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## Our Mission

Your Bliss Magazine explores the power of overall wellness. We look to push past the boundaries of physical health and explore the aspects of mental health, financial health, and health of the spirit. Our goal is to bring you information that you can use to live a happy, healthy, and spirited life. We find tips for the short term as well as more expansive information for the long term.

With the ever-expanding technology, knowledge, and evolution of the health field, there is a growing supply of data to take from. With Your Bliss, we find the information for you and put it all in one place. Every month we bring you new articles on a wide range of topics so you can live a more fulfilled and whole life.

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# The Significance of Service Animals

By: Amber Light

My name is Amber. I have had my Service Dog named Smoky since October 2019.

For the majority of my life, I struggled with depression and anxiety related to PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). I was actively attending counseling and about to start EMDR Therapy, a type of eye movement therapy, when my counselor and I discussed getting a service dog. At the time I was living alone. I was really struggling with going into grocery stores, restaurants, going to work and doing everyday tasks due to my anxiety and depression. My counselor and I spoke about natural ways to help me live a "normal lifestyle". We discussed getting a service dog for myself.

I started to look into the process of getting a service dog. I came across



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**I have now been able to go shopping, go out to dinner and go to work daily.**  
”

different ways to get a service dog. A few ways were going through an agency or self-training. I decided to self-train. I came across Canine Kismet LLC owned by Rebecca Klinger. We spoke about the process of training a service dog. I then decided since my service dog was going to save me and help my life, I also wanted to save this dog. This is when I decided to rescue a puppy from Buddy's Second Chance and train him with the help of Rebecca.

When I got Smoky, we did several private lessons with Rebecca in my home and out in the community. We did group classes also. I also brought Smoky with me to my counseling sessions so he could learn when my anxiety would come on. Shortly after I got Smoky, the world shut down due to COVID. One thing that I learned with my depression and anxiety is to not isolate; but everyone was being told to isolate. I worked with Rebecca safely. I watched YouTube videos, and I was out in a park daily training him to become my service dog.

Smoky was a life saver for me through COVID. A time where everyone was isolating, I had Smoky to keep me going and a reason to get out of bed every day when I could have easily gone back into a major depression. Smoky can feel when I start to become anxious, and he will perform the task he needs to perform. I have now been able to go shopping, go out to dinner and go to work daily. Smoky has traveled with me on airplanes. Smoky has helped me through several surgeries. Unfortunately, I have been discriminated against by just a few different businesses both in the WNY area and in other states, but I do not let that discourage me.

I have been told Smoky is just an emotional support animal, but he is not. He does do several tasks when he is with me to help me live every day. I have been asked to disclose my disability. When I do come across some of these situations, I politely tell the person I do not need to disclose my disability; I am protected under the ADA. I tell the person you can only ask me what task my service dog performs. Despite some of these bad experiences, I fully believe and support anyone that has or wants a Service Dog rather than them struggling with a mental health disability or a physical disability. Dogs are an amazing natural way to help humans and should be treated as a precious gift of life and hope.

# Mindful Techniques to Cope with Grief

By: Laura Ott, LCSW PLLC, Ott Counseling & Consulting, LLC



Grieving a loss is a journey often riddled with sorrow and loneliness. No one is immune from the experience of grief. As long as we have the capacity to love, care, wish, and want, we also have the capacity to grieve and feel pain, abandonment, separation, and loss. Loss can be exceptionally difficult, when in American cultural, grief is reserved for death exclusively. Often support is plentiful initially, but fades quickly as life goes back to "normal." Dependent on your relationship with the deceased, you may be entitled to a few measly days off or bereavement time to attend funerals, memorial services, wakes, or events surrounding the loss. The reality is, if you have the ability to take a few days off from your typical schedule (which many people cannot) that is the best case. The reality for many people is that they do not process grief during these times. These events can feel like formalities.

## Here are a few facts and tips for coping with grief and loss:

1. Grief is not exclusive to death of a loved one. We can experience grief related to relationships ending, job changes, relocation, and even our expectations not becoming reality. Acknowledging that you may be grieving any loss experience is crucial to moving forward.
2. When we experience loss, guilt is typically never far behind. We struggle with the existence of contentment, joy, playfulness, and having fun in the face of loss. It is important to understand and remind yourself

regularly that emotions can coexist. You can feel joy and sadness simultaneously. Joy does not replace feelings of loss, but it can sit next to it. Acknowledging the coexisting emotions can help mitigate feelings of guilt and open the door to acceptance.

3. Grief does not get smaller with time. There are no predetermined time frames for loss. What is helpful to remember is that while grief does not shrink, your world will grow around it and expand so it is a part of you, but does not always feel like the center of your world.

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**Grief does not get smaller with time. There are no predetermined time frames for loss.**  
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Exploring grief and its relationship to health and wellness is fitting in August especially: the month that houses Grief Awareness Day. Don't hesitate to look into community or virtual resources to help you on your journey. If you are or have experienced grief, know that means you've experienced love.

