consequences for one's livelihood as adult, where job applications or resumés make a bad impression if they contain errors. And even though spell-checkers are helpful in many ways, nevertheless, it is risky to rely on them exclusively (Joshi & Carreker, 2009).

Most students acquire acceptable spelling skills by the end of their elementary school years. However, many of them do not. In fact, between 3 and 11% of all children and adolescents suffer from a spelling and/or reading disorder (Galuschka & Schulte-Körne, 2016) and are at a heightened risk of academic failure. In addition, their chances of finding adequate employment

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are comparatively low (Joseph & Powell, 2022). Finally, individuals with poor literacy skills are prone to developing psychological problems, including depression and anxiety (Willcutt & Gaffney-Brown 2004).

Thus, it is of fundamental importance to provide students who struggle with spelling with appropriate and effective instruction. Fortunately, quite a few reliable studies are available in this area and have come up with successful interventions. In a recent meta-analysis by Galuschka et al. (2020), summarizing the effects of 34 sound experiments, the authors concluded that there are many very beneficial approaches to remedy spelling difficulties. What all serviceable methods seem to have in common is their potential to "... help build and automate spoken and written language structures and, in turn, reduce cognitive load" (p. 14).

One of the most effective ways to lower the demand on mental resources needed to perform an otherwise complex task such as spelling is the use of so-called mnemonics. These "memory-aiding strategies" (Cook, 1989, p. 3) are designed to help with information retention and retrieval. Common mnemonic devices include acronyms, acrostics, rhymes, and songs, all linking unfamiliar content to already known and concrete materials (Fontana et al., 2007; Mastropieri et al., 2000; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 2000).

An especially effective memory-aiding strategy uses eye-catching pictures connected to short sentences. Howard and colleagues (2008) developed a specific technique called PESTS using this kind of mnemonic to assist students in spelling difficult words. In their paper, the authors give the example of helping children to remember how to write the word "trouble" by presenting them with a drawing of two people in a car before a fork in the road and the sentence "Turn right off uncle Ben's last exit." By recalling the picture and connecting the first letter of each word in this short instruction, students can easily deduce how to spell "trouble" correctly.

As part of their study, Howard et al. (2008) compared PESTS with the "look, cover, write, check" technique (Cook, 1997). Without giving further details, they concluded:

In our comparison of the spelling approaches we found that, on average, students did not learn any sight words beyond what they initially knew on the weekly pretest when they were taught using the traditional "look, cover, write, check" method. However, when using PESTS, all of the children improved their spelling. The average gain scores were 1.5 to 2.5 words spelled correctly from the list of five target words. (p. 6)

The purpose of the present study was to shed further light on the effectiveness of PESTS. We found no papers published in peer-reviewed journals on

verifying this strategy meeting the standards for acceptable professional research. To fill this gap in the literature, we conducted a short single-case analysis with a female third grader, trying to teach her the correct spelling of 15 tricky, but commonly used words.

METHODS

Setting and Participant

Our participant was a 9;6 year old girl (Lea – her name was changed to maintain her anonymity) who was attending third grade in an elementary school in a major city in Germany. She did not have an immigrant background and was described by her teacher as reserved, quiet, and friendly. Testing Lea's spelling skills using a standardized orthography test (Stock & Schneider, 2008) revealed a very low percentage of 5 – far below the level of her classmates. Apart from language arts, her school achievement could be considered mediocre. She was tested for a learning disability in the areas of reading and writing at the time of the study (the results were not yet available when this paper was being prepared). Lea was very conscious of her academic shortcomings and was motivated to work on them.

Experimental Design

We applied a multiple-baseline design across three word sets consisting of a baseline and a treatment phase. The study stretched across 10 school days with daily performance measurements. We did not include a maintenance phase. However, two weeks after the last probe, the second author went back to the school and tested Lea again to determine if she was able to maintain her performance. All sessions were delivered in a 1:1 format with an instructor (the second author) and the student.

Dependent Variable

We selected 15 nouns from a collection of words that are most commonly used in the German language, but difficult to spell (see www.duden.de/Liste-der-rechtschreiblich-schwierigen-Woerter). To be included, a word had to consist of a maximum of seven letters (the complete list is available from the authors upon request). Lea was dictated the 15 problem nouns. The number of correctly spelled words served as the dependent variable. Every day, the sequence in which the nouns were dictated varied randomly. To ensure reliability, about 30% (27.27%) of all dictations were independently reviewed by a research assistant who was blind to the purpose of the study. The interrater-agreement reached 100%.

Procedures

Before the intervention started and the PESTS strategy was introduced, the second author played a game with Lea for approximately 15 minutes. This was done to control non-specific intervention effects and increase the internal

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validity of the study. After play time was over, the second author dictated the 15 nouns. No feedback was given on Lea's performance. At the beginning of the first treatment session, the second author presented Lea with the first set of five words on an 8.27 x 11.69-inch sheet of cardboard (the selection was drawn randomly from the pool of 15 nouns). She then introduced the corresponding mnemonic pictures along with the associated sentences (all materials are available from the authors upon request). Subsequently, the second author described what was happening in each picture, put it aside, thought out loud about the sentences and the first letters in each word, and then wrote down the corresponding noun. Next, she asked Lea to repeat this procedure. The second author intervened whenever the student needed assistance. Attending to each of the five nouns of the first word set in the described manner lasted for approximately 15 minutes. Finally, Lea's performance was evaluated as outlined above.

At the beginning of the second session, the second author went over any spelling errors the student had committed the day before and discussed the correct responses with her. Afterwards, she went over the five words for the day, first demonstrating how to use the strategy and then letting Lea try it out herself. The following sessions were mainly dedicated to rehearsing the nouns that she had already learned to spell. For the second and third word sets, the procedures were carried out in the same way as for the first. The more words Lea spelled correctly, the less time was spent rehearsing them. Instead, the intervention focused on the nouns she still had trouble spelling.

Treatment sessions lasted between 15 and 25 minutes (this does not include the time spent on evaluating past performance). Naturally, practicing three word sets at the end of the intervention phase lasted longer than practicing one or two. However, as soon a series of five nouns was given specific attention twice in a row, Lea picked up on them pretty quickly and did not need to go over the pictures and sentences any more. A follow-up measurement was carried out two weeks after the treatment.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for the Three Word Sets*

	Word Set 1	Word Set 2	Word Set 3
Min. A Phase	0	0	0
Min. B Phase	4	5	4
Max. A Phase	0	1	0
Max. B Phase	5	5	5
M A Phase	0.00	0.25	0.00
M B Phase	4.71	5.00	4.60
SD A Phase	0.00	0.50	0.00
SD B Phase	0.49	0.00	0.55

As illustrated in Figure 1, Lea was not able to spell any of the 15 problem words correctly during baseline conditions. The only exception was one noun that she got right once before the intervention. As soon as the PESTS strategy was introduced, Lea's performance reached the maximum of five correctly spelled words for Sets 1 and 2. For Set 3, she instantly got four nouns correct. At the end of the treatment, Lea was able to spell out all 15 words without making a mistake. Because we conducted only one follow-up probe (instead of planning for a maintenance phase with multiple measurements), the results are not included in the tables and the figure. Fortunately, Lea remembered the spelling of every single word and was able to write all of them down correctly, achieving a perfect score of 15.

