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Written By the Sister of a Survivor

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INSPIRATIONS

Lisa Butler: Developing Partnerships for Healthy Living

HERLIFE Magazine's January focus is on beginning anew, and Lisa Butler, entrepreneur, certified health coach and personal trainer, supports women and men of all ages in taking steps to begin a new path. Setting goals, evaluating strengths and weaknesses and seeing progress, she says, are key to maintaining lifestyle changes.



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Photography by Amber J Deery



Have you ever read or listened to something that changed your life?

One of those things that as soon as you've processed it, you can't wait to share it with others? I was talking with our editor, Marilyn, one day and she mentioned an interview with Alan Cumming and how impactful it was to her. I, like I so often do, immediately opened a tab and found it. I didn't listen to it for probably a week or two, but there it was, one of many open tabs as my constant reminder to listen to it when I had some time.

"Cancel. Continue." Those are two words that I hope stay forever engrained in my brain. I am constantly repeating them. Things happen, so you cancel, or reset, and then you continue to something else; you move on. I listened to Cumming's interview at the perfect time. We were finalizing a redesign for 2022, which I am very excited about. This is our first issue with it, the start of a new year with the updated look and a new January focus, Beginning Anew.

I have said "cancel" to 2021 and I am looking forward to a new year. Yes, this year will have its ups and downs, just like every other year. However, I am beginning this year looking in the right direction.

This issue has some great stories about Beginning Anew. Our cover feature on Lisa Butler is such a motivating and inspiring story and delivers a great message to kick off a new year. Our Trendsetter showcasing The Little House is another great

example. After 20 years, they moved to a new location, and they are having great success.

If you find that you are holding onto something that's happened over which you have no control, find your cancel button and continue. You've got this, we've got this, so let's make 2022 an amazing year. I wish everyone a wonderful and healthy New Year.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are available for \$20 (for 12 issues). Please go to herlifemagazine.com or mail a check made out to HERLIFE[®] Magazine to the above address.

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ELEVATE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE IN 2022

BY ABBY WOOD

Is 2022 the year you are finally going to make your personal style a priority? I sure hope so! Personal style is not just about the clothes you wear. It is about the way you wear them to make yourself look your best. It is about expressing yourself without even having to speak! It is about bringing confidence to your life.



Every morning, you start your day in your closet. It sets the tone for every interaction you will have throughout the entire day; why not make it the very best you can? The only way you will achieve this, though, is if you are true to yourself.

Follow this process and watch your personal style shine through!

1. Audit your closet once per year. Even better, do it twice. My clients go through their closets with me twice per year so that we can assess each upcoming season. A lot can change in a year, which is why it's so important to go through piece by piece to assess what is working and what isn't.

2. Have a style session in your closet. Try to put together a few outfits from what you already own and try them on. Make notes to yourself about what you like and dislike about them. Take photos so you can see these outfits someplace other than a mirror. Does the outfit feel like you? Does this style speak to your personality?

3. Make a shopping list. Identify pieces that you need in your

wardrobe that make sense to your lifestyle and your personal style. You wouldn't go to the supermarket without a grocery list, would you? I certainly don't, because if I did, I would come home with a lot of unneeded items. The same goes for your closet. If you shop from a list, you will be bringing in only the necessary items that you need.

4. Get inspired. Everyone is so busy all the time, so it is key to block out some time to get inspired! I always suggest looking at Pinterest or Instagram to see styles that catch your eye. Save them to a board.

5. Find your style. After you have gathered your inspirational photos, go back through and ask yourself: Do I like this for my current lifestyle? Does it work with my body type? Is it a color I will wear? Where am I wearing this? Can I incorporate this with something I already own? Keep the styles that work for you; delete the ones that don't. ♦



Abby Wood is a wardrobe stylist and style blogger in Kansas City, and her education in design plus retail experience make her an expert in fit, fabric, style and trends. Her professional experience in fashion began with an apprenticeship with a bridal designer, shifted to creating and showing her own line, moving up to management and training at a retail level and now professional styling as an independent consultant. Abby loves to help individuals develop and evolve their own sense of style.

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HOLISTIC REMEDIES FOR WINTER: NATURAL WAYS TO STAY HEALTHY

BY LISA TARANTO BUTLER

A cough, a sneeze, a sniffle and a wheeze. It's that time of year when germs are flying and bodies are working overtime to dodge sickness. When it comes to our health, the practice of using natural remedies is becoming increasingly popular, especially as we still are journeying our way through a pandemic.

Good thing for us, our bodies are well equipped with a pretty remarkable immune system that defends us from disease-causing bacteria on a daily basis. But to ward off sickness, we can do our share to keep our system in tip-top shape. Although natural medicine has been practiced since the beginning of time, only in the last several years has it started getting so much attention.

Most experts agree we don't need a handful of pills to keep us perky. Fortunately, there are several things we can do naturally to maintain optimal health and energy levels. Here are a few ways we can winterize our bodies and fight germs the biological way.

ELDERBERRY

Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, called elderberries "nature's medicine chest for the common people." Today, there is vast interest and unmet demand for native elderberry as a functional ingredient. Elderberries are known for their immune-boosting properties, and in today's environment, anything we can do to boost our resistance is a win.

Michelle Gordon, a Midwest elderberry grower and advocate, says the public's attention is turning to protection. "Many people are focusing on products such as elderberry for themselves and their families to ward off sickness. We are more conscious



than ever about what we are putting in our bodies as well as the effects from the environment."

Elderberries, rich in antioxidants, vitamins C, A, B6 and beta carotene, can be found in a variety of products. "Juices, syrups, elixirs and gummies are just a few of the products broadly available in today's marketplace," notes Gordon.

How can you make elderberry work for you? There are a variety of elderberry products including liquids, pills and gummies. Gordon focuses her time on producing an elderberry elixir, and recommends taking one ounce daily to bolster the body's immune system.

OTHER SICKNESS-FIGHTING FOODS

Garlic: Known for keeping vampires away in the movies, this versatile condiment also fights off influenza and other wintertime bugs. The best method for protection is to add it to foods just before serving. Heating it up deactivates some of its protective properties.

Mushrooms: Fungi such as shiitake, reishi and maitake improve cardio health and immunity. If you're trying a certain variety for the first time, eat a very small bite, as some mushrooms may have unwanted effects on the body.

Fermented Foods: Fermented foods are a good source of healthy bacteria because the fermentation process allows various helpful

forms of bacteria to multiply and grow. Yogurt, sauerkraut, kimchi and kefir are rich in beneficial bacteria, or probiotics, which make our digestive tract healthier and stronger. Studies show having an ample amount of good gut bacteria can help our immune cells differentiate between normal, healthy cells and those harmful invader organisms. If fermented foods aren't for you, try probiotic supplements to keep your gut on track.

OTHER NATURAL IMMUNE BOOSTERS

Getting ZZZs: A night without sleep won't bring you down, but regular sleep deprivation causes excess amounts of the hormone cortisol. Lose too much sleep over a couple of weeks and you may be on the road to Virusville.

Blitzing the Booze: Too much alcohol impairs the immune system and increases vulnerability to infection, but how do you know when enough is enough? Experts say drinking more than one 1.5-ounce daily may lessen our chances of fighting off disease. It's good to sip with friends, though. A glass of wine or beer provides health advantages, and sharing with a buddy provides socialization, a fun way to increase our immunity.

TAKE A CHILL PILL

In today's environment, it's easy to get stressed out. Too much stress promotes inflammation and long-term anxiety, which can lead to imbalances in our immune cell function. Mind-body therapies including meditation, yoga, tai chi, creative visualization and hypnosis can keep our immune system at the top of its game. Some of us could also benefit from seeing a licensed counselor or therapist, whether virtually or in-person.

Let's face it. Our bodies are armed with a myriad of defenses to guard against germs and bacteria, but it is up to us to bring our well-tuned weapon to battle. In our busy, often stressful, lives, many of us are searching for natural health solutions. Talking to our doctor or medical provider can give us a head start on natural immunity. And by taking a cue from Mother Nature, we can arm ourselves with the biological boost we need to stay happy, healthy and strong during the winter season. ♦

SOURCES: riverhillsharvest.com, health.harvard.edu and healthline.com.