4. When we don't make room for processing grief, we often fill the space it should be occupying with other maladaptive responses such as drinking, drugging, overworking, overeating, etc.). If it is a challenge to make time to feel and experience the emotions of loss in your day-to-day life, consider making time regularly for therapy, support groups, conversations with loved ones specifically centered in the loss, journaling, or reflection. Allowing yourself time to acknowledge the feelings can help you feel in control.



## Business Spotlight Q&A with Drew Dockery, Author and CEO



### 1) Who are you & what is your business? How long have you been in business?

I'm Drew Dockery the author of "THE CONNECTOR'S HANDBOOK", the CEO and Master Connector of The Connector's Corner where we coach and train companies and individuals on sales & marketing strategy, leadership growth and development, but most importantly effective networking to scale and grow revenue. I've been a business coach and trainer for more than a decade partnering with some very large organizations and decided to branch out on my own in 2021.

### 2) Explain to us your business mission and goals. What products and/or services do you offer?

My goal as a business coach is to help sales professionals and entrepreneurs not leave money on the table by doing 3 simple things:

- 1) Monetizing their relationships
- 2) Growing their networks
- 3) Making proper connections

We do offer copies of "THE CONNECTOR'S HANDBOOK" which is the blueprint to master networking. Our most effective resource is our 1 to 1/group hybrid coaching program called "THE CONNECTOR MASTERY MASTERMIND" as a more hands-on approach to growth and results.

### 3) What made you want to pursue this type of business?

I believe helping others reach the levels of success they desire to reach is a part of my overall life purpose. I find great joy in being a part of someone's growth and development. Being able to see someone's transformation is a privilege. Helping many people transform and grow for 10 years, for free, made me realize that I could help more people go higher in life by developing a company that is primarily geared towards growth and development. So I did!

### 4) What makes you stand out from your competition?

Aside from being an African American male in the professional space, we are the only company that offers "THE CONNECTOR MASTERY" program. Also, through my style of coaching and training, we are flexible so that we can make adjustments for strategies that are tailor made to fit each of our clients. We are very results driven, and for us, the results are the name of the game.



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# Adding Flow & Harmony into our Everyday Lives

By: Lana Shapiro, Owner of Shapiro Holistic Health

Imagine this: you wake up feeling rested and refreshed, you get out of bed, get ready for your day. You make yourself a healthy nutritious breakfast, the sun is shining, so you decide to sit outside and enjoy that warm sunshine on your face. How did that make you feel? I bet you felt warm, relaxed and happy.

Everything in the Universe is made up of particles that vibrate and they all vibrate at different frequencies. That includes you – you are made up of vibrating particles and those particles vibrate at different speeds depending on your energy. The higher your vibration, the happier you feel. The happier you feel – the higher your vibration gets.

There are many practical ways to raise your vibration when you are feeling low or simply need a boost. Here are just a few that are my personal go to:

## 1. Breath Work and Meditation

We all breathe, but do you ever pay attention to how you breathe? We are a quick-paced society, constantly rushing from one thing to the next, and this reflects in our breathing. Most of us breathe as fast as we move. Breathing to raise your vibration means slowing down and really focusing on your breathing. You want to breathe in through your nose and feel your breath go all the way down to your lower chakras, breathing out through your mouth and letting out a sign – releasing all the energy that no longer serves you.

Meditation is simply a form of breath work, with the addition of our connection to the divine. If you feel scared by the concept of meditation, guided meditations are a great way to begin your meditation journey.



## 2. High Vibration Foods and Eliminating Toxins From Your Body

Everything you eat has an energy of its own, so when you consume food, you are also consuming the energy of that food. When you make food at home and you use clean ingredients, you know exactly what goes into your body. Some of the best high vibrations foods are organic fruits and vegetables, which can be incorporated into all your meals. Your energy when preparing your meals also matters – make sure to always add the extra ingredient of love to your cooking. In that same aspect, eliminating toxins from your body such as alcohol and processed foods, will help to raise your vibration and connect you closer to your spirituality and your higher self

## 3. Gratitude and Positive Thoughts

Starting your day with gratitude can literally chemically re-wire your brain. There is always something to be grateful for. Stop for a moment, look around your room and name two things you are grateful for in your environment. Take pauses throughout your day to raise your awareness around new things that you notice. Keep a gratitude journal and add new things to it daily.

Your thoughts matter, they also carry a vibration with them and affect your feelings and behaviors. What thoughts do you give your attention to throughout the day? Do you get stuck in the negativity when one thing doesn't go as planned? Every time you have a thought that spirals you down, turn it around by thinking about something positive. It may be even be completely unrelated to whatever brought your vibration down initially.

## 4. Pay Attention To What You Consume With Your Eyes and Ears

The things we watch on TV, read about in books, magazines and see on social media, even the music we listen to, they all carry a vibration. Do you ever scroll past something on Facebook and feel angered? Do you get caught up with replying to something you don't agree with? Ever feel anxious after watching something violent, even if it's fiction? Pay attention to the things that trigger a visceral reaction in you.

## 5. Connect With Nature

We are a part of Mother Gaia and she is a part of us. Connecting with nature is one of my favorite ways to raise my vibration. Going outside for a walk, sitting and reading under a tree, laying down and mediating at a park, taking off your shoes and walking around barefoot, simply sitting by a creek and listening to the sounds around you.