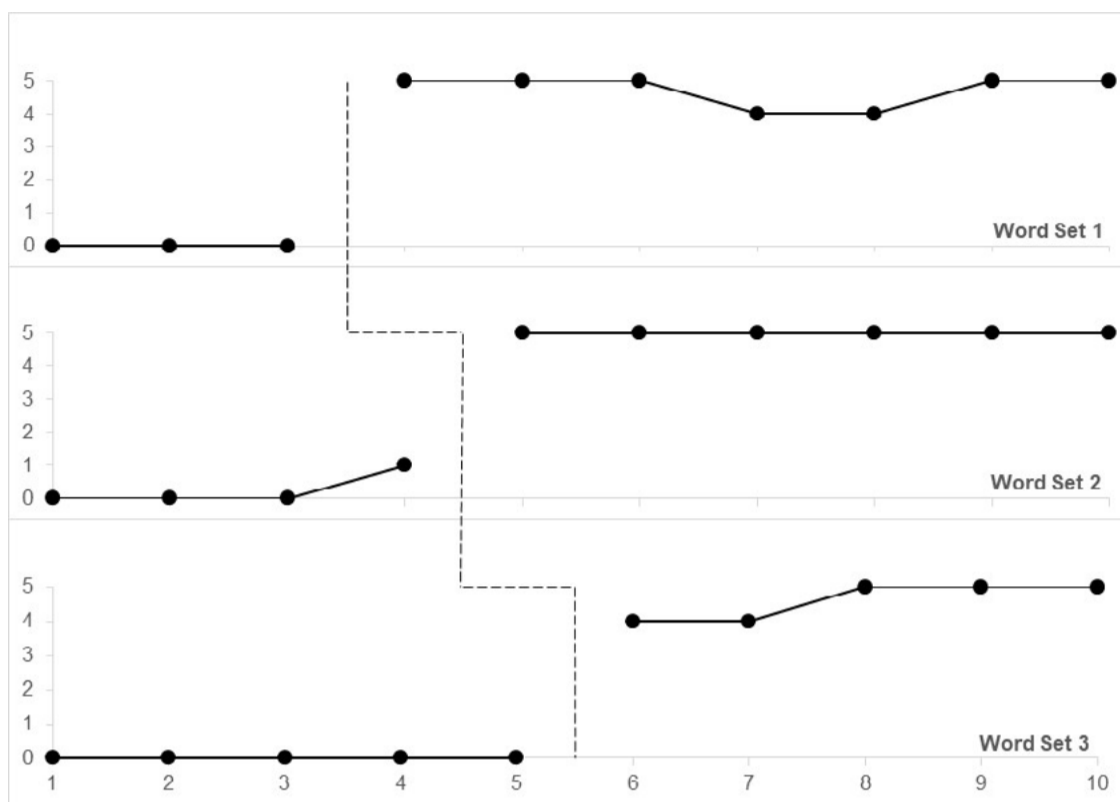


Figure 1. Number of Correctly Spelled Words (y-Axis) on Each Day of the Study (x-Axis)

As part of our analysis, we determined three commonly used non-overlap coefficients: percentage of non-overlapping data (PND), non-overlap of all pairs (NAP), and Tau-U (see Wolery et al., 2010). The computations were done using three online calculators: www.ktarlow.com/stats/pnd, www.singlecaseresearch.org/calculators/nap and www.ktarlow.com/stats/tau. Not surprisingly, all effect sizes reached very high values for improvements between Phases A and B. Although we collected only a small number of data points, all non-overlap measures turned out to be statistically significant (see Table 2).

Table 2. Overlap Indices for the Three Word Sets

	Word Set 1	Word Set 2	Word Set 3
PND	100% (< .05*)	100% (< .05*)	100% (< .05*)
NAP	100% (< .05*)	100% (< .05*)	100% (< .05*)
Tau-U	0.82 (< .05*)	0.94 (< .01**)	0.90 (< .01**)

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to test the effects of a simple mnemonic technique designed to help students remember how to spell difficult words. Our results indicate that the strategy worked very well with the student participating in the experiment. In fact, it is remarkable how quickly she was able to spell all 15 problem words correctly. Even two weeks after the intervention, she did not make any errors. This squares well with the findings outlined in the paper by Howard et al. (2008) and confirms the great efficacy of mnemonics in general when used to help students memorize new content (Lubin & Polloway, 2016; Wolgemuth et al., 2008).

Of course, this research has some limitations. For example, the number of probes was relatively small and only one follow-up measurement was conducted. In addition, we did not measure treatment fidelity and did not capture social validity. Furthermore, the results from one short single-case study with only one participant do not allow for far-reaching conclusions.

Nevertheless, the fact that Lea picked up the words so quickly and was able to spell all of them correctly two weeks after the intervention ended is impressive. Although she learned only a very limited number of words (15), the motivational effects of such a quick and stable increase in performance must not be underestimated. Students with serious academic difficulties often stop even trying to succeed, because they have experienced too many failures in the past (Wehmeyer & Shogren, 2020). Being able to “prove” to them that they are, in fact, capable of learning fast and efficiently is usually very gratifying and an effective incentive. Given the results discussed here and in the original paper by Howard et al. (2008), strategies like PESTS should attract more attention of teachers working with struggling spellers. The intervention is easy to implement and cost-effective. By using it early with a struggling student, it can help prevent severe and lasting difficulties in the future.

This paper is the first to describe a detailed study on the effects of PESTS. Howard et al. (2008) just referred to having conducted an experiment, but never presented the particulars of their research. Thus, the knowledge base on the benefits of PESTS is small. Additional findings are needed to gain more insights into how this strategy can unfold its potential in the classroom. In our study, we presented Lea with ready-made mnemonic pictures and sentences. It would be interesting, for example, to determine to what extent students are capable of coming up with their own aids to remember the correct spelling of a word. The same goes for the opportunities that peer-tutoring might offer when using PESTS.

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SCITRO

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2. Toners will immediately return the necessary and proper pH balance back to your skin.

A 5.5 pH is a proper balance for healthy skin. It will take your skin about one hour to bring its proper pH back without a toner, leaving it open to bacteria and toxins, which can lead to several problems.

Consider a proper pH as defense for your skin from many culprits. This is a simple explanation of the importance of a toner. Make it a part of your skincare regiment! Your skin will love you.

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Hydrating Toner

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- STIMULATES CELL RENEWAL
- FOR DRY SKIN TYPES
- FORMULATED WITHOUT PARABENS.
- MADE IN THE USA



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Red She Said

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Carpe Vinum

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- Comfortable Wear
- Free of Gluten, Parabens, Phthalates, Oil, Sulfates, Corn, Fragrance And Latex
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Straight n' Wavy Holiday Season



WHETHER YOU'RE HOSTING A FAMILY DINNER, PREPARING FOR A HOLIDAY PARTY, OR EVEN PLANNING A WINTER VACATION, THIS FLATTERING LOOK IS PERFECT FOR ANY HOLIDAY OCCASION! DI





HAIR & PHOTOS BY:
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WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

A well-balanced diet is important for good health. For a real transformation, it starts from the inside out. Exercise is also important to control weight, build healthy bones, and tone muscles. There are so many exercise programs out there to try. Walking, swimming, jogging, body lifting and sculpting are just a few. Speak with your doctor which is best for you. It's important for our self-esteem, and after a workout, we're infused with energy. Enjoy the health benefits of eating organic, exercising, and replenishing your body with the right vitamins and what they can do for you.

"But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them; Let those also who love Your name be in You."

Psalm 5:11

Breakfast

Rocket and Balsamic Red Onion Breakfast Attack

BY NAOMI KEMP

Ingredients Needed:

- 4 x Vegetable patties of your choice (store bought or Homemade)
- 4 x Brown medallion mushrooms (large)
- 2 x Red onions
- 1 x Large tomato
- 1 x 100g Packet of Arugula
- 1 x 40g Packet of mixed herb microgreens
- 1 x Avocado
- 1 x Tbsp capers
- 1 x tsp Black sesame seeds
- 1 x Tbsp Raw honey
- 1 x Half packet or jar coriander pesto
- 2 x Tbsp vegan mayo of your choice
- 1 x 125ml Organic balsamic of Modena vinegar
- 2 x Tbsp Olive oil
- 2 x Tbsp Raw crushed garlic



Directions:

Fry the vegetable patties in 2 Tablespoons of olive oil. Chop the red onions into rings and fry in a pan with 125ml of organic balsamic of Modena and add a tablespoon of raw honey, cook till onions are glazed. Pan fry brown medallion mushrooms and place garlic on each mushroom. Mix coriander pesto with vegan mayonnaise. Slice tomatoes and wash the rocket leaves and mixed herb microgreens.