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JANUARY: TIME TO RENEW SKIN CARE!

BY KELLY HIGGINS



Q

When is the best time of the year to get a chemical peel?

A

Right now! It's peel season! Winter brings shorter days, less sun exposure and less change in the skin, which is the perfect formula for an in-depth skin treatment such as a chemical peel. A chemical peel will encourage cellular turnover, exposing new skin, and promote healing. Peels are considered a classic treatment for healthy aging and are great for various skin concerns such as pigmentation, fine lines, acne and rosacea. If the idea of a peel makes you nervous, don't fret! Today's peels won't have you hiding in your house for days on end. While everyone's skin reacts differently to a peel, most of the action happens at the time of application, as dead skin cells are digested by the peel solution. In the days that follow you may experience some light flaking or micro-peeling, which will quickly subside and give way to rejuvenated, fresh, healthy skin.

Q

I want to get my skin looking great. What's your advice?

A

Achieving healthy, glowing skin takes time and consistency. It's not a one-regimen-fits-all; it's an individual journey that's well worth it, and I'm here to help guide you in the right direction. I have three essentials that start you in the right direction.

Sunscreen is a must-have. It doesn't matter if you're inside working on your computer; you are exposing your skin to UV rays and blue light from your technology devices. Eighty percent of facial skin aging is related to UV exposure, and we're not even talking about the risks of skin cancer here. It's very simple: wear SPF every day, 365 days a year!

Exfoliants are important. Be sure to exfoliate three times a week with either chemical exfoliants, such as AHAs, BHAs or retinoids, or physical exfoliants. Bonus points for combining the two!

Hydrators and moisturizers are important regardless of skin type to keep your skin barrier hydrated and happy. Your skin barrier function is critical for skin health. ♦



Kelly Higgins has nearly 17 years of experience in the medical aesthetics field. She's a licensed medical aesthetician in Missouri and Kansas, and a certified laser technician. Having joined Advanced Cosmetic Surgery in 2021, Kelly brings years of experience and an intricate understanding of advanced facial treatments, medical grade chemical peels, medical microdermabrasion, IPL photo rejuvenation, laser hair removal, microneedling, dermaplaning and much more. Kelly's passion is product knowledge and patient education, as she believes our skin is a window to our health. She is dedicated to improving her patients' overall appearance, and she thrives on making people feel more confident as a result.

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FITNESS AND FASHION! 2022 ACTIVE WEAR TRENDS

BY LISA TARANTO BUTLER

Since life seems to be getting somewhat back to normal, does that mean that loungewear and active wear will take a backseat to fashion? Doubtful, say most fashion experts. The world's love affair with athleisurewear will continue to evolve, and fashionistas everywhere still want to stay trendy taking Tai Chi or tennis.

According to the NPD Group, an American market research company, the activewear market accounted for 40 percent of all online sales last year. Wearing fitness clothing that makes us look and feel good not only gives us the motivation to work out, but also boosts our self-confidence. Here are a few athleticwear trends you can count on for 2022.



ing on a comfy cardigan or blazer to run errands or meet for brunch.

BOTTOMS

High-waisted pants will continue hitting the gym this winter and spring. What did we do without them? Stretch any way you want; these belly covers allow us to look flatter in almost any yoga move. We may not see very many

low-waisted bottoms for quite some time, so snatch up a few of your favorites at after-holiday sales or online.

Biker shorts are still going strong for 2022. These skin-tight stretchy shorts may not be for everyone, but once you get used to the silhouette, you can liven the look up with colorful and metallic tops for the winter. If you prefer a little more material around the legs, cropped leggings and bootcut pants will be another great workout option.

ALL SIZES

Men, women and children of all shapes and sizes are working out, so companies are responding with expanded sizes, lengths and varieties. Many companies are now including plus-size models in their ads and online. Some brands are breaking barriers and directing their advertising to women of all shapes and sizes, including curvy, tall, thin and petite.

In August, Old Navy® announced Bodequality, an effort to offer all women's styles in sizes 0 to 30 and XS to 4X, all priced the same and merchandised in the same sections of the store as well as online. Other companies are offering similar programs, demonstrating that everyone deserves to look and feel good in their activewear.

COLORS

It's no secret that bright colors make us feel good, so as we continue journeying through a pandemic, bold, beautiful colors will still be up for grabs. And, if you're a fan of the color-block trend of

STYLES

With a pandemic still looming, the rise of leisure athleticwear is still very popular and the trend seems to be moving forward. Athleisure is the fastest growing clothing category in fashion, seemingly driven by a new trend in wellness goals, not to mention celebrity and influencer endorsements on social media. The distinction between activewear and daywear is becoming a very gray line, often giving fashion-forward fitness enthusiasts a chance to collaborate between the two.

SUSTAINABILITY

2022 is leading the way with an eco-friendly impact. Over the last several years, workout folks have become increasingly environmentally conscious, requiring more clarity about how their clothing is produced while searching for organic and recycled clothing pieces. Some activewear websites even allow users to sort through products by their preferred sustainability methods.

TOPS

Look for bras to be happy and fun. Cut outs on bras will definitely be popular this year and crop bras will also continue holding the "girls" in place. Keeping with the athleisure moment, trendy fitness people may be seen working out in a crop top bra, then throw-

2021, then you can still do your lunges and squats in monochromatic matching tones in 2022.

Fitness fashion will also be readily available in earthy tones such as browns and greens. Still popular in 2022 are camouflage and animal prints, helping us feel more confident and connected to nature.

TECH STYLE

Athleticwear can serve many purposes. Modern brands are fusing technology with fitness in order to create clothing, everything from socks to shirts to caps, that possesses some sort of performance-boosting technology while still staying in line with fashion trends.

Companies are optimizing technology with compression material. Leggings and performance tops made with compression help pump blood throughout the muscles, which aids in hypertrophy, force exertion, fatigue management and post-workout recovery. The options are endless and are being worn by professional athletes to everyday exercisers. Tech-driven clothes are continuing to evolve, so taking your fitness game to the next level is easier than ever.

As long as people are exercising, fitness wear will be evolving and progressing to meet the demand. The coming year looks no different. The pandemic has added to the fast track of everyday activewear and by the end of 2022 the athleisure industry is expected to be valued at \$83 billion. There will be lots of choices for activewear and fashion is always a part of the workout. ♦

SOURCES: *luxedigital, linchpinseo.com and healthworkcollective.com.*



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MEGAN MARSHALL & THE GOOD LIVING EXPO

“GATHERING TOGETHER IS A GREAT WAY TO LEARN & STAY CONNECTED!”

BY JUDY GOPPERT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER J DEERY

For many years, the Just For Her events have drawn thousands of women from around the Kansas City area. Megan Marshall, the new owner of the franchise, plans to expand the shop-pamper-treat concept to yet another exciting event this month, the Good Living Expo, to be held at the Overland Park Convention Center, 6000 College Boulevard, Overland Park, Kansas, January 7 and 8, 2022. It's an interactive health, wellness and fitness expo featuring a variety of local Kansas City companies, including fitness centers, healthy food vendors and anything that falls into the category of health and wellness.

“People can see the newest health and fitness trends and participate in live fitness classes on stage,” Megan explained. “We will also feature companies focusing on mental and health awareness, such as chiropractors and yoga instructors. This is not a huge shopping event, as our other events are. Attendees will be able to purchase some fitness and health items onsite; however, it's more geared to creating awareness about those companies and how people can benefit.”

A HEALTHY START

It's the ideal time of year for such an event, as everyone is creating new goals for the new year, and it highlights the importance of “living the good life” through staying fit, active and healthy. Men, women and families who want to enhance their lifestyle through fitness, natural beauty, nutrition, weight loss and staying or becoming healthy both physically and mentally will find a great way to be encouraged! More than 150 vendors will be on hand, including scrumptious food trucks to tempt the palate, and there will be a special, fun section for children,



sponsored by Bizzy Babies, to keep them occupied while Mom and Dad peruse the displays.

Megan is excited to offer Just For Her, and she's planning to hold more events for local corporations. She named her company Farfalla Events LLC; farfalla means butterfly in Italian and it has a special significance for her.