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Pay attention to the things that trigger a visceral reaction in you.  
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# World Wide Web Day: The History of the Internet

By: Molly McGarvey



The internet originated in the United States during the Cold War as a government tool. Its development was propelled by the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in 1957, which led the U.S. to invest in science and technology. The fear of potential attacks on the nation's telephone systems prompted the proposal of a computer network known as the "galactic network" by J.C.R. Licklider. This network, aimed to ensure communication through the government network called ARPAnet even if traditional telephone lines were destroyed.

In 1965, the introduction of "pocket switching" allowed data to be broken down into blocks before transmission, making ARPAnet less vulnerable. The first successful transmission of data between computers occurred in 1969, connecting a computer at UCLA to a computer at Stanford. These early computers were large in size, resembling small houses.

Vinton Cerf, a computer scientist, invented the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP), which served as a virtual handshake to connect various mini-networks. This development transformed the internet into a global network, enabling effective file and data exchange for researchers and government officials throughout the 1980s. In 1992, a browser was developed, enabling users to view text, images, and clickable links on web pages, revolutionizing the internet experience. The same year, Congress made the web accessible for commercial use, paving the way for the emergence of e-commerce.

The advent of social media followed suit. In 1997, SixDegrees.com became the first true social networking site, offering features such as user profiles, friend lists, and private messaging. This was followed

by the rise of platforms like MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn in the 21st century.

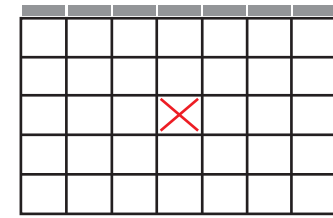
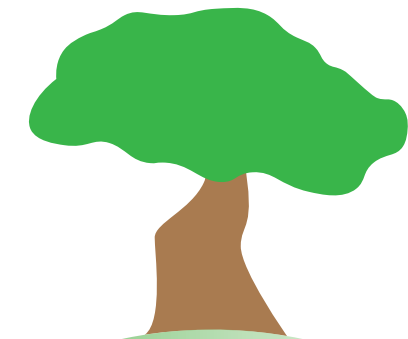
The rapid adoption of social media has brought significant changes to social behavior, raising concerns about potential negative effects. Surveys indicate a correlation between frequent social media use and mental health problems, with depression and social media often intertwined. On May 13, 2021, the Social Media Act was introduced in the Senate, requiring the Federal Trade Commission and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

to report on social media use among individuals under 18. The report would cover usage frequency, mental health impacts, and policy recommendations. The bill aims to protect vulnerable children from bullies, predators, and addictive content fueled by personalized algorithms. Although the bill may face challenges, both parties recognize the technology industry's role in keeping children glued to screens. Social media platforms employ powerful algorithms to engage users and increase advertising revenue.

The rise of social media has also coincided with a mental health crisis, particularly among young girls. Rates of depression have doubled from 2009 to 2019 according to the Centers for Disease Control and prevention.

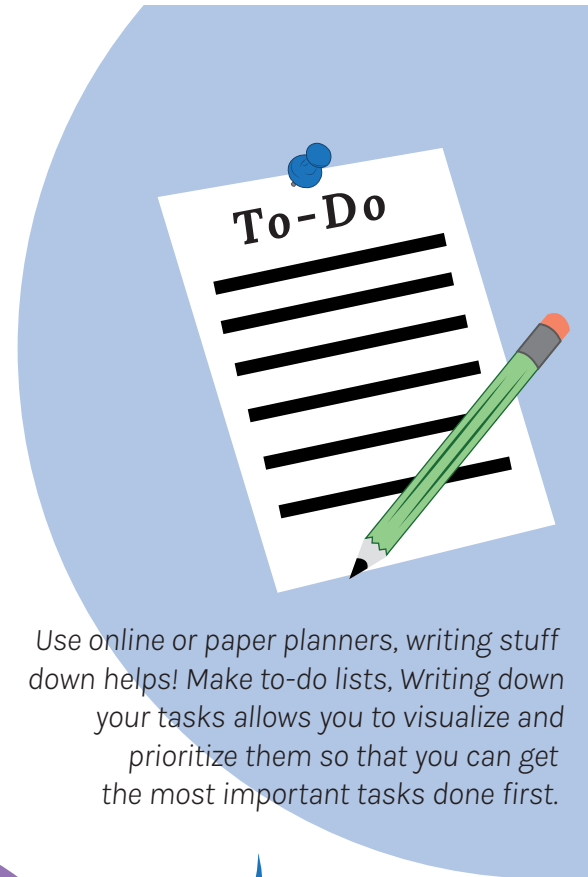
At the same time most people would agree that social media has made our lives easier in many ways from opening doors to new information, to connecting us with people and family members across the world. While social media has its benefits and drawbacks, it is crucial to conduct individual research on its impact on well-being, as answers to its effects remain uncertain.