Stack the ingredients as follows: Slice the medallion mushroom in halve and place bottom half first on the plate then layer coriander pesto mayonnaise on the mushroom, place a vegetable patty on top of the pesto/mayo layer. Next is your slice of tomato and the rocket. Top the stack with the glazed red onions and capers.

Slice the avocado and place as much as you desire on the plate then decorate plate with capers and coriander pesto mayonnaise. Lastly sprinkle with black sesame seeds.

Lunch

Asian Slaw Noodle Salad

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 x 400g Asian slaw packet (includes carrots, red cabbage, and spinach)
- 5 x Sugar snap peas
- 1 x 400g Bok Choy packet
- 1 x 400g Canned chickpeas (drained mass 244g)
- 1 x 300g Packet brown vermicelli noodle packet
- 1 x Tbsp Sesame seeds
- 1 x 80ml Olive oil
- 1 x 60ml Braggs apple cider vinegar
- 1 x 60ml Organic tamari sauce
- 2 x tsp Raw crushed garlic
- 2 x Tbsp Macadamia nut butter
- 1 x tsp Honey
- 2 x Tbsp Coconut oil
- 1 x tsp garlic herb spice
- Salt and pepper to your taste preference

Directions:

Boil the vermicelli as indicated on packaging. Fry the Bok choy in coconut oil.

Assemble the salad by combining the Asian slaw with chopped sugar snap peas and add the canned chickpeas to the bowl and toss the salad with the salad dressing.

Salad dressing: Combine olive oil, Braggs apple cider vinegar, tamari sauce, raw crushed garlic, macadamia nut butter, honey garlic herb spice and salt and pepper to your taste preference.

Place vermicelli noodles on the plate and top it with the salad. Then place Bok choy as desire on the plate. Lastly drizzle a little bit of salad dressing over the entire plate and the scatter the sesame seeds over the salad and Bok choy.



Dinner

Chickpea and Potato Masala with Brown Basmati Rice

Ingredients Needed:

- 2 x red onions (medium)
- 1 x 1kg baby potatoes
- 2 x 400g canned chickpeas (drained mass 244g)
- 2 x 400g canned diced tomatoes
- 1 x 400g packet of baby spinach
- 1 x canned organic coconut cream
- 1 x Tbsp mustard seeds
- 1 x Tbsp pink Himalayan salt
- 2 x Tbsp raw honey
- 2 x Tbsp Chicken masala spice
- 2x Tbsp Olive oil
- 2 x cups Basmati brown rice

Directions:

Boil the basmati rice till soft. Wash and cut the baby potatoes into quarters and boil till they are soft. Slice and fry the red onions in olive oil then add the masala spice, mustard seeds, and salt. Once they have browned add the diced tomatoes, canned chickpeas, coconut cream and honey. Add baby spinach and once the chickpeas have softened and the sauce is to your desire then it is ready to serve.



Dessert

Banana Peanut Butter Chia Pudding with Sugarless Blueberry Compote

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 x can of coconut milk
- 4 x Tbsp chia seeds
- 2 x small ripe bananas
- 3 x Tbspn natural peanut butter (sugar free)
- 2 x Tbspn 100% organic maple syrup (A grade)
- 5 x chopped deshelled pecan nuts
- 2 x cups of fresh blueberries
- 1 x Tbsp coconut oil

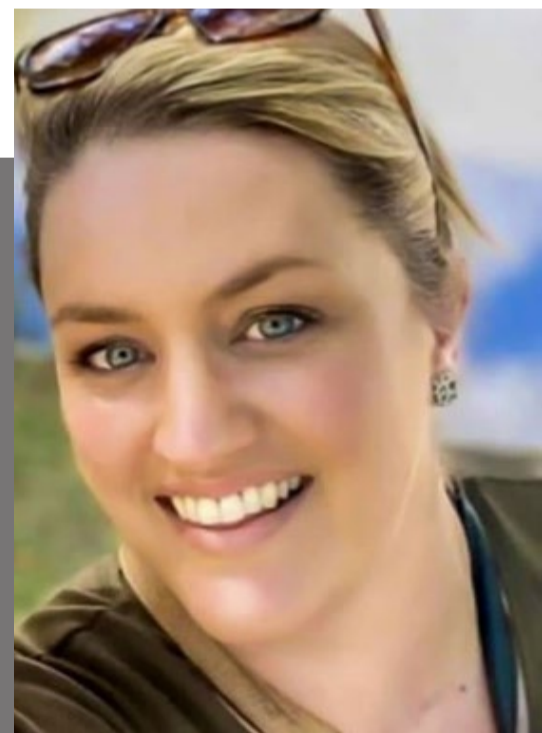
Directions:

Place coconut oil in a frying pan and add blueberries then allow the mixture to cook till it is of a thick consistency. Place the following in a blender: coconut milk, chia seeds, chopped bananas, peanut butter and maple syrup. Once blended place in the desired dish and put in the freezer for an hour and a half. When served place blueberry compote on the chia pudding, sprinkle with chopped pecan nuts and garnish with a mint leaf.

NAOMI KEMP IS A DIRECTOR ALONGSIDE HER HUSBAND GERVANN KEMP OF REJUVENATEX360 IN AUGRABIES, SOUTH AFRICA. RECEIVED A MASTERS OF SPORT SCIENCE FROM STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY. LECTURED FOR 10 YEARS AT CPUT, IN ANATOMY, PHYSIOLOGY AND SPORT PSYCHOLOGY.

IN 2019 OUR LIVES CHANGED WHEN MY HUSBAND WAS DIAGNOSED WITH NON – HODGKINS LYMPHOMA, SINCE THEN A NEW WORLD OF WHOLE FOOD PLANT-BASED LIVING HAS OPENED TO US. GOD TOOK MY HAND EVERY STEP OF THE WAY AND INSPIRED AND GUIDED ME IN OUR FARM KITCHEN IN THE KALAHARI TO CREATE NUTRITIOUS AND EXCITING DISHES FOR HIM ON HIS HEALING JOURNEY, AS WELL AS OUR SONS AND FAMILY. WE HAVE PUT OUR TRUST IN ABBA FATHER ALL THE WAY. WE HAVE FOUND GREAT JOY IN THE AMAZING PRODUCE HE HAS PROVIDED US WITH, AND WE ARE HUMBLLED WE GET TO EXPERIENCE HIS GRACE DAILY. MAY YOU ENJOY THE DISHES AS MUCH AS WE HAVE.

BE BLESSED XXX



Reset, Renew and Rejuvenate and then Rejoice

BY REV. RIKA GRIFFITHS

The definition of renewing in the dictionary is: an act or instance of setting, adjusting, or fixing something in a new or different way.

For the past 2 years, we have been bombarded with negative reports that resulted in changed lifestyles, and habits that led to anxiety, fear, and stress.

Now is the time to reset, renew and rejuvenate our spirits, soul (mind, emotions, and will), and body.

1. Spirit

If you have the spirit of fear, cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the spirit. You became one with the spirit of fear by worrying and stressing about the future, your work, your family, your relationships, your health, and the list goes on and on.

Repent and get rid of the spirit of fear out of your life by commanding it to leave in the Name of Jesus. Sanctify your spirit.