“I come from a long line of strong Italian women, with my mom and grandma being the two most influential people in my life. My daughter Gigi's middle name is my grandma's maiden name, Tidona,” she mused. “I was fortunate enough to be by my grandma's side when she was passing away and there was a day when my mom and I took her out on her patio to get some fresh air. The three of us were just sitting there enjoying the moment when a monarch butterfly flew over us. My grandma wasn't talking much at this point, and she looked up at us and said, ‘How beautiful that butterfly is! I wish I was that butterfly right now and I could get up and fly like it.’ It wasn't too much longer afterward that my grandma passed away. The butterfly is symbolic of her for my mom and me; we

remember her that way. I try to keep her close to my heart every day and make her proud because there isn't a day that goes by that I don't wish she was here with me."

HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE

She purchased the franchise in August 2021 from her friend, Amy Jacobsen. Megan's family has ownership in GreatLIFE Golf, which has 20 local golf courses and fitness centers, and she had been working with them since 2012 as head of corporate sales. "In March, I wanted to take a step back. I was pregnant and hoping to take some time. I had my own retail shop, the Girl Boutique, in Hawthorne Plaza, so I got to know the retail side and I enjoy helping people," she smiled.



People can see the newest health and fitness trends and participate in live fitness classes on stage," Megan explained. "We will also feature companies focusing on mental and health awareness, such as chiropractors and yoga instructors."

Megan grew up in Kansas City, attending high school at Notre Dame de Sion, then earned her degree in textile management from MU. She met her husband, Larry Marshall, following graduation, and the two have three children, Emerson, six, Genevieve, four, and one-month-old Oliver. "Larry is the muscle of my business, when necessary," she mused.

HERLIFE Magazine co-sponsors the Just For Her events, and is very invested in the health of our community. This event will be one more way for us to come out of COVID positive, renewed and revived! ♦

Visit goodlivingexpo.com for more information. The Spring Chick Event will be held the end of April 2022 and the Just For Her event is set for June 2022.





LISA BUTLER

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS
FOR HEALTHY LIVING

Pen and paper. Weights and cardio. Coaching and counseling. Knife and fork. These are just a few of the tools employed by FitChix KC owner Lisa Butler as she guides her clients by partnering to build a healthier lifestyle. Based in Leawood, Kansas, she's worked in the fitness and wellness arena for decades and established FitChix KC in 2007. She is double-certified by the American Council on Exercise as a health coach and personal trainer. She is also a group fitness and Silver Sneakers instructor. The mission she shares with her clients, ranging from mothers in their 30s to seniors in their golden years, is based on setting personalized goals while creating and delivering safe and effective exercise programs for individuals and groups and maintaining their efforts.

BY CINDY McDERMOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER J DEERY
HAIR AND MAKE UP BY LIZ MILLER OF HELLO LOVELY

"People come to me for help, and through an initial consultation, we create a plan together to help them realize results," she shared. "We might start with their top three goals for improving everyday life. Maybe that's working on reducing stress, toning arms and abs, losing weight or just getting more energy and flexibility to play with their grandkids. I love to see those changes in people."

PEN AND PAPER

You might recognize Lisa's name as one of the contributing writers for *HERLIFE* Magazine, taking on the role of health and lifestyle contributor for more than ten years. Her decades of writing and her deep background in health and fitness, including running FitChix KC, have helped make her an expert in the field.

With a background in journalism, Lisa enjoys researching the fitness world and discovering new information to share. "*HERLIFE* readers are savvy and progressive, so my aim is to keep them updated on health and wellbeing," she remarked. "Over the last year, I have written a lot about COVID and its long-term effects. Now, because of the circumstances of that same pandemic, more people are training virtually. We've learned that even though we were in a lockdown in our own spaces, we can still work out. It's hard to find excuses for not being engaged in some form of exercise. Technology is continuing to evolve and there are so many more ways to work out at home. My personal favorite is face-to-face. There's nothing quite like the motivation that comes from someone guiding you through that process."



WEIGHTS AND CARDIO

At FitChix KC, Lisa is focused on evaluating each person's strengths and weaknesses, while developing an individualized workout plan with accountability goals and timelines. Lisa highlights a group of clients who started working out together a few years ago. Among them, cholesterol, body fat and blood pressure numbers were high. The plan was to reduce these figures through a basic exercise program while monitoring food intake. Working together, they accomplished these goals. On the other hand, a client working alone lost 35 pounds in less than a year.

"What drives these success stories is the motivation that they



In fitness, as with any business, you can either learn and grow or go with the motions," Lisa affirmed. "I feel the best when I'm helping others be their best. We definitely develop a partnership, and I want to be there for them in their successes and through the hiccups. Some days are challenging, but they're erased by the other days in which I am amazed by what someone can accomplish."



wanted to work out, feel better or look better in their clothes. They devoted time in their schedules for their workouts and followed through,” Lisa said. “Through this process, they feel good about their accomplishments, which is a boost for their mind and body, not to mention their self-confidence.”

While most of her sessions are built for individuals, Lisa supports bringing along an exercise buddy for support. “Everyone is different. Some people prefer to work out on their own, while others bring a partner because they desire the accountability,” she stated. “Many times, they’re working out with similar goals, which makes it even more fun to train them. Sometimes they’ll push each other to move up in weights or add more cardio.”

COACHING AND COUNSELING

Weights and fitness equipment aren’t the only tools Lisa calls upon in her line of work. She monitors a client’s success regularly with electronic equipment such as an Omron fat loss monitor, which displays BMI and body fat statistics. Of course, simple tape measures and weight scales are very effective as well.

“I’ll weigh and measure clients to set a baseline and then follow up regularly. Some want to do that every couple of weeks and tracking regularly can help clients ‘see’ their success,” she noted. “But sometimes achievements don’t have anything to do with digits. Maybe you feel stronger. Maybe you have more energy throughout the day. As

ARE YOU READY TO BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY?

Lisa offers sound advice for taking the first steps to a healthier lifestyle.

- *You have to be ready to make a change, not a spouse or someone else pushing you to do it. It’s great to have the support, but you have to have the personal commitment to see yourself through.*
- *It’s a good idea to work with a professional, so you are committed to keeping those appointments. Find a trainer/coach that allows you to be you, but still helps you achieve your goals. Most people know what to do but they have a hard time staying motivated on their own. They need someone to push them to new levels.*
- *Workouts don’t have to be so intense that you dread them. Challenge yourself but keep showing up. ♦*



how we will eat for those events is important.”

She added that we all have food and health fears or self-doubt keeping us from being our best selves, but the idea is knowing when we are ready to make a change. This usually begins with a gut feeling or an event such as seeing a picture of yourself not looking your best, being winded going upstairs or at the extreme of finding yourself in the emergency room with a serious health issue.

LIFESTYLE PHILOSOPHY

FitChix is more than just exercise, it's also a way for Lisa to help mold lifestyle changes that clients desire to make. “It's not one or the other. You can't exercise all day and not change your diet and vice versa. A healthy lifestyle is good food and portion control coupled with a sound exercise program,” she advised. “Some people think that they didn't eat so well over the weekend but they're going to get back on track come Monday. But it's not like that; it's a lifestyle change that you need to embrace. Eighty percent of the time it's enjoying healthy foods and exercise while the remaining 20 percent can be indulging in actions outside those goals.”

After decades in the business and more than ten years running her own company, Lisa has seen thousands of lunges, crunches, push-ups, squats, burpees, triceps extensions and many more exercises. What keeps her going is the self-satisfaction she gains from her work and the achievements of her patrons as they realize their goals.

“In fitness, as with any business, you can either learn and grow or go with the motions,” Lisa affirmed. “I feel the best when I'm helping others be their best. We definitely develop a partnership, and I want to be there for them in their successes and through the hiccups. Some days are challenging, but they're erased by the other days in which I am amazed by what someone can accomplish.” ♦

a trainer and health coach, I have to take all of those achievements into consideration. Everyone is so varied in their goals; frankly, it all comes down to appreciating a better lifestyle.”