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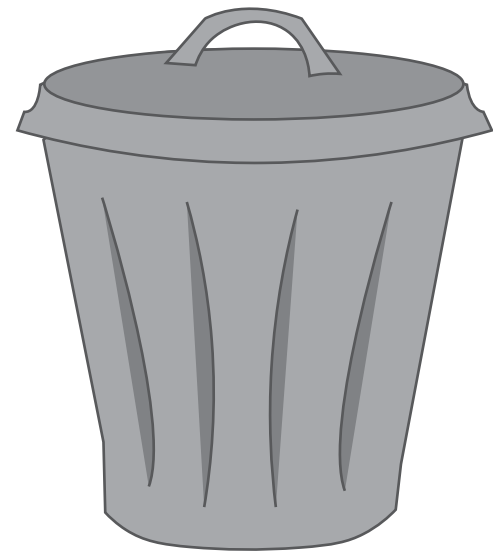


Don't procrastinate, make schedules and deadlines and make sure to stick to them.

Don't stress yourself out, take your time and go at your own pace. Schedule breaks, studies show that being well rested and taking breaks helps people stay on-task and engaged.



Use online or paper planners, writing stuff down helps! Make to-do lists, Writing down your tasks allows you to visualize and prioritize them so that you can get the most important tasks done first.

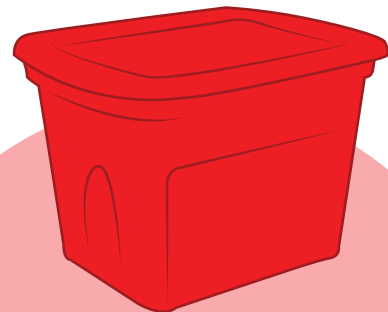


Let go of old and worn out clutter. Consider donating it, recycling it, or even just throwing it away.

## HOW TO KEEP AN ORGANIZED WORKSPACE



Clean up your workspace regularly. Research suggests that too much clutter tends to hurt productivity, but a little can be OK, especially for creative people. Whether you need a completely clean desk depends on your personality and job. If you find that clutter distracts you and you need to make a change to get better results, try keeping a tidier workspace.



Find a place for everything and put everything in its place, if you have a lot of space and a lot of clutter, that's nothing but opportunity!

# Stress Less and Conquer Your Workday

By: Sue Perbody

Do you have a lot going on at your workplace? Are you feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work you have to do? Are you stressed about how you might accomplish all of your tasks? If you answered yes to any of these questions, keep reading and you can find some tips on how to conquer some of the stress that you might be feeling in the workplace.

**1. Stay Organized:** Maybe the files on your computer are all over the desktop, maybe your desk has papers and files all over it, or maybe you threw a bunch of stuff into the top drawer and thought that you would come back to it later. Either way, staying organized can reduce the amount of stress you might feel. If your area is clean and everything has a spot, it can be easily found, and you will have a lot of room to work. After all, a clean area is a happy area.

**2. Prioritize:** Make a list of the most important things that you need to accomplish. This way, you know what you have to get done first and you can make goals to finish it.

**3. Take a Deep Breath:** If you are feeling very overwhelmed, take a minute, inhale for five seconds,

then exhale. Try doing that a few times to calm you down on a busy day.

**4. Go for a Walk:** Sometimes a change of scenery can make all the difference in the world. You don't need to go on a long or far walk; maybe you just take a lap around the office or go visit a co-worker on the opposite side. Getting up and moving can help alleviate some stress you might be feeling by clearing your mind and giving you something else to think about. You will also be able to get in a little break and some exercise for the day!

**5. Avoid Unhealthy Snacks:** If you know you are going to have a long day at work, plan to bring healthy snacks such as fruit, nuts, or granola bars, something that is not filled with sugars and will keep your body energized, healthy and feeling good.

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Getting up and moving can help alleviate some stress you might be feeling by clearing your mind and giving you something else to think about.  
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Being stressed is never fun. And feeling stressed can make you more stressed. Take time to care for yourself and distress. You will feel better and have better outcomes.

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## Bone Health in Adults

By: Food as Medicine; Dr. RS YouTube Channel

As we grow older, our bones become more important. We grow more vulnerable to falls and bone breaks, as we become more fragile human beings. At a younger age, we don't typically pay attention to our bones because we are less delicate and sustainable to injury. With proper diet and exercise at a young age, we can keep our bones strong for many years to come. Our bones stay together, like a tight cloth, in our younger years. As we grow older, we can develop compression fractures in our spine, making people grow shorter in height. If you begin to notice differences in your height, you should see your doctor to determine if you have osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is a bone disease that develops when bone mineral density and bone mass decreases. It can also make bone structure and strength change, as well. This disease can be crippling; people cannot walk, be independent, and can have digestive problems. There are a lot of problems associated with osteoporosis. You should pay attention to your height if you fear you

may be developing this disease. DEXA scans can be done with your doctor to check bone density and mass. If the density is going down, you can receive annual injections, as well as take vitamins and supplements, to better help this problem. You may also increase your milk and egg intake to get more minerals, calcium, magnesium, and vitamin D. Remember to check with your doctor before consuming more of these supplements because too much vitamin D or calcium is not good for your body.