The Word says in 2 Timothy 1:7 *"God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind."*

2. Mind

Sanctification of the soul is renewing your mind, which means changing your thinking, pursuing to think and behave like God thinks and behaves.

Psalms 34: 4 says that the Lord will deliver you from all your fears. Set your mind on the things

of the Spirit and your soul will be gradually sanctified by the transforming work of the Spirit. It is not easy to sanctify your soul as the habit of worrying has been a part of you for so long that it is a long-term memory in your brain.

You have to remove the source of the thought, that spirit of fear, and then deal with those toxic mindsets by meditating on the Word of God, retraining your mind, and transforming it not to worry or fear or have chronic stress.

TRAIN your mind; five things to focus on :

"T" stands for taking captive every thought. 2 Cor 10:5 *"casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."* If you struggle with anxiety in your thought life, you can form a plan for taking every thought captive.

"R" stands for resisting the devil and the negative emotions he stirs up. James 7:14 *"Resist the devil [stand firm against him] and he will flee from you."* Refuse to accept and allow any negative thoughts.

"A" stands for the armor of God. Ephesians 6:11 *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* When we do this, we are not susceptible to thoughts that the enemy, who seeks to harm our walk with Christ, wants to plant in us.

"I" stands for *immersing your mind in positive thoughts.* Philippians 4:8 *"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true,*

"God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind."

2 Timothy 1:7

whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." Think about good things for personal victory in any situation.

"N" stands for *nullifying negative emotions*. Stand on God's promises. Ephesians 3: 20 *"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."*

Renewing the mind is a process that takes time and dedicated effort. First, you need to speak the Scriptures over and over and over and over and over and over again ... until you get a breakthrough in that area.

It is like a farmer planting his field and not expecting a harvest the following day. Instead, he must tend the field, feed the plants, and wait for the harvest. We apply the Lord's spiritual principles the same way in our lives. First, there is seed time and then harvest.

Galatians 6:9 *"And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint."*

3. Body

Nutrition

As our spirit and soul need Spiritual food, our bodies need nutritional food to sustain us to be able to do the work He requires from us.

Gen 1: 29 " And God said, See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the land and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food." (AMPC)

The society we live in today wants instant gratification, instant results, instant food, and instant satisfaction. If we are dissatisfied with the results, we get a new one; a new pill, a new supplement, a new diet, a new relationship,

and we get into a spiral pulling us down into depression and becoming overweight. We are eating junk food that spikes our sugar, putting us on a high and then dumping us down into the pit of despair. A vicious circle and cocktail that we drink every day added to that come stress, anxiety, and fear that makes us eat more, drink more, and get more and more sick. Food and the state of mind go hand in hand. For example, when Susan or Peter were children and they were unhappy or sad, mommy or daddy took them to the doughnut shop to make them feel better. That put a smile on their faces and created a memory of contentment and happiness. Today they are adults and when they experience negative emotions what do you think they want to eat? Doughnuts.

Stress and emotional eating is learned behaviour and is not healthy. Most of us want sugar or fatty foods and we see it as rewarding. But what is the result of it?

The refined carbs and sugar spike your blood sugar and you feel better even great, and then your blood sugar drops.



When you are tired, angry, worried, fearful, stressed, or in a state of negative emotions, you should refrain from drinking or eating until you are calm and rested. According to Dr. NW Walker, putting food in the system at negative times causes unpredictable reactions; the food does not digest properly, resulting in toxaemia.

One of the simplest things to do is to add some of our Creator's most nutritious foods into our diet. From a nutritional perspective, foods with an amazing range of health benefits go far beyond their nutrient value and are considered "superfoods." The world's most potent inflammation and cancer-fighting substances are found right under our noses in the form of natural plants, herbs, and spices.

We live to eat; people are obsessed with every taste and food experience they can conceive. Every bite you eat can promote health or disease in your body, depending on your choices. We are to ingest whole food from the earth.

You have to apply the knowledge and wisdom that God revealed in His Word for us and take personal responsibility for your health to enjoy divine health:

1. We have an immune system and self-healing mechanism built into our bodies by God.
2. Supply the body with high-quality living nutrients to boost its self-healing ability, rebuilding stronger, healthier cells and organs.
3. The best source of these high-quality nutrients is raw fruit and vegetables.

Exercise

Lack of exercise not only affects my physical health but also my spiritual health.

Faith is like a muscle and needs to be exercised.

Some of us spend time every day exercising certain muscles that we want to develop. You say, "I haven't run for a week, and I feel the difference." Similarly, if a week goes by without exercising faith, you will notice the difference. The longer you go without using faith, the greater the danger that you will forget how to use faith altogether.

A first step that we can take to walk in faith is to read the word of God. I am reminded that faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes from the word of God (Romans 10:17). The more I take time to hear the word of God speak, the stronger my faith grows.

**Faith is
like
a muscle
and needs
to be
exercised.**

Physical exercise

Exercise glorifies and honors God by caring for the body He gave us. The body's stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) are reduced with regular exercise and can help ease depression and anxiety and improve your sleep. It also stimulates the production of endorphins and releases them in the brain that is the body's natural painkillers, enhancing your sense of well-being and increasing self-confidence.

Physical activity is a critical element in the prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of many diseases. According to a 2019 research review, moderate-intensity exercise can stimulate cellular immunity by increasing the circulation of immune cells in your body. Which helps your body better prepare for a future infection by detecting it earlier.

As a result of a sedentary lifestyle, inadequate physical activity is currently the fourth leading cause of mortality in developed countries. However, scientific evidence shows that regular and sufficient exercise reduces the risk of premature death, cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, type II diabetes, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, and depression by about 30%.

Find activities you enjoy doing with others like walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, or going to the gym, and gain support by becoming more

active from family and friends. Or rebound at home it has benefits that go way beyond exercise.

**Rebounding
rejuvenates
and oxygenates
EVERY
SINGLE
CELL in your
muscles,
bones, eyes,
heart, lungs,
kidneys, ears,
and glands
-it is a whole-
body exercise.**





In his ground-breaking research, Dr. Samuel West discovered the importance of activating the lymphatic system for better pain control and health. He found that conditions that produced cause loss of energy, disease, and death at the cellular level were 'trapped proteins' in the lymph system. He had outstanding results by simply getting people to pump out the toxins from the 'garbage' disposal system (our lymph system) with simple, gentle movements.

Rebounding is believed to increase the drainage of toxins from organs and muscle tissue and promotes lymph flow through the body. It is a fun and safe way to detoxify your lymphatic drains, improve venous and lymphatic circulation, and detoxify and oxygenate the body, especially the brain, heart, and kidneys. The lymphatic system works with valves and lacks a pump to move the lymphatic fluid.

There are about 60 to 80 trillion cells in your body. Toxins are squeezed out by the 2 to 4 G forces (gravitational pull) in bouncing with a rebounder.

Toxins, dead cells, diseased cells, fatigue substances, trapped protein, fatty globules, pathogenic bacteria, infectious viruses, heavy metals, and foreign substances, the cells cast off and are removed from the body, which improves the endocrine system and correct hormone imbalances.

Ten minutes of jumping on the rebounder effectively flush the body's lymphatic system, a vital part of the immune system.

It helps improve insulin sensitivity, heart health, and body composition while decreasing blood pressure and fat. These benefits prevent you from increasing belly fat, which can boost your risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and premature death.

Research at NASA found rebounding to be 68% more efficient than running on a treadmill.

Rebounding for just 2 minutes offers the equivalent physiological benefits of 6 minutes of running, 10 minutes of swimming, and 22 minutes of walking!

Start with 2 minutes of rebounding per day and work up to 10 minutes a day to ensure complete flushing of the entire lymphatic system. As a result, the white blood cell count will nearly triple, providing a greater defense system, stimulating red bone marrow action, and supporting tissue repair.