While individual training is a big part of her business, Lisa is also involved with wellness counseling. As a health coach with the Kansas City-based company Live Fit for Life, her role is to work with corporations to enhance their company wellness programs by offering one-on-one coaching to employees. “These are 20- to 30-minute coaching phone calls with employees who want to make changes in their lifestyle. We help them set healthy goals based on their wellness indicator measurements,” she remarked. “We'll discuss where they want to be with their health and then devise the small steps to get there. I enjoy seeing their results. People can be amazing, turn it around and surprise you.”

KNIFE AND FORK

Just as you change up a workout, Lisa advises that you do the same with your nutrition. Do away with unhealthy meals or fast food and focus on eating whole foods with dishes that are tasty and can be created quickly. Her secret to success is planning. Many fitness apps feature the ability to plan meals and figure calories with a few keystrokes.

“I find or create recipes I like for my family and then I share them on social media. I'm a basic cook who uses things from her kitchen to try to eat healthier,” she noted. “Sometimes we are not honest about what we're consuming or we underestimate the portions. Planning meals, or at least thinking about it ahead of time, can be so helpful, not to mention cheaper.”

She points to a change in lifestyle, not counting on restrictive diets, although she does say special regimens can help you jumpstart your efforts. But normally those efforts can't be maintained for long periods and many may fall into the yo-yo diet category. “A person can lose 20 pounds on a commercial diet, but what happens when they go back to normal eating? We should think about nutrition every day,” she noted. “It's more about trying to put good things into our bodies more often while cutting back on the unhealthy foods. We have to find what we can stick with long-term and still be happy. There will always be holidays or birthdays where we want a treat, but planning



NEW GROWTH, NEW YEAR

BY ERIN LITTLE

This is a bittersweet moment for me, in the most wonderful way.

I have been writing monthly features for *HERLIFE* Magazine for nearly four years, and this will be my last monthly feature, at least for a while.

When I left my broadcast TV career in 2016, I never thought I would go back to working in television again. I walked away from a great job with an amazing team. In a sense, I had it all, but I wanted to keep growing. Leaving was scary. In all honesty, it was terrifying to walk away from the only job I had ever known to try something new.

But once I pushed past that fear, I could clearly see a whole new world for me that didn't exist in that old framework. It gave me a completely new perspective that wouldn't have been possible without stepping outside my comfort zone.

When I came back to broadcast television with KCTV5 News in 2018, I walked in with a gift. The gift of a new perspective. The gift of new opportunities. The gift of a growth mindset.

I knew that once I started back on TV, I wanted to keep doing more. I wanted to keep challenging myself with things that terrified me professionally.



Like writing in a magazine.

I could speak to you every morning on television for hours, but I'm not a magazine writer. Right? Well, nearly four years later, after writing monthly magazine articles, I now know that I just needed to keep pushing past that fear. Our own thoughts most times are our biggest obstacles.

Writing these monthly features for *HERLIFE* Magazine has allowed me to be candid and connect with Kansas City women in a completely different way. This opportunity has been a gift, one that wouldn't have been possible without the friendship and support of Tammy McDonald and Michelle Carder. I adore you both!

Now it is time for me to do the next thing professionally that will challenge and

terrify me.

Ladies, change can be hard, scary, even bittersweet at times. Trust me; it's worth it. You are worth it to keep growing. You are strong. You are brave. You can do amazing new things into this new year. Thank you, Kansas City, for always supporting me. I love and appreciate you all! ♦



Meteorologist Erin Little starts your day off with a smile and the forecast each morning on KCTV5 News *This Morning*. With over a decade of experience forecasting the weather in Kansas City, she understands it's not all about the weather, but how it will impact our busy lives. Erin is thrilled to be raising her three young children in her hometown of Lee's Summit. You can find her Monday through Friday, 4:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. on KCTV5 News.

CONNECT WITH ERIN ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER & INSTAGRAM: @ERINKCTV5

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HEARTY MINISTRONE SOUP

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LANE | LAUREN-LANE.COM



INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
 1 large onion, diced
 3 celery stalks, diced
 4 garlic cloves, chopped
 2 teaspoons basil, dried
 1 teaspoon oregano, dried
 ½ teaspoon thyme, dried
 1½ teaspoon salt
 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 pinch of red pepper flakes
 1 28-oz. can diced tomatoes
 1 15 ounce can white kidney (cannellini) beans, rinsed and drained
 2 bay leaves
 1-2 Parmesan rinds (optional)
 7-8 cups chicken or vegetable stock
 1 cup small pasta soup shells, dry
 4 large handfuls of spinach or kale, coarsely chopped
 ¼ cup parsley, chopped
 ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped (optional but delish)
 Italian crusty bread loaf for serving

DIRECTIONS

Preheat large Dutch oven or heavy bottom pot on low-medium heat. Swirl olive oil in bottom of pan to coat. Add onion, celery and garlic; sauté until tender, stirring occasionally. Add next 11 ingredients and stir. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook on low for 30-45 minutes. Add pasta and cook for additional 5-8 minutes. Remove the parmesan rinds. Remove from heat. Scoop 2 cups of soup from the bottom of the pot and blend until smooth. Return blended soup to the pot. This will make the whole pot of soup creamy. Skip this step for a non-creamy soup. Alternatively, you can use an immersion blender and place it in into the whole pot and blend briefly. Add spinach or kale, parsley and basil. Adjust seasoning to taste; it will likely need more salt. Serve hot with shredded Parmesan cheese, a drizzle of olive oil and crunchy bread. ♦

TIPS...

1: Store soup in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 5-7 days.

2: Freeze soup once fully cooled in an airtight container for up to 3 months. Thaw on a stovetop, low heat and covered.

3: Use 3½ teaspoons dried Italian seasoning instead of the dried thyme and oregano.

4: Substitute any types of beans you like.



After 25 years in creative design and management with Hallmark Cards, Lauren Lane retired to pursue her lifelong passion for food and entertaining. The ensuing years have been an amazing educational journey as she pursues her dream of helping people appreciate food more fully, and enjoying how it brings people together. Lauren continues to experiment with how to make food more delicious, more approachable and share the experience more fully with her audience.

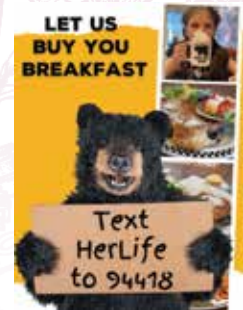
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JJ's is a fine dining tradition, with a contemporary American menu featuring locally sourced produce and meats, house-cut steaks, fresh seafood, and the best thin crust pizza and pork chop in the city. The world-class wine list has earned multiple honors from Wine Spectator magazine, and Zagat rates JJ's as one of Kansas City's best restaurants. All the more reason to make JJ's part of your Country Club Plaza dining experience.