Overall, it is important to keep our bones in good condition. Healthy bones lead to healthy joints. Exercise is extremely important, in terms of strengthening our bones. Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions and as you age be sure to have a bone density check as recommended and be aware of any changes in your height. And a healthy diet and weight is the best way to maintain a healthy body and can lead to a long, happy life.



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## Back To School Tips for Parents & Students

By: Roberta Schlehr

Back to school is just around the corner. Preparations are being made – buying new clothes or uniforms and getting required supplies. We hope the school year will be successful for our children.

As a parent, what can we do to help the year be a success? One thing to remember is that success is different for each student. Try not to compare your child to other students in the class or other siblings.

The following thoughts are my own, as I reflect on the start of the new school year from a parent's point of view and the point of view as an educator. I am in education for over 25 years in secondary and post-secondary education. Although I have not taught at the elementary level, I have two children that I will relate my experience. Here are some tips that I think are important for parents to do – by grade levels:

### K – 5th grade

Early elementary school is important for your child to gain a strong foundation of how important school is. Students learn social skills, how to read and write and the start of general education. As a parent, your involvement is critical at this point. If you can participate as a classroom helper – do it! Can you go on field trips or make snacks? Children will see and know that they are important to you, and that you want to be a part of their day. At home, take the time to practice the review of numbers, letters and colors – I know you are tired and may have had a rough day at work, but your child needs you to be present in their lives.

### 6th – 8th grade

At this grade level the opportunity for parent involvement at school starts to dwindle. But at home, it is even more important that you are involved with helping your child to complete homework, study or review work. This is when they are starting to become independent. It is important for students to develop good study habits.

### 9th – 12th grade

This stage is harder as students become more independent; maybe if they have jobs they need to learn to balance their school work. You can still be present and an important part of their education. Talk with your children, find out what they are learning, challenge them to develop their own ideas. Consider BOCES for 11 and 12th grade, even if your student is going to college. Let them test out a trade, learn a skill, something that will be with them the rest of their lives. Our country is in need of skilled trade workers – and there is good money to be made!

### College

Community or 4-year college – take an interest in what field of study your child wants to pursue – and if they don't know yet, that is ok, too. Encourage them to take a college success class – here they will learn skills needed to be a successful college student. They will be able to explore career options and identify programs they may be interested in.

Overall, parent involvement is important to helping your child be successful in school. Don't do the work for your student, but be there to encourage and support them.

“  
**Overall, parent involvement is important to helping your child be successful in school.**  
”



# Inflation and Retirement

By: Tahir Jaffri, Financial Advisor

As retirement time horizons continue to increase and people are living longer, the rising cost of lifestyle expenses can dramatically impact a retiree's likelihood of financial success. As a retiree's cost of living increases, so does their need to increase income in retirement. Factoring in the increasing costs of living represents a retirement risk that plays a large role in calculating a retirement savings need.

## What does it mean for retirees?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) regularly averages the costs of goods and services used by American households to help determine how much consumer prices are increasing. This increase is commonly referred to as inflation. The chart below illustrates the increase in costs over a 20-year period.

Housing, health care, food, transportation, and charitable contributions account for 89% of spending in households over age 75. As retirees age, their spending on housing and health care typically increases while the spending on food and transportation usually decreases.

While 2022 was an unusual year with the June CPI reading peaking at 9%, the highest inflation figure since the 1970s, inflation over the past 50 years has averaged 4%. And more recently, the inflation rate from 2013 through 2023 has averaged 2.7%.

Consider this hypothetical case of a 65-year-old planning to fund \$50,000 of annual expenses over a 14-year retirement through age 79. Without assuming any inflation, the total amount of retirement expenses through age 79 would be \$700,000. If 3% inflation is factored into this scenario, the total expenses through age 79 would be \$854,000.

An important part of preparing for retirement is protecting against a variety of potential risks. With a 3% inflation rate, the cost-of-living doubles in 24 years. Inflation and increasing living costs could become challenging as someone lives 25 to 30 years or more in retirement.

Staying healthy, managing health care costs, preparing for potential long-term care needs, and having enough money in retirement are 4 of the top 5 concerns facing today's retirees. Health care risk is facing unexpected

and increasing medical expenses, such as insurance premiums, copays, and dental care.

## What are the potential risks?

According to Fidelity, the average 65-year-old retired couple may spend \$315,000 to cover their health care expenses over their lifetimes. That figure does not include a potential stay in a long-term care facility.

Long-term care (LTC) is not only expensive, but the costs are also inflating at a rate faster than the rest of the economy. AARP indicates the national median cost for a private nursing home room is \$9,034 per month. Many LTC recipients are making the choice to receive long-term care services at home based on the understanding that home health care is not as expensive. While this may be true, average home health aide costs are \$5,148 per month.

While consumers may not entirely understand how LTC insurance works, they express a clear need for it. In a 2022 study, 60% of respondents said they need LTC insurance. This number jumped from 55% in 2019, which suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic may have raised the perceived need for LTC coverage.

Individuals who are age 65 today have close to a 70% chance of requiring some form of long-term care in their remaining years, leaving retirees to determine how to cover potential LTC costs. About 75% of middle-income seniors would need to use their home equity to pay for assisted living; even then, 39% would still fall short.

