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Understanding the Significance
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Date Night Ideas

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Financial Aid Awareness

Important Details to Recall
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Keeping a Healthy Heart

Five Tips to Maintain a
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February 2023





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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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Black History Month: The Aftermath of Slavery

By: Amiyah King



After asserting that the flap of a butterfly's wings could cause a natural disaster, meteorologist Edward Lorenz coined the term "butterfly effect" in the 1960s to explain the universe's deep interconnectedness and how the most trivial occurrences can have a massive effect on outcomes. As many come to embrace this theory as an understanding of the vast complexities of our world and societies, acceptance of "the butterfly effect" presents a unique dichotomy within minority experiences in America—namely for those continually facing the ramifications of the post-Atlantic slave trade today.

In political conversations it seems to be lost on some, the massive effects hundreds of years of slavery has on people today.

But how? You may wonder.

Even possessing this question is the aftermath of years of media conditioning and universal invalidation of Black people's mental health, safety and wellbeing. The desensitization of the Black experience is ingrained in our society from unjust police brutality court rulings to discussions of reparations and suggestions of "leaving the past in the past."

Researcher, educator and author Joy DeGruy introduced "post traumatic slave syndrome"

or PTSS, as an explanation for why Black people still experience personal suffering as a result of centuries of slavery. Her theory comes from intense research of the Black mind, both past and present. The findings suggest that traumas are passed down generationally, causing Black people to operate from a "lack" or "slave" mindset in the present day.

At the height of the Transatlantic slave trade, many African people used spiritual practices to protect themselves from oppressors. Rootworkers, herbalists and healers would perform "miracles" not understood by their masters. Miracles ranged from fully healing whip lashing wounds overnight, to curing fever and fatigue in inexplicable ways. These miracles instilled fear in the minds of the captors, who only worried about keeping control over their stolen people.

As a result, freedom seekers were brutally punished and sometimes killed for practicing native traditions. Over time, this resulted in an almost complete depletion of this aspect of culture from the Black community.

In the book, *How to Make a Negro Christian*, Kamau Makesi-Tehuti displays the motive of Christian slave masters in the 1800s who believed that stripping Black people of their religious origin would grant them

total control over the race by breeding conformative, unsuspecting workers. This tactic worked for years and still does, as Black people began to regard traditional African practices as “evil” and “witchcraft.”

Making an entire group of people ignorant to their own history has been the driving force behind keeping Black people controlled and complacent in this country.

As a Black person in America, it is impossible to understand yourself if you do not understand your history. Now, we see Black people returning to their roots through traditional African spiritual practices and holistic health. We are witnessing the reversal of an identity crisis that slavery placed upon Black

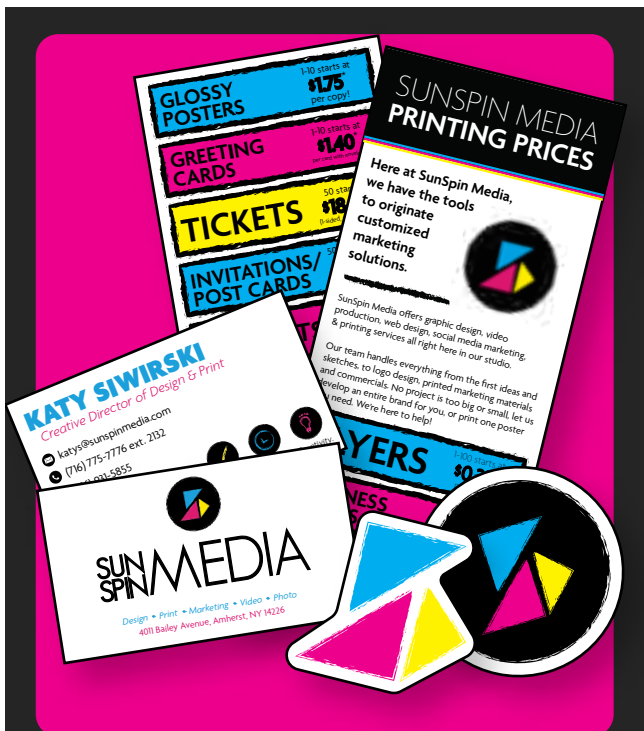
people for hundreds of years. As we continue to learn more about our history, we learn more about ourselves.

“
Holistic practices such as meditation, sun dancing, and herbal health help restore the Black identity by helping us