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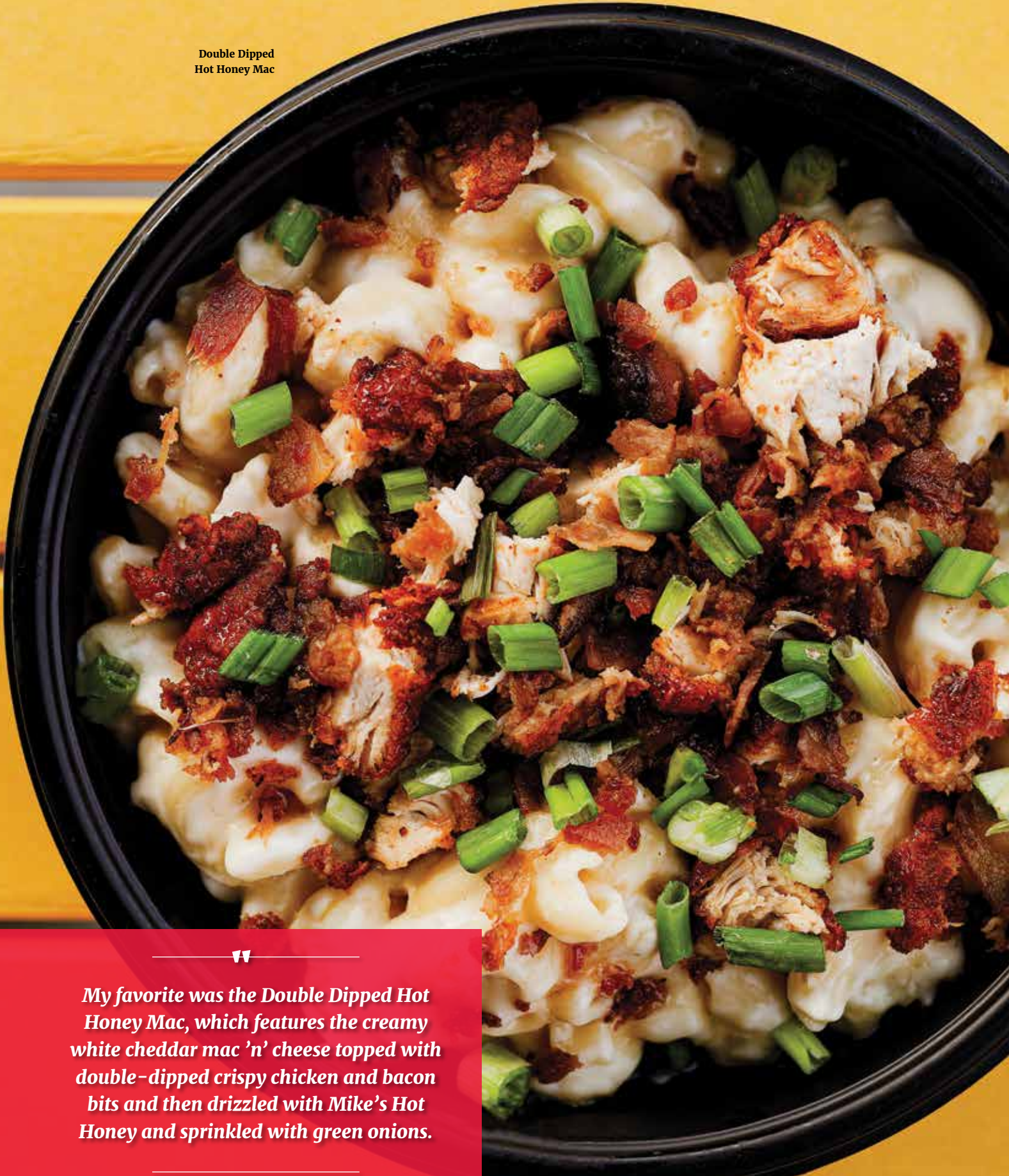
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Double Dipped
Hot Honey Mac



My favorite was the *Double Dipped Hot Honey Mac*, which features the creamy white cheddar mac 'n' cheese topped with double-dipped crispy chicken and bacon bits and then drizzled with Mike's Hot Honey and sprinkled with green onions.

WingStand

MUCH MORE THAN CHICKEN!

WRITTEN BY MEGAN NEHER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

If you think the new WingStand by Jefferson's is just another fast-casual chicken place in an already crowded specialty restaurant market, you need to run, not walk, to get a taste of chicken heaven, and see for yourself.

WingStand differentiates themselves by doing a few things. First, hands down, their chicken simply tastes awesome! The **tenders** are huge and juicy. The chicken **wings** are big, perfectly cooked and have just the right amount of crunch. The reason WingStand, well, *stands out* is probably because their wings and tenders are fresh, never frozen. It's not something many of their competitors can claim.

"We knew the catch to capturing the attention of today's customers was that somehow we had to be different and be better," said Brandon Graham, president of Jefferson's Franchise Systems, the restaurant umbrella company that created WingStand. "We've poured ourselves into every ingredient, every flavor combination and every menu item so that our customers will fall in love with every single bite at WingStand. And that's how we intend to stand out."

And that they did. All of my fellow tasting crew fell hopelessly in love with WingStand's signature sandwich, the **Double Dipped**. It's hand-breaded chicken breast tossed in their Turbo sauce and refried for a crispy sandwich, giving it big flavor and a crunchy exterior. Then, it's topped with their house-made ranch, mild sauce and pickles. I'd suggest ordering a side of coleslaw or asking that they add a little on the sandwich!

A tie for second place is WingStand's other two sandwiches. Always hand breaded, one is called **Signature Sauced** and is tossed



Speaking of the **Mac 'n' Cheese**, it isn't your teenager's Kraft version. I'd describe it as a rich and creamy mac 'n' cheese entrée loaded with flavorful chicken tenders and many other toppings. It is just the kind of menu item a true flavor junkie like me would adore. In fact, it was very difficult to decide exactly which one I thought was the

in your choice of one of the signature sauces and topped with honey slaw. The other is **Gochu-DANG!**, tossed in the delicious and unique Gochujang sauce.

And that brings me to the signature sauces. This is probably my all-time favorite thing about WingStand, which prides itself on its more than 18 sauces from mild to hot and sweet to savory. Menu developers for WingStand had a plan to create enough sauces to please all customers. As for me, I simply have a general fondness for condiment choices. But remember, the sauces aren't only for the wings! All menu items can be tossed in the signature sauces including the jumbo tenders, crispy chicken sandwiches and even the Mac 'n' Cheese.

CLASSIC HEAT SAUCES

Mild

Medium

Hot Atomic Scorpion

(Warning: This one has after effects that are out of this world! The spiciest sauce that gives a new meaning to hot wings.)



Famous
Fried Pickles



Gochu-DANG!
Sandwich

most outstanding so it took many, many bites during our tasting.

In the end, all were delicious, but my favorite was the **Double Dipped Hot Honey Mac**, which features the creamy white cheddar mac 'n' cheese topped with double-dipped crispy chicken and bacon bits and then drizzled with Mike's Hot Honey and sprinkled with green onions. My recommendation is to try all three and see for yourself.

Even if you're not a wing connoisseur, this is such a fun restaurant, and there are lots of options for everyone. You'll discover with your first bite, WingStand this isn't your typical chicken joint. ♦

TWO WINGSTAND LOCATIONS IN KC

(MORE LOCATIONS SOON TO OPEN)

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**7715 State Line Road
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*Order and get deliveries online through the website:
wingstand.com ♦*



Journalist-turned-PR-professional Megan Neher has never forgotten her true first love: writing. Today, Megan owns her own PR firm, Megan Neher Public Relations; she's a wife, mom, marketer, student and spends a lot of time cleaning up after her four pets and two teenagers. Her dream is to live on a tropical beach somewhere where she can stroll barefoot to a nearby grass hut for a fish taco and margarita.