The need for these services is projected to grow significantly for the foreseeable future due to the growing number of Alzheimer's disease cases. It's estimated that 6+ million Americans ages 65 and older are currently living with Alzheimer's and that this number is projected to grow to 13.8 million by 2060. As the number of these cases continues to grow, so will the need for LTC support services.

Protecting retirees from the unknown but potentially expensive cost of health care and long-term care will become more important in the future as people continue to live longer. Planning ahead for this financial impact can help provide today's retirees with more of the peace of mind they desire.



# Challenging Your Anxieties

By: Faizan Haq, Editor-in-Chief & Publisher, Your Bliss Magazine



Every day in business, one makes many decisions and each decision may cause many unwanted consequences. The most difficult decisions are those where one must change or redirect team members for the betterment of the business. The anxiety hits you when you have to balance the long-term with the short-term effects and goals. Anxiety gets even more severe when there is an increased possibility of unwarranted reactions by individuals with unstable personalities and fragile egos. Difficult conversations become even harder when there are not many links of common grounds of communication available. It often takes place when organizations are either expanding or diversifying their business models.

At such a time, one must prioritize business objectives and organizational goals. Long-term consequences must prevail however indecisiveness will add to the state of anxiety and will cost organizations dearly. The state of not making a decision for a longer period of time, can be more destructive than making an immediate decision of poor quality. Once a decision is made and communicated, regardless of the quality of the decision, it provides a pivoting reference for the course of business. From that point on, the direction is set and the path to success becomes clearer. At times, the clarity comes by making a bad decision.

At the end of the day, anxiety is an emotion that is embedded in the fear of the unknown. The only way to deliberately tackle the unknown is, to know what is needed to make an informed decision. The responsibility of acquiring the information to decide competently is one of the main functions of the management and the leadership. There should be a system of collecting, testing and compiling the organizational data, so that the quality of decisions can be consistently maintained.

After doing all of this homework, the level of anxiety may reduce, but it may never go away. The last and the ultimate step to challenge the anxiety is to move forward with **A Decision**. Then get ready to contain the outflow of the reaction. Prepare all stake holders in your organization proactively and explain the context so that they understand the reasoning behind your decision. Consulting major stake holders in this process will help lower the anxiety not only for yourself, but for the whole organization.



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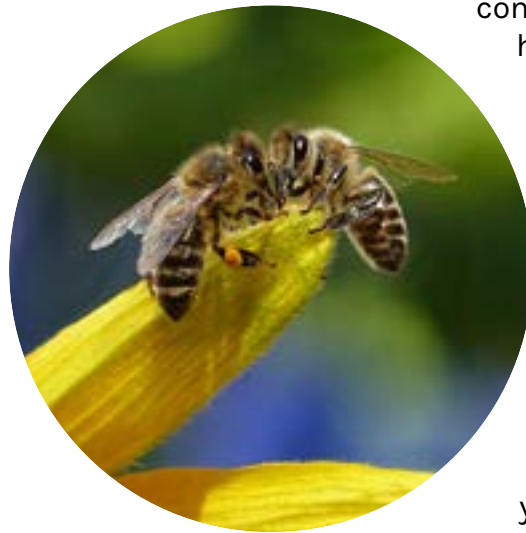


# There's Nothing to "Bee" Afraid of!

By: Katy Defazio

You hear a buzz, and you see them fly, high and mighty in the sky. Pollination and restoration; good for Earth with so much worth! Bees are crucially important to our precious planet, and we often forget this as we hear them buzz past our faces. How can we preserve these precious creatures for generations to come?

According to an article from MedicalNewsToday.com, there are over 4,000 species of bees native to the United States. In recent years, humans have come to recognize the importance of food security and ecosystem variety, thanks to bees. Unfortunately, a rise in pesticide use and urbanization has caused a decline in the number of bees, negatively affecting a number of Earth's ecosystems. People have used bees and bee-related products for thousands of years,



noting claims of antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and anticancer properties. Reflecting on traditional medicinal purposes, honey has been used to treat a wide variety of conditions for generations. Some of these conditions include bronchial asthma, hiccups, dizziness, eczema, and ulcers. Beeswax has also proven to be beneficial for skincare products and ointments.

We have pointed out the significance of honey from bees, but these creatures have properties that play an even more crucial role, that being pollination. Around 75 percent of crops produce better yields if animals help pollinate. Of all animals, bees are the most dominant pollinators of wild and crop plants. They visit over 90 percent of the world's best crops. Overall, bees are essential for growth of plants and food crops.

Individuals have been working with bees for many generations. For example, the Ancient Greeks thought of bees as a symbol of immortality. In the 19th century, beekeepers in New England would inform their bees of any major events in human society. Meanwhile, native northern Australians used beeswax when producing rock art. For historical experts, bees and their products are a key aspect of archaeology. This is because beeswax produces a "chemical fingerprint" that people can assess to identify components in organic residue.