Isaiah 40:31 *"but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."*

To reset, renew, and rejuvenated we need strategies and goals:

1. Renew your attitudes 1st:

- Consciously choose to stop putting negative things in your mind
- Consciously choose to start putting positive things in your mind on a daily basis
- Consciously choose to avoid negative people
- Consciously choose to speak in a positive way.

2. Renewing your minds through learning:

- Knowledge is power
- Knowledge builds confidence and perseverance
- Learning also adds excitement and enthusiasm.

3. Setting Smart goals:

- Specific – what do you want to accomplish?
- Measurable – how will you measure the achievement of your goal?
- Achievable – what are the specific steps to reach your goal?
- Relevant & realistic – how does this goal relate to your long-term goals and interests? Are they realistic?
- Time-based – when do you want to complete your goals?

When you have set your long-term goals break them down into smaller achievable chunks for example:

Long-term goals:

- Memorize 52 scriptures a year
- Loose 24 pounds
- Rebound 30 minutes every day

Week 1 goals:

- Memorise 1 scripture a week
- Loose ½ pound a week
- Rebound 2 minutes a day

After week 1 has been achieved; REJOICE! Your spirit, mind, and body are being Rejuvenated!

Now set the goals for week 2 and the only goal that you want to change is to rebound for 3 minutes a day, as your fitness levels increase.

Martin Luther King Jr. put it so well when he declared,

**“TAKE THE
FIRST STEP
IN FAITH.
YOU DON’T
HAVE TO SEE
THE WHOLE
STAIRCASE,
JUST TAKE THE
FIRST STEP.”**

RIKI GRIFFITHS ENTERED THE FITNESS INDUSTRY IN 2007 AND HAD 3 SUCCESSFUL CURVES FRANCHISES WHERE SHE WAS PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN COACHING AND COUNSELING MEMBERS WITH FURTHER STUDIES IN NUTRITION AT BAYLOR UNIVERSITY, TEXAS, AND THE CLEVELAND HEART CLINIC.

WHEN HER HUSBAND WAS DIAGNOSED WITH STAGE 4 LIVER CANCER IN 2015.

THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE, THE LORD BIRTHED A DESIRE TO EDUCATE, COUNSEL, AND FACILITATE INNOVATIVE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS THROUGH AN IN-DEPTH FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL HOLISTIC WELLBEING.



JOY, It's Deeper Than Happiness

BY JONATHAN DISTAULO, PHD, LPC

One too many office parties, a second slice of birthday cake, and leftover Halloween candy you've smuggled from the kids. Enough is enough. Today will be different, today you will take back your life. You march with a renewed focus toward the MACHINE. Standing before you it mocks you, taunts you, insults your silly attempts to get in shape, yet here you are. You've somehow managed to put on your workout clothes, bought new workout shoes and with all the emotional energy you can muster you face it... the dreaded treadmill! You punch in your weight, set your time limit, and set your speed, finally, you hit the START button; the whoosh and whirring sounds are all too familiar. A wave of déjà-vu overtakes. "Why am I doing this again!?" "Why do I even bother, I'll never get back into those jeans like I did in College." Your body begins shutting down, your muscles ache and tense, you open your mouth and sound like a BEAR.

It's hopeless, and even worse you've lost your JOY.

Just like the results of a diet left unchecked are disastrous to a person's weight and self-image, the outcomes of sinfulness are disastrous and painful. Where would we be without the fruit of the Spirit, like JOY, what are the results of living by the desires of the flesh? To find out, read Galatians chapter 5. One of the very starting points for the journey of living by the Spirit is JOY, second only to Love. Despite our sinful nature, there is hope for something better when we choose to live by the Spirit. Despite our inclinations to compromise, there is more for us than mere happiness. Despite our weaknesses, and proclivities towards one too many desserts, our Heavenly Father...Brings...JOY.

Here we are at the launch of another Advent season, and it made it wonder... how do JOY-filled people look? How do they behave?

Romans 15:12-13 puts it this way: *"The heir to*

David's throne will come, and he will rule over the Gentiles. They will place their hope on him. I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Joy comes from a deeper place within each person, the result of living life empowered by the Spirit. This empowerment is evidenced by the Fruit of the Spirit (read Galatians 5:22). Whereas happiness is something that visits us but then departs until the next time. We often find ourselves chasing happy moments. Joy is a state of mind, a confidence of the soul, an assurance in a person's heart that follows after Jesus Christ.

Are you facing a challenge, is there something that has really rocked your world and shaken you to the core? Maybe you're at the beginning of a wonderful chapter in your life, or perhaps you have lost something precious, or you have been careless with the people in your life. How do you begin to start again? The only way I know how to do that is to come before God humbly and place my trust in Him. The Bible says all those who place their trust in God are completely filled with JOY and peace. Before things get out of hand this Christmas season with shopping lists, dinner parties, or whatever your schedule demands of you, let the Spirit of God work to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit and fill you to overflowing today. I have lived long enough to know that I can only go so far on my own steam, usually only a few days, I need God's presence, His Spirit, to make it the distance.

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Protecting Your Business and Employees

If you have employees, you know firsthand that the loss of a key employee can have a profound impact on business operations. When an employee leaves, customers who dealt directly with that person may worry about receiving their goods or services in a timely manner; suppliers may be concerned about getting paid for their deliveries; and staff morale can also take a dip as remaining employees worry about assuming a heavier workload.

That's why it's important to make sure that your business is prepared to deal with the unexpected departure of a key employee which usually happens for one of three reasons: the employee chooses to resign, the employee becomes disabled, or he or she passes away.

While life insurance cannot protect against employees choosing to leave, it is often used as a tool to help incentivize them to stay; deferred compensation plans are powerful vehicles for doing just this. Deferred compensation arrangements allow you to provide retirement income to select employees. The way it works is that you and the selected employee enter a contract that specifies the compensation you will pay out to him or her in the future. Since you may not set up a specific reserve fund in which a participant has a vested right, a life insurance policy is uniquely suited to informally finance a deferred compensation plan. The future of your business depends on attracting and retaining the right talent with the right tools.

It's also important to protect your business against the economic losses it may face as the result of a top employee's death with the use of key person insurance. The way it works is that the business applies for and becomes the owner and beneficiary of a life insurance policy covering the key employee. If the insured employee dies, the business receives the policy proceeds.

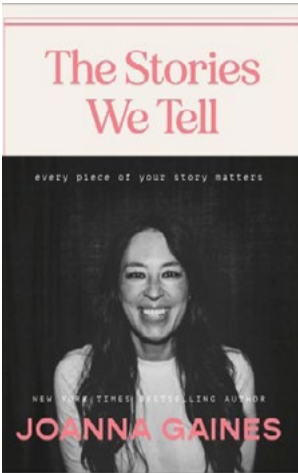
Deferred compensation and key employee insurance are benefits that are related exclusively to your top employees, but New York Life also has options that you can offer your entire team to help cultivate a rewarding work environment, such as life and disability insurance. These benefits can provide employees and their family's peace of mind and added financial security, which can go a long way toward attracting and retaining valuable employees.

As a business owner, you've worked hard to get where you are today. Having a contingency in place will allow you to focus on making the best possible decisions for the future your business.



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Must Read Books for 2022



THE STORIES WE TELL

By Joanna Gaines

Publisher's Description: In her first solo memoir, *New York Times* bestselling author Joanna Gaines invites us on an authentic and deeply vulnerable journey into her story—and helps shine a light on the beauty of our own—guiding us to release the weights that hold us back so we may live and share our story in truth.

We've all dropped anchor in places that suited us for a time: a city, a perspective, a lie we mistook as truth.