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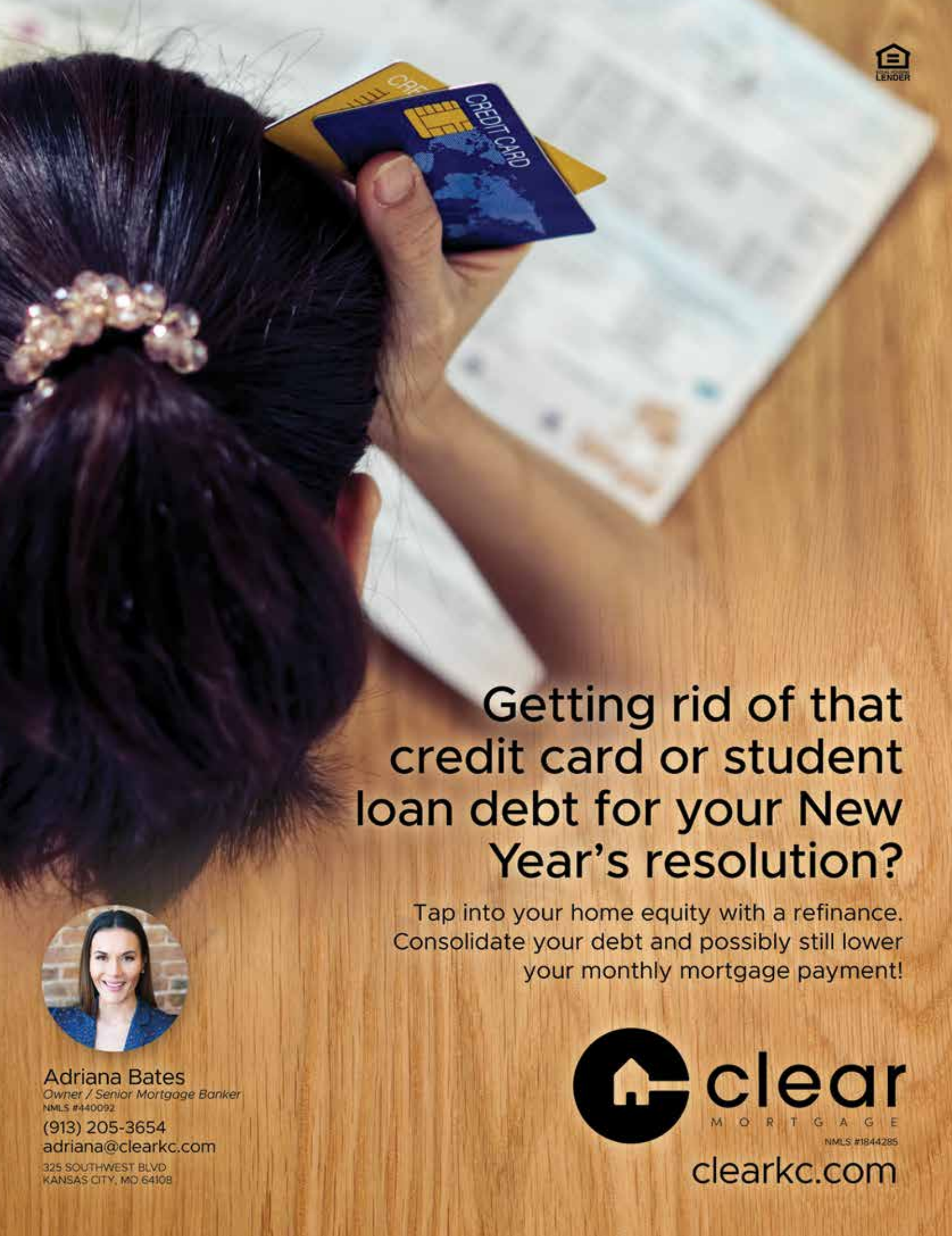


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PHOTOGRAPHY
Amber J Deery

MODELS
Amy, Hadley and Hunter Morris

STYLED BY
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YOU HAVE MORE INFLUENCE THAN YOU THINK

BY VANESSA BOHNS

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Vanessa Bohns is a social psychologist and professor of organizational behavior at Cornell University. She holds a PhD in psychology from Columbia University and an AB in psychology from Brown University. Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Harvard Business Review*, and her research has been featured by the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Economist* and *NPR's Hidden Brain*.

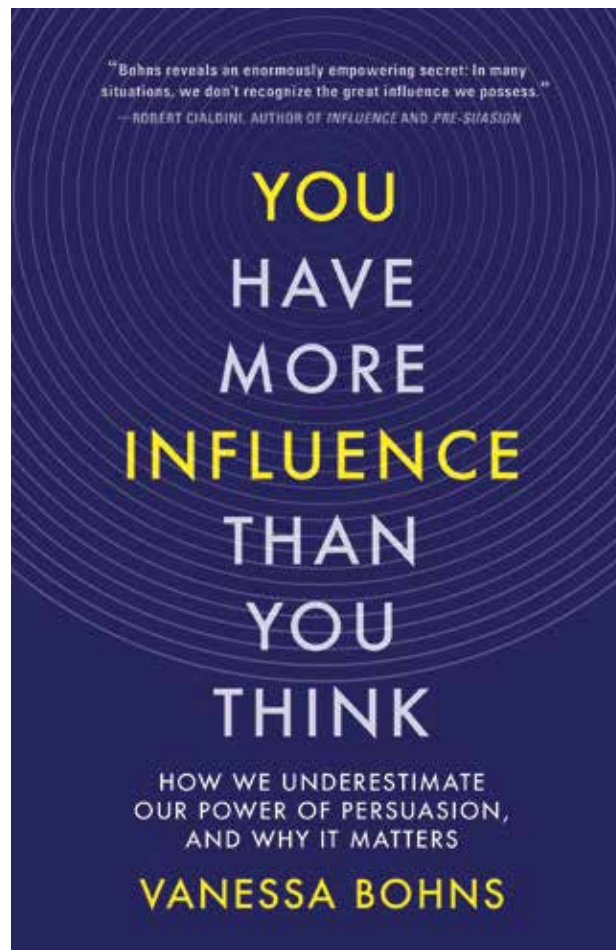
Now, look it here. There's something you need to know, eyes forward and listen, keep an open mind and a shut mouth, and pay attention. Then know that this is not the way to persuade anyone to do anything; in fact, it'll backfire and in *You Have More Influence Than You Think* by Vanessa Bohns, you'll learn what will work to gently change someone's mind.

"Hey, I like your shirt!"

It literally takes two seconds to say that, but watch what happens when you say it to a stranger: they stand a little taller, happily flustered that someone approves; they feel good, and boom, you've just influenced someone to smile.

You'd be surprised at how easy it is to be influential, says social psychologist Bohns. You just have to be noticed, and you won't need to "wave your hands around and shout" for that to happen. If you want attention, "you already have it" because we humans are "wired to notice... people," and people who are noticed are often followed.

"We are instinctively attuned to other people—we notice them, remember them, wonder what is going on in their minds, tune our thoughts and messages to them, and copy their behavior," Bohn notes. "But that means other people are also attuned to us and exhibit



the same behaviors to us. When we think about how much influence we have, the first mistake we make is underestimating how much other people pay attention to us."

So, you have influence without even trying, but how do you create the biggest impact? Here's another surprise: studies show that sometimes, all you have to do is ask. Students sent out to borrow cell phones from strangers were successful more than not; one experiment proved that people will commit minor vandalism, if they're asked.

This may be explained by an extreme human difficulty in saying "no." Research shows that even if something is illegal or uncomfortable and a person clearly doesn't want to say "yes," many will, to avoid saying "no." This, says Bohn, is why understanding the ask is essential, and dating and mating can be irritating; add perceived power to the mix, and an issue becomes less influential and more wrong.

To further your influence, try to connect with people. State what you think; that alone may help. Utilize crowd behavior. Always communicate in per-

son. And chill; as every parent will tell you, overreactions just make things worse...

You are being watched. And that's a good thing but it can also be detrimental, so complete your actions wisely: in *You Have More Influence Than You Think*, you'll see how even innocuous behaviors can make an impact.

Beware, but as author Vanessa Bohns states, there's no need to be paranoid if you keep in mind that the title of this book is correct and that being an influencer has serious weight. Indeed, the notion that influence can be harnessed with a mere appropriately-stated request is almost shocking, like having a Superpower that's too big to control. Whether it's verbal, action, or a posting, your influence can hurt someone and can cause misinformation and rumors to be perceived as truth, even when said in jest. Pick your convictions with caution, as she indicates, and remember that "You don't need to have an opinion on everything."

Read *You Have More Influence Than You Think* carefully and with great thought, take its confidence-boosting, and use it wisely. There's power in this book and if you need sway, lookit here.

Editor's note: *Of interest is Bohns' discussion of British philosopher of language Paul Grice's highly influential theory of conversational norms, a theory that has had a lasting impact on the science of communication. "Central to Grice's theory is the idea that communication is a cooperative endeavor. In order to understand one another, we must work together. And in order to do that, we must have some ground rules, which Grice called maxims. According to Grice, the very first maxim of communication is that people should only say what is true, meaning that we shouldn't say something we know to be false, and we shouldn't say something for which we don't have evidence." Those who have read Malcolm Gladwell's Talking to Strangers will recognize his concept that humans "default to truth;" that is, we tend to take on face value the things people tell us, even if we should know better. Particularly apropos for 2022, wouldn't you say? ♦*

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Clear Mortgage blends the advancements of technology with the personal touch of a locally owned business,” Adriana explained. “We are small, comparatively, so we can close a loan quickly and we have built a reputation of being nimble, which is important in a competitive real estate market like we’re in now.”