How can we help bees? How can we preserve these precious creatures for generations to come? Increasing rural spaces in urban areas can boost human mental and emotional well-being. Watch and observe instead of getting frightened and running away! Individuals are encouraged to watch bees and record the types of flowers they visit. The welfare and number of bees worldwide are in decline, and it is essential to protect them to maintain the overall health of our planet and all the creatures inhabiting it as well.

# A Review of *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story*

By: Alex Tilton

I'd been planning a review of season 3 of *The Witcher*, but couldn't find the energy to power my way through five hours' worth of the show when I just wasn't in the mood for anything heavy. So instead, I reviewed a 10-month-old movie on Roku...because why not? And I'm glad I did because it was nice to sit down with a comedy for a change. I kept seeing this movie advertised on the Roku screen saver that the TV goes into and I wanted to watch it before it disappeared.

If you grew up with "Weird Al's" music, or if you were ever any kind of a fan, then it won't surprise you to hear that *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story*, isn't actually "Weird Al's" life story. Rather it's a satire / parody of biopic films that shamelessly jumps between truth and outright fantasy without batting an eye.

This works strongly in the movie's favor, because some things you would assume were made up turn out to be absolutely true, like the scene where "Weird Al" records a song in a public bathroom because it has good acoustics. And other things that seem completely believable turn out to have never happened at all. Like that time "Weird Al" went to Columbia to rescue his girlfriend Madonna and kill drug lord Pablo Escobar.

In all seriousness, I loved this movie. It had the courage to make some very bold choices. One scene in 'Weird' references an incident from a 1969 Doors concert in Miami where Jim Morrison got arrested for indecent exposure. A lot of people aren't going to get this joke, and the ones who do will be surprised at how adult it

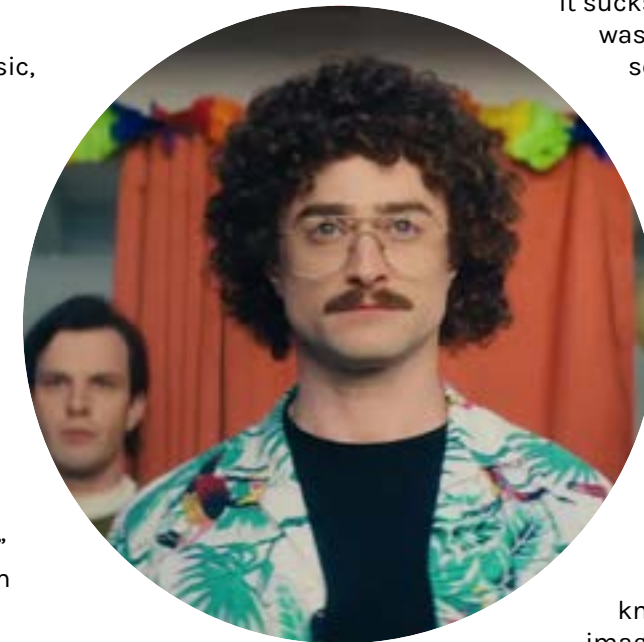
is. It felt like being rewarded for paying attention in class, and it was great. The movie expected me to be an adult with a certain amount of knowledge and it was willing to leave me behind if I wasn't. More movies need to do this.

Al himself plays several characters in the film, mostly a music producer who tells movie Al (played by Daniel Radcliffe) that his music is stupid and also that it sucks. One thing that the movie left out was the fact that in real life "Weird Al" seeks out permission from the people he's going to parody. This has been a big factor in his real career, but it wouldn't have made for a good comedy movie. Instead, "Weird Al's" song 'Eat it' is portrayed as an original song and Michael Jackson's 'Beat it' is portrayed as an inverse parody.

Interestingly, Al has said that the fictional relationship with Madonna was not something he got her permission to put in the movie. He said in an interview that he doesn't even know if she's aware that the movie exists. But she's well known for being a fan of his music, so I imagine she was fine with it.

Every so often a movie is exactly what it needs to be. *Weird: The Al Yankovic Story* is one of those. It stays true to its spirit the whole way through, delivers a lot of good laughs, and doesn't water itself down to appeal to a broader audience. It did a lot of refreshingly good things and it was nice to see.

Image Sources: [Film-Authority.com](https://www.film-authority.com) & [IMDb.com](https://www.imdb.com)



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# Sheet-Pan Chicken Fajitas

Source: eatingwell.com

## Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 large red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, sliced
- 2 cups sliced red or yellow onion (about 1 large)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 8 corn tortillas, warmed
- Lime wedges, cilantro, sour cream, avocado and/or pico de gallo for serving

**Total Time:**  
40 mins

**Fat:**  
12g

**Yield:**  
4 servings

**Carbs:**  
33g

**Calories:**  
357

**Protein:**  
30g



## Directions

### Step 1

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.

### Step 2

Cut chicken breasts in half horizontally, then slice crosswise into strips. Combine oil, chili powder, cumin, garlic powder and salt in a large bowl. Add the chicken and stir to coat with the spice mixture. Add bell peppers and onion and stir to combine. Transfer the chicken and vegetables to the prepared baking sheet and spread in an even layer.