This book is an invitation to a kind of life where you know how to hold what you believe—about yourself and the quiet worlds behind the people you pass—with gracious and open hands. To see your story as greater than any past or future thing, but for all the beauty and joy and hope it holds today. It's an invitation to take stock of the chapters you've lived—the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly—glean what's gold, and carry only that forward. Let it slow your feet and steady your life-in-motion so you can see where you stand today from a new point of view. No longer through weary or uncertain eyes, but a lens brimming with hope.

"The only way to break free was to rewrite my story. Because something would happen every time my pen stopped: it was like my soul was coming back to my body. Like the deepest parts of me that got knocked around and drowned out by all the crap I let the world convince me about who I was came back to the surface. And what was left was only what was real and true. I was, finally, standing in the fullness of my story. I felt hopeful. I felt full. Our story may crack us open, but it also pieces us back together.

We all have a story to tell. This happens to be mine--every chapter a window into who I am, the journey I'm on, and the season I'm in right now. Because this is my story, maybe you won't always relate, or maybe it will feel like you're looking in a mirror. Whatever we have in common and whatever differences lie between us, I only hope my story can help shine a light on the beauty of yours. That my own soul work will stir something of your own. And that by the time you get to the end of my story, you're also holding the beautiful beginnings of your own.

A story only you can tell. And I hope that you will."

-Joanna Gaines

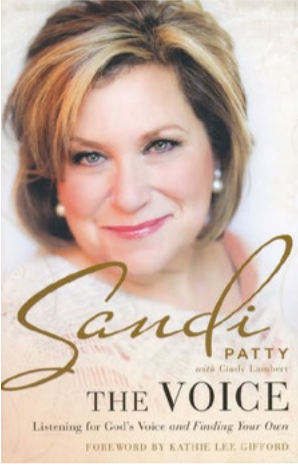


THE APPLE CREEK ANNOUNCEMENT

By Wanda E. Brunstetter

Publisher's Description: Andrea Wagner has a charmed life and finally has fallen in love with Brandon Prentice, a local veterinarian. But then she discovers she was adopted—and all she thought she knew about herself has crumbled. Andrea becomes so fixated on finding her birth mother that she pushes Brandon away. What will Andrea lose before she finds herself again?

Must Read Books for 2022



THE VOICE

Listening to God's Voice and Finding Your Own
By Sandi Patty with Cindy Lambert

Publisher's Description: Christian music icon and forty-time Dove award winner, Sandi Patty has long astounded listeners with her powerful voice. And yet, off the stage, Sandi struggled to have a voice at all.

Through deeply intimate stories of her life and the empowering spiritual truths she's learned, Sandi offers readers wisdom to navigate the journey from voicelessness to discovering the voice God has given you. With a poignant history of sexual abuse, infidelity, divorce, and crises of self-image, Sandi lived much of her life feeling unworthy of love or value. And like so many of us, she coped by living through the voices of others, allowing other people to prescribe her identity. As she performed around the world, Sandi met others just like her, who hid wounds behind quiet smiles and struggled to live with fractured identities.

Sandi's warm and invitational writing will draw you to the voice of God who sings over your life saying you are seen, you are loved, and your voice is worth hearing. With timeless wisdom, *The Voice* will help you uncover your God-given identity and a voice of your very own.

"God heard my voice even when I couldn't hear it myself and then his voice broke through my walls and wounds, insecurities and self-doubts. I am voiceless no more!"

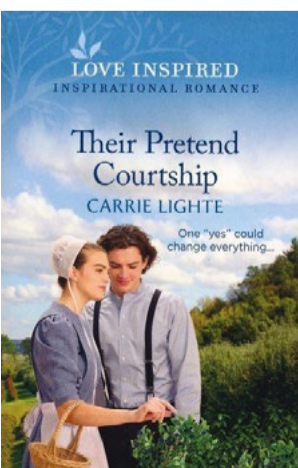


THE WARMTH OF SUNSHINE

By Kelly Irvin

Publisher's Description: Growing up Amish, Abigail Bontrager often felt like a square peg in a round hole. Not ideal for an aspiring Amish wife and mother, but her faith and love of her family, which are so much more important, are solid. Plus, her relationship with the attractive and kindhearted Owen Kurtz is moving in the right direction. His friendship with Abigail has gradually blossomed into a sweet and loving courtship. Inspired by the hope of a future with the girl of his dreams, he decides to take the next step in building a business of his own—in the promising new industry of growing sunflowers.

When an outsider claiming to be Abigail's birth mother abruptly enters her life, Abigail's world comes crashing down. Confused and upset, she is determined to discover who she *really* is.



THEIR PRETEND COURTSHIP

By Carrie Lighte

Publisher's Description: Eliza Keim has no interest in getting married. But with her stepfather pressuring her to court, Eliza begrudgingly agrees to walk out with blueberry farmer Jonas Kanagy. She has no idea his true intention is only to protect his brother from getting his heart broken. Yet making their in-name-only courtship look real is surprisingly easy. Might this practical arrangement end up backfiring in the best possible way?

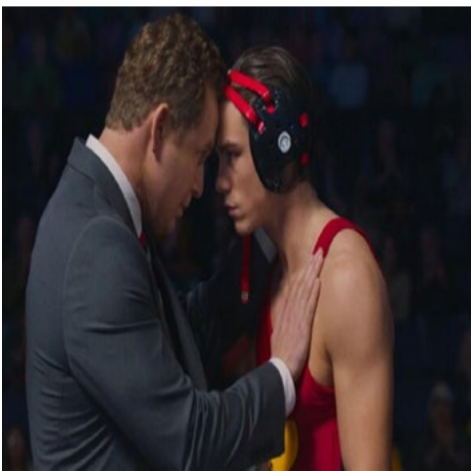
& Must Watch Movies 2022



THE THREE WISE MEN

"Narrated by the legendary Andy Griffith (THE ANDY GRIFFITH SHOW, MATLOCK), this heartwarming animated special is a charming re-imagination of the classic Christmas story following the three wise men on a wondrous quest to meet the newborn king. Their journey is told through rhymed narration alongside a soundtrack of holiday carols performed by The Brothers Cazimero from Hawaii. The digital release features a new original song by Jonas Myrin, a Grammy Award-winning songwriter."

—*Aspiration Entertainment*



THE LAST CHAMPION

"When his mother dies, scandal-ridden ex-Olympian John Wright returns to a hometown that has not forgiven him. John Wright, a former championship wrestler and promising Olympian, is forced to face his past when he returns to the hometown he left in disgrace twenty years earlier. Can he become the hero his town expected...or will he remain a prisoner of his past mistakes?"

—*IMDB Movie Summary/Description*



AGAINST THE TIDE

"Against The Tide takes viewers on a journey from Oxford to Israel as John Lennox and Kevin Sorbo unpack and analyze theological and scientific evidence of God."

—*IMDB Documentary Summary/Description*



I STILL BELIEVE

"One love can change your life. One life can change the world."

From the creators of **I CAN ONLY IMAGINE** comes an inspiring love story for the ages. Rediscover the wonder of love in **I STILL BELIEVE**, based on the real-life story of chart-topping singer Jeremy Camp."

—*Istillbelievemovie.com Summary/Description*



LIGHT OF THE WORLD TALK SHOW

HOSTS



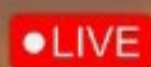
Dr. Teresa
Allissa Citro



Bishop Michael
Aboagye Ghansah

THURSDAYS

2pm EST // 7pm GMT // 8pm WAT // 9pm SAST



www.facebook.com/LightOfTheWorldTalkShow

A Blessed Life

RIGHTEOUS *Living*



Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro
Dr. Linda A. Knowles
Dr. Justin Noah Citro

“There is no point in expecting anything from God without living righteously before Him.