ADRIANA BATES & CLEAR MORTGAGE

THE PERSONAL TOUCH BLENDED SEAMLESSLY WITH TECHNOLOGY

BY JUDY GOPPERT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER J DEERY

In today's competitive world of finance, it takes experience, originality, perseverance and understanding, all of which Adriana Bates and her life and business partner, Sean Finn, have in abundance. Both played basketball competitively during their college years, and they're familiar with the teamwork required to succeed on the court, in business and in life.

Adriana grew up in upstate New York. She played collegiate basketball at Brown University, where she earned her BA in human biology and completed pre-med requirements. After realizing her passion wasn't medicine, she pursued a dual MA program at Washington University and Saint Louis University in real estate finance and urban planning in 2010.

PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

"At the time I graduated, the economy was not the best. I was subsequently recruited into the mortgage industry," she noted. "Finance is primarily a male-dominated field, yet I moved up quickly and started Clear Mortgage with Sean. He was done playing professional basketball in Europe, where he played for 12 years. Prior to that, he played at the University of Dayton and had a short stint in the NBA. He decided to help Clear Mortgage buy out its financial backers."

Clear Mortgage, 325 Southwest Boulevard, Kansas City, Missouri, has experienced exponential growth in the last three years, staying primarily focused on talent. Their home base is in the Kansas City metro, which includes both Kansas and Missouri, and the company has expanded into Colorado, Ohio, Florida and North Carolina. "Future expansion really depends on where we find smart, eager and hardworking individuals who believe in our values and mission," Adriana smiled.

"Clear Mortgage blends the advancements of technology with the personal touch of a locally owned business," Adriana explained. "We understand that there are many choices when it comes to home financing, and unless you have had a bad experience people typically won't understand the importance of great communication, low rates and low fees. We are small, comparatively, so we can close a loan quickly and we have built a reputation of being nimble, which is important in a competitive real estate market like we're in now."

EXCELLENT ADVICE

Adriana believes 2022 will bring the same real estate market the country currently is experiencing, with low inventory paired with aggressive and historically low rates, which means continued craziness for buyers as a whole. "This is a great time to sell," she notes. "But at

the same time, remember that when you sell high, you are typically buying high, too.

"The industry has recognized home appreciation, and maximum conventional loan limits have increased to \$647,200.00, which is the maximum loan before you are in the jumbo loan product," she reiterated. "Money is cheap; if you have equity in your home, tap into it now. In many cases you can consolidate debt or finance a home renovation project while lowering your rate and keeping your payment low. You could also get rid of your private mortgage insurance. If you're paying PMI at all, you definitely need to reach out for an appraisal estimate."

SPORTING FAMILY

Adriana and Sean run Clear Mortgage as a team in addition to their family team. "We have three boys; Sebastian, 7; Sawyer, 5; and Spencer, 2. If we're not working to build the business or with the kids, we are at the art gallery, Lemonade, which we own in the Crossroads or golfing!" The couple hopes all their boys will love the sport of basketball as they did. She noted that their oldest son is into football and baseball right now, and all three are athletic, and, to no surprise, very tall!

She was thrilled to have the opportunity to host *The American Dream*, a television show focused on lifestyle, culture and real estate in cities across the United States. The show has now been picked up by CNBC, Travel Channel, Fox Business and Bloomberg News. Her hope is to bring Selling Kansas City to a network, although there are no commitments quite yet.

As the Kansas City real estate market is competitive, she recommends buyers and sellers work with an agent who is well connected. "If you're looking for a deal right now, an agent is going to be the one to find it," she asserted. "Once a home hits the Multiple Listing Service, it's pretty much gone. We've built our business on great relationships within the industry and we would be happy to connect you with agents that we know, like and trust." ♦

For more information, visit clearkc.com or call 913-205-3654.

GIVE IT TO YOUR HEIRS NOW!

BY CATIE WATSON

Sharing your wealth with your heirs in the here and now has the advantage of allowing you to feel their gratitude while you're still around to enjoy it.

If you take care to leave enough for your own expenses, there's really no reason to wait until you're gone to pass on portions of your estate. Just make sure you understand the rewards and risks for both you and your heirs.

TAX CONSIDERATIONS

In general, the IRS doesn't care whether you pass on your money now in the form of a gift or later as an inheritance. Either way, the recipients of your generosity will not have to pay additional taxes. You also won't owe taxes on either a gift or inheritance until you're reached a lifetime limit, also referred to as a lifetime exclusion. The exclusion amount varies by year according to adjustments for inflation and tax law changes. In 2021, the lifetime exclusion was \$11.7 million for single taxpayers and double that amount (\$23.4 million) for married couples. For money and property inherited from a spouse, the exemption is unlimited.

The IRS doesn't require you to pay taxes on your gifts to a child or other heir until your gifts to that individual surpass the lifetime exclusion. If you give less than the lifetime exclusion at the time of your death, your heirs can use the remaining amount to reduce or eliminate any estate taxes they may owe. Otherwise, they may end up paying up to 40 percent of their inheritance in estate taxes.

In addition to a lifetime exclusion, the IRS grants an annual exclusion of \$15,000 per individual and \$30,000 per married couple. You aren't required to pay a gift tax on amounts less than the annual ex-



clusion and these gifts do not count toward your lifetime exclusion for that person. This means a married couple could give \$30,000 to each of their children and grandchildren without incurring any tax debt for the parties involved. Making payments for a family member's school tuition or medical expenses is exempt from the gift tax, providing funds are transferred directly to the school or health care organization.

You may need to file a U.S. Gift Tax Return, IRS Form 709, to report your gifts even when no taxes are owed. It always pays to consult a tax professional if you're planning to make a large gift of cash, real estate, investment properties or other valuables.

BENEFITS OF GIVING NOW

If your estate is large enough to owe estate taxes, then it may make more sense financially to begin dividing your assets among your heirs during your lifetime. Even if this is not the case, making gifts to your children at a time in their lives when they need the money could make a big difference in their futures—a difference that you'll be able to witness. Being able to finance a child's first home purchase or a grandchild's college education can provide you with immense satisfaction, provided you give strategically. You can also help your heirs build wealth earlier in their lifetimes.

CAN YOU AFFORD TO GIVE?

Taxes are important, but there are other factors to consider before you decide to disperse your wealth. Some other important ques-

tions to ask yourself and discuss with your financial advisor are: How will the gift impact your current and future financial situation? Giving your children too much money now could mean you'll be financially dependent on them later in life.

Is it clearly understood by your heirs that giving now will reduce or eliminate the amount you leave for inheritance? Will the gift change your family dynamic? For example, you may cause problems if you give to one child now and wait to give to other children later.

Each family is different, requiring each to search for the best solution for sharing a large estate. Throughout the process, it's important to support transparency and open communication about your plans to avoid future resentment and accusations of being unfair.

FLEXIBLE GIVING APPROACH

According to a 2019 study conducted by Merrill, 65 percent of Americans over age 55 believe it's better to pass on at least a portion of their estate during their lifetime. Instead of giving it all away as gifts, many financial experts recommend a flexible approach that combines annual gifts with an inheritance.

The current gift tax annual exemption is scheduled to expire in 2026; without additional legislation, it will be reduced by 50 percent. Changes in tax law could reduce it even sooner, which is a good reason to consider giving now instead of later. At the time of this writing, it is not known whether the exemption will be reduced in 2022. ♦

SOURCES: [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov), [merrilledge.com](https://www.merrilledge.com), [schwab.com](https://www.schwab.com) and [turbotax.intuit.com](https://www.turbotax.intuit.com).



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GRAB YOUR MASK AND GET OUT THERE!

BY VIKKI MORAN

Returning to international travel is not without its trials and tribulations but it's so well worth the effort as well as the mild aggravation that is inherent in our COVID life. The ability to walk less crowded streets, eat in the restaurants that you've always dreamt of trying; to scratch that itch we call wanderlust is the prize unto itself.