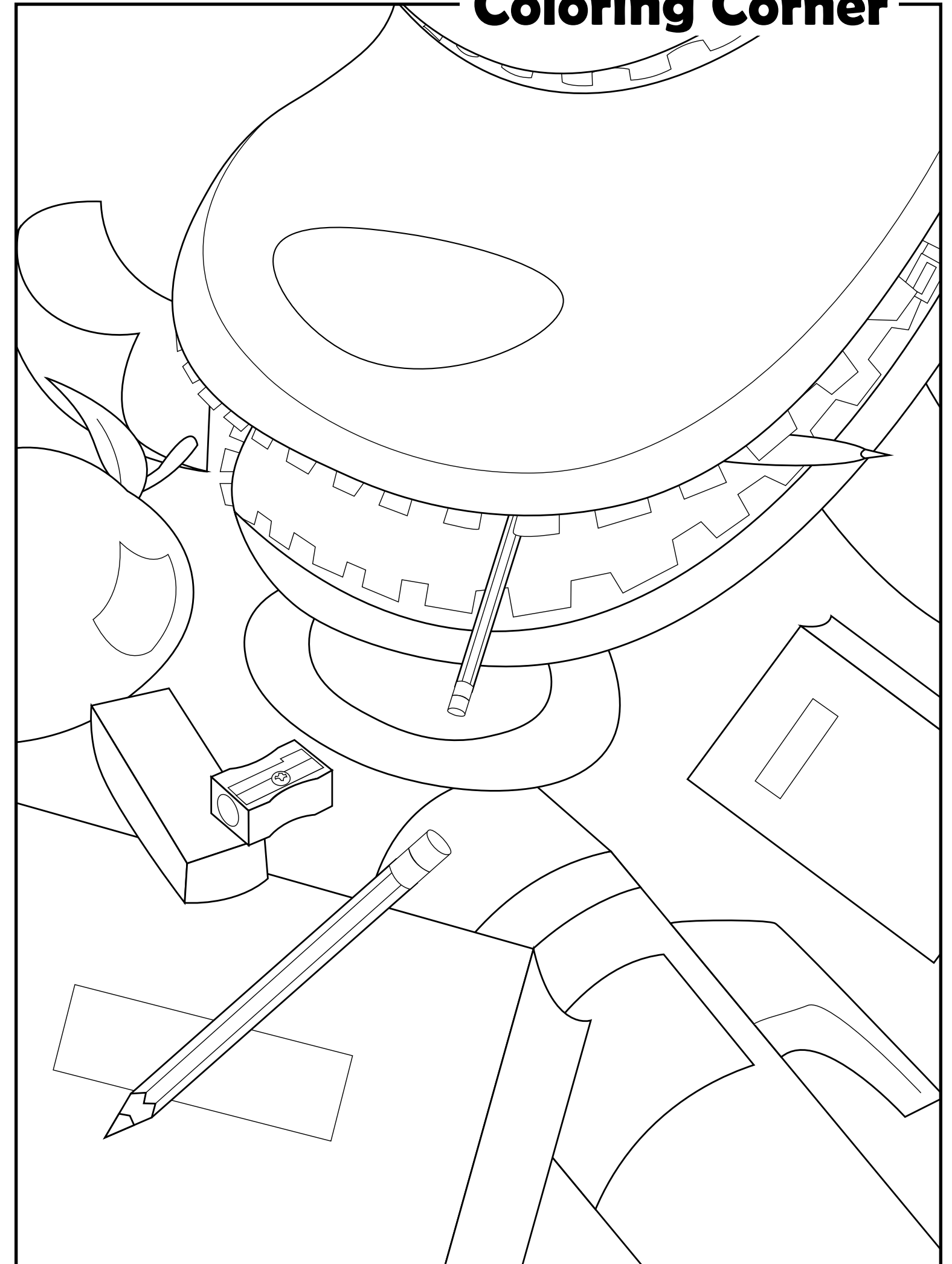
### Step 3

Roast on the middle rack for 15 minutes. Leave the pan there and turn the broiler to high. Broil until the chicken is cooked through and the vegetables are browning in spots, about 5 minutes more. Remove from oven. Stir in lime juice.

### Step 4

Serve the chicken and vegetables in warmed tortillas accompanied by lime wedges and topped with cilantro, sour cream, avocado and/or pico de gallo, if desired.

## Coloring Corner





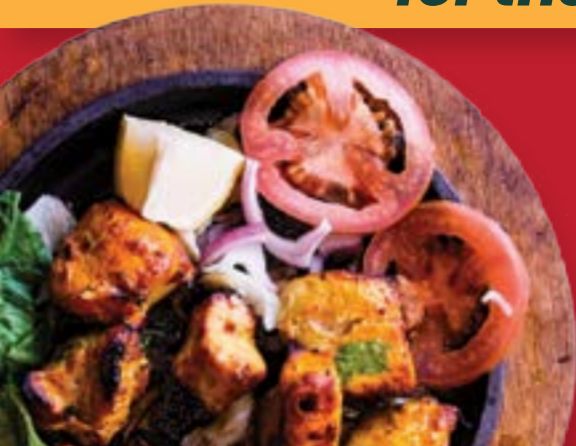
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