If you desire the blessings of God in your life, you want to see miracles worked in your family, and you want God to hear and answer your prayers, there is only one way to do this: living a righteous life before God.

Discover the meaning of righteous living from the real lives of Biblical characters such as Elisha and the poor widow, Tamar (Judah’s daughter-in-law), Abigail, Bathsheba, Caleb, Esau, Noah, and Judas.

Living in rebellion and defiance towards God results in catastrophic consequences, while righteous living brings glorious blessings and rewards.

The righteous shall prevail. The righteous are drawn to His side with everlasting love. Set your face like flint, determine to do His will, and live by His ways and His commands, knowing that you will not be brought to disgrace but will be called righteous.”

- Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro

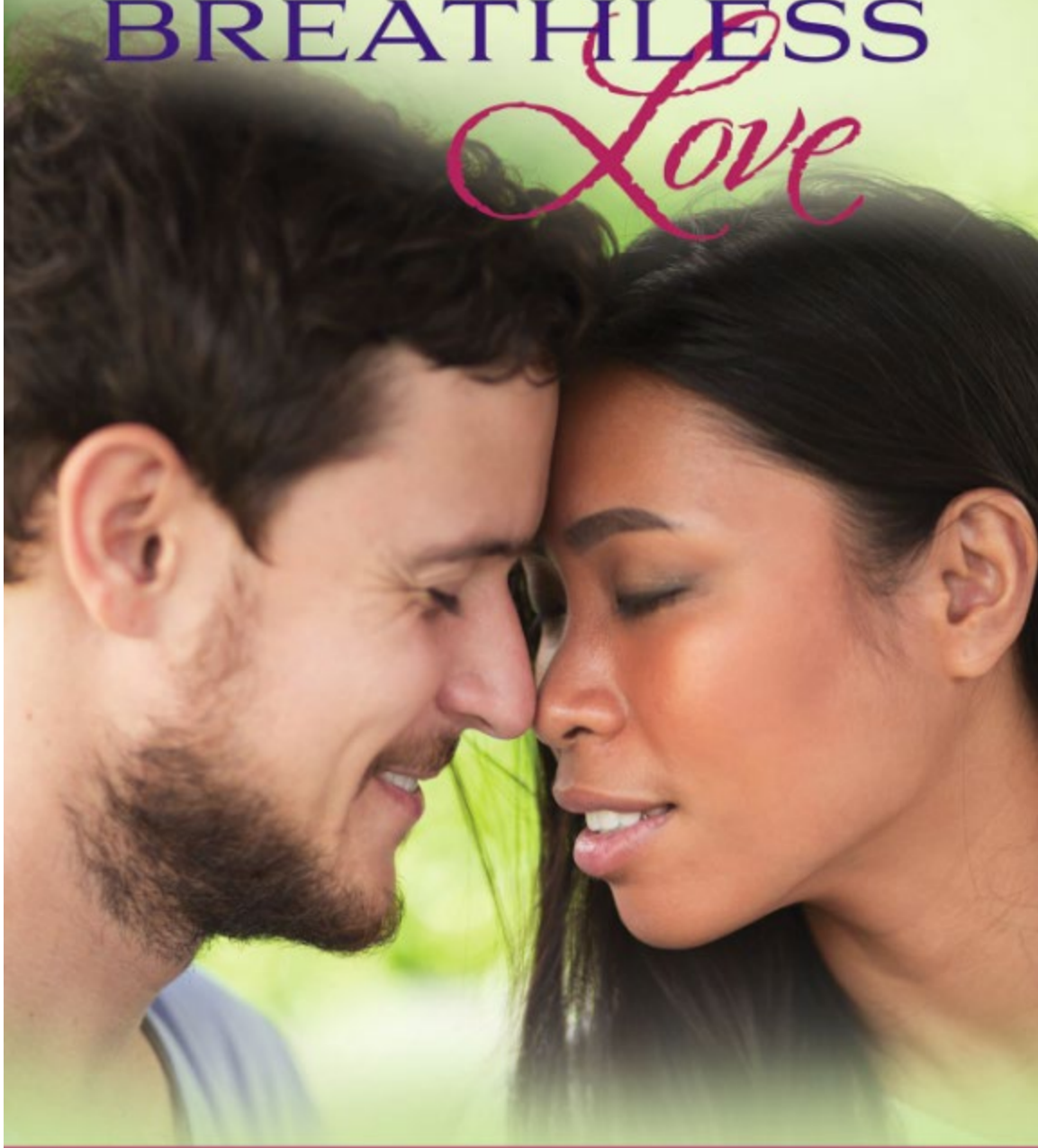
Publisher Note: This book is suitable for adults, young adults, teens, pastors, church leaders, church teachers, Sunday School curriculum, Bible study leaders, Bible Colleges, Seminary Schools, individual, group, or classroom study.

Buy at Amazon

amazon

Finding and Keeping Your Happily Ever After

BREATHLESS *Love*



Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro
Dr. Linda A. Knowles
Dr. Nicholas D. Young

“The love journey God intends for men and women results in a lifetime of explosive ecstasy.

From the pages of The Bible, discover the most beautiful stories of men and women who experienced amazing love, the love of a lifetime. God wants you to experience this same kind of love, a love that leaves you breathless and wanting for more.

Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel, Boaz and Ruth, Queen Esther and King Artaxerxes, The Shulamite and King Solomon were amazing couples with great destinies. Each of these men and women had ups and downs, they faced extraordinary challenges, yet the bond of love remained strong.

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Publisher Note: This book is suitable for individual, group or classroom study as well as marriage counseling and pre-marital counseling. Readers who are single, contemplating marriage or already married will benefit from this book.

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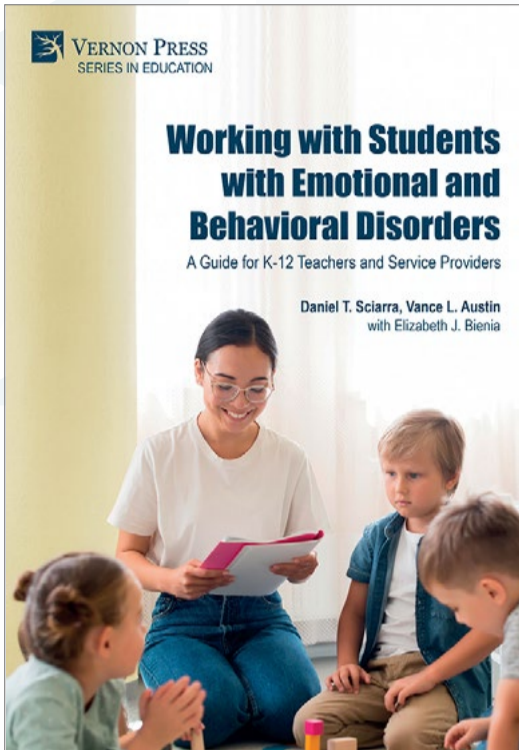
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Working with Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

A Guide for K-12 Teachers and Service Providers

This text is designed to help teachers and service providers work successfully with children who exhibit emotional and behavioral disorders by affording them a repertoire of valuable, evidence-based treatment strategies. Furthermore, because the book represents a synthesis of expertise, written from the dual perspectives of an experienced clinician and an educator, the school professional who reads it will better understand the role of both teacher and service provider, thus optimizing the coordination and effectiveness of the services that are critical to the success of these students.

‘Working with Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: A Guide for K-12 Teachers and Service Providers’ explores the most prevalent behavioral disorders encountered by school professionals as they work with today’s students. These high-incidence behavioral disorders are addressed by type, and each includes a discussion of the relevant characteristics, causes, prevalence, and treatment strategies. Features that are unique to this book include its acknowledgement of the need for a collaborative approach to these problems by all school professionals, as well as the coordination of services provided by the classroom teacher and other service providers working with these students. To date, few books, if any, have provided this holistic perspective.

This book is designed to help K-12 teachers and related service providers (i.e., school psychologists, school social workers, speech-language pathologists, guidance counselors, and occupational therapists) work successfully with children who exhibit emotional and behavioral disorders by affording them a repertoire of valuable, evidence-based treatment strategies.

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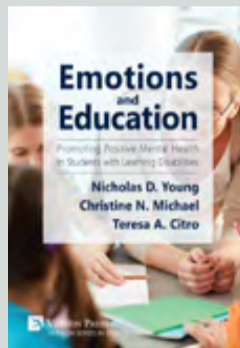
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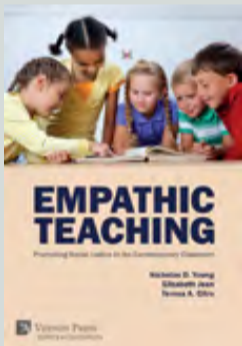
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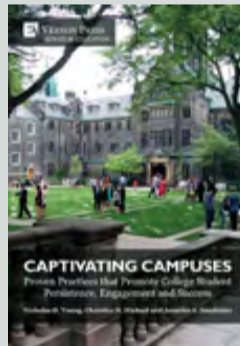
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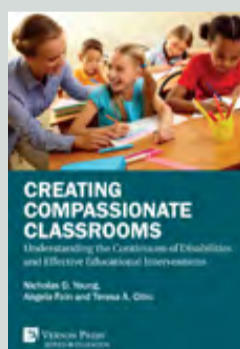
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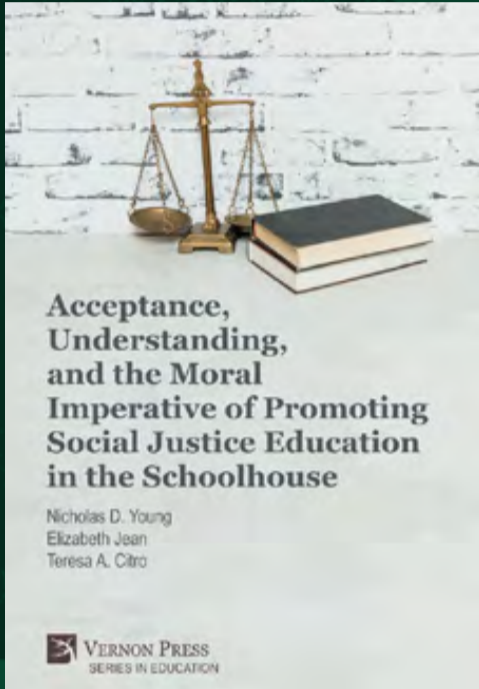
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Acceptance, Understanding, and the Moral Imperative of Promoting Social Justice Education in the Schoolhouse



Nicholas D. Young, American International College
Elizabeth Jean, Endicott College
Teresa A. Citro, Learning Disabilities Worldwide

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"Offers a fresh look at the concept of equity between students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, and other defining characteristics. The book takes a brief look at the fundamentals of social justice as well as federal law before turning to the more important job of identifying students and the benefits that social justice can bring to each and every individual."

Richard B. Holzman,
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UMass-Amherst and Springfield, MA; Superintendent
of Schools, retired, Ware Public Schools

"The authors discuss how to use both the Common Core and social justice simultaneously in the classroom as well as how assessment bias plays a role in student performance. This book is of benefit to all educators who wish to dig in a bit deeper into social justice and begin to include more equitable strategies in the classroom."

Judith L. Klimkiewicz,
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of Elementary and Secondary Education

"Offers a close look at the possibilities that exist for students who find themselves in the classroom with a teacher who believes in teaching fairly despite the innate difficulties that come with that curriculum."

Anne E. Mead,
Ed.D., Director, Danbury Public Schools

This book examines the critical issues associated with the topic of social justice in primary and secondary education. Emphasis is placed on programs, approaches and strategies to increasingly teach tolerance, respect, and understanding within and between these groups and members of the majority culture. This book is for teachers, psychologists and other education professionals who wish to gain a better understanding of how social justice can and should become a valuable part of the educational landscape.

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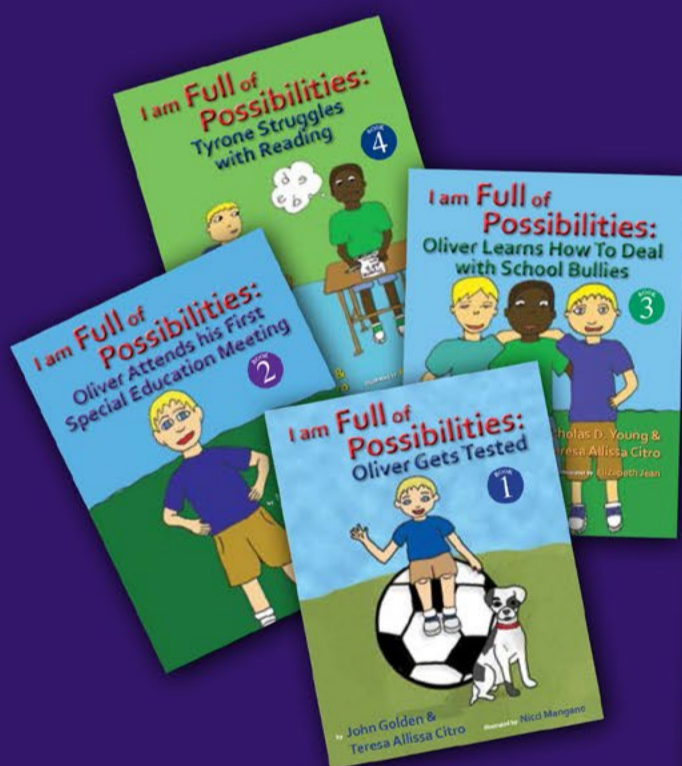
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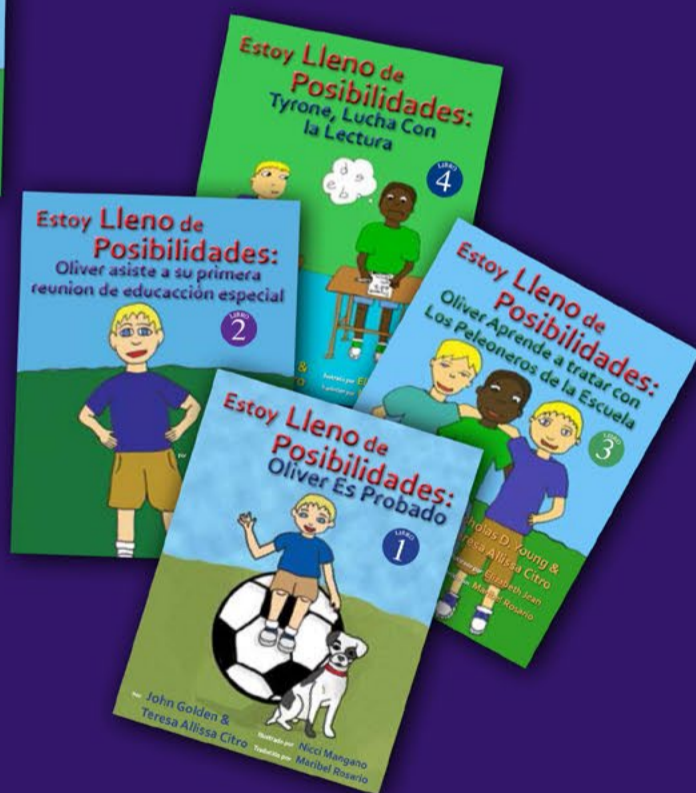
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