Are there bargains to be had? Yes, some, but perhaps not as many as you would expect. The travel industry is trying to make up lost revenue to stay afloat. Set your sites on upgrades and travel perks, which seem to be much easier to obtain right now. If you belong to an airline frequent travelers' program, ask for an upgrade in flight class. On a recent trip to Italy and Amsterdam, I watched as many who requested upgrades were called up before boarding. Hotel chain clubs can grant early check-in requests more readily and room upgrades seem less elusive while travel abroad is still on the slow side. Have you ever requested breakfast to be included for no upcharge? Now is the time. Lastly, but perhaps most tempting, are the exchange rates for Euro. At the time of this writing, it's at the lowest point in a very long time.

Like the U.S., the European Union is changing travel guidelines frequently, sadly, even on a day-to-day basis depending on the member state (country). Airlines can only do so much to keep up with ever-changing dynamics and they're giving you information as they receive and understand it. In your research, you may read a requirement that a negative COVID test is needed for entry into the country, but by the time your plane leaves, that same information may have changed. That was my experience, resulting in some hefty rapid testing fees; by



the time we arrived at the airport, we learned tests were no longer needed due to rapidly changing guidelines.

Each European country has different rules on entry and the U.S. has stringent testing rules on reentry. You need to be aware of all rules. Factor in arrival times when determining when to test. If it is 72 hours, you will need to provide a negative covid test within 72 hours of arrival time, not departure time. Always have your vaccination cards handy for entry into restaurants, concerts, spas, larger cathedrals and muse-

ums. Some will ask for proof and others will not, but you will never know which way the wind will blow on this until you're about to cross the threshold.

In addition to testing, a prepared traveler should plan to step up their mask game. Many sites in Italy are currently requiring a medical-grade mask in lieu of fabric and disposable ones. We found plenty of vendors selling them around the places they were required.

It seems funny that in cities like Rome or Florence there could be so many changes. After all, these are the cities of Caesar, the Medicis and Dante, but while everything you burn to see still delights the soul, they are often without crowds. Some hotels have closed, some permanently and some planning to reopen in spring 2022, so embrace trying new and exciting ones. One such discovery for me was the new Dimora

Palanca in Florence.

The Dimora Palanca is a beautifully restored 18th-century villa that has been linked to the arts for many years through private ownership. The vibrant artistic heritage is clearly represented throughout the property today. The staff of the Dimora Palanca was brought together from top luxury properties throughout Italy with astounding results. From the professional concierge staff to Head Chef Giovanni Cerroni and his team at Mimesi, their fine dining restaurant, this new 5- star luxury hotel hits every sensory note in beautiful Florence.

New creative restaurants are popping up all over Europe, weaving together with the family-owned and operated treasures that have delighted us in the past. COVID has provided some talented people in Europe the opportunity to venture out and open the food establishment of their dreams, so experiment and enjoy as many as you can.

Is Michelangelo's David still a 5.17-meter marble statue to gawk and enjoy? Yes, it has not changed a bit from Covid. Is the Vatican accepting visitors? Yes, even the audiences in the square have opened again for weekly glimpses of Papa Francesco. The opera at the world-famous Verona Arena is open, still thrilling to witness. The tower in Pisa is still tilting like crazy and the grapes of Chianti are about to be harvested. Life is pushing ahead as it always should.

Whatever your European sightseeing desire, it's there for you. With a bit of fortitude and some patience, you can go in greater protective comfort. Do as I did; pull up your mask and don't look back. ♦

SOURCES: *wsj.com, dimorapalanca.com and united.com.*



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JUST SAYIN'

BY Q104 PERSONALITY JENNY MATTHEWS
PHOTO BY LAUREN FRISCH PUSATERI

I've always had an all-or-nothing mentality. In the past, that was really the case when it came to the new year and resolutions. I'd usually start off strong and dedicated to my goals and life changes. Then, I'd miss a day of working out here, go off the diet there. So, then none of it seemed worth it and I'd just quit and go back to old bad habits.



THE **MORNING DRIVE**

MIKE KELLAR + JENNY MATTHEWS

I've decided this year my resolution is to do away with that. I'm bidding farewell to my all-or-nothing mentality! As a busy, working mom of two kids with a zillion things on my to-do list each day, I simply have to give myself grace. Living the other way did nothing but cause me stress and made me feel like a failure. I was putting a lot of unnecessary pressure on myself. The fact is, if I'm doing my best every day, that's enough.

I am also giving myself permission to have days where I don't

accomplish a thing. I used to feel guilty for sitting around while there was laundry to be done, closets to organize or errands to run. Maybe that sounds ridiculous. Or maybe you can relate. I'm learning that it's not only okay to chill, it's healthy. I feel better when I'm rested, mentally and physically. I'm better for everyone around me when I'm taking better care of myself.

Here's to a happy, healthy, well-balanced 2022! ♦

Jenny Matthews was on the air at Mix 93.3 for 15 years and in 2019 moved to Q104 to co-host The Morning Drive with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews, 6:00 to 10:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. Check out her podcast, Real Life with Jenny Matthews, follow along with her blog and connect at jennymatthewsonair.com.

Q104

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JANUARY 2022

5 - 23

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7 - 8

Good Living Expo

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21 - 23

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29

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29

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CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

A time of reflection, January brings with it the discovery that you've let things slide. With crushing realization comes the determination to make things right, with friends, family and your significant other. Make a point of making time and achieving balance this year, or it will come back to haunt you in all areas of your life.



TAURUS
(APR. 20-MAY 20)

There may be some domestic issues that you need to pay attention to this month. To deal with the pressures, you may feel the need to turn to a spiritual outlet. Do not fight this inclination, as it is a natural evolution. Hold off on making any big purchases this month, as things are still not settled in the financial department.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

This is a time to reflect on how balanced your life was last year, and how you can make it more so this year. On the work front, you may feel as if you are not being valued and that your hard work is not generating the income you expected. Don't despair, as this is temporary and soon you will have things the way you'd like.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

This time of year, if you are going to become depressed, it will be big. Avoid being in the dumps this year by spending some time where you can absorb some sunlight and get some exercise. Resolve not to repeat past mistakes; make your peace with the ones you made and move forward. This is going to be a great month and a good start to a fantastic year.



GEMINI
(MAY 21-JUN. 20)

You've experienced some drastic changes in your life, especially in the work, life and career areas. Make sure that you are valuing your abilities and setting your rates appropriately so that you are being paid what you are worth. Continue to hold to the clarity that you discovered months ago about the path you want to take, as a crossroads is going to present itself soon.



LIBRA
(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Mars will be transiting across your sign, making you more likely to say things in anger that you ordinarily would have kept quiet. Think before you speak; make sure that you are taking care of yourself, in particular your back and digestive systems.

STAR JOURNEYS

BY MELODY BUSSEY

The New Year brings with it a time of self-reflection. For many signs, this will bring a realization that things have been piling up and need attention. This may take the form of needing to spend more time on your health, fitness, finances or personal relationships. Whatever you need to do better, set realistic goals for achieving the improvements you want to make in your life.



PISCES
(FEB. 19-MAR. 20)

You have become aware of the differences in your family, and your awareness weighs heavily on your mind this month, especially in the areas of education, children and finances. Remember that sometimes when you lose, you win.



CANCER
(JUN. 21-JUL. 23)

The change that has been in the air has arrived this month. It's asking you to shift your focus away from entertainment and more toward work. Jupiter is in your favor; this means that you will achieve what you set out to accomplish. Hang on, as your pace is going to get more hectic as this new aspect of your life emerges.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

The planets are lining up nicely for you this year, bringing a sense of stability, organization and discipline that you've not had in a long while. Take disagreements with others in stride. They won't last long.



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 19)

The planets have aligned at the start of this new year to favor you. After experiencing some struggles the past year, you will see them all successfully resolved this month. More than four planets are going to be aligned with your sign! This is huge, Aries, and it means that a lot may come your way at once. Take things slowly and don't give in to the pressure to do things right away.



LEO
(JUL. 24-AUG. 22)

Spending a great deal of time with extended family seemed like a great idea last month, but not so much this month. The strict rigidity of some family members may now make you rebellious. Make sure that you don't burn bridges in your haste to get back to your own life and goals.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Due to Saturn's influence, there may be health-related issues that you will have to pay particular attention to. Additionally, many things that you set into motion last year are coming to fruition. While they will eventually straighten out many months from now, the initial phase of their manifestation is going to be a headache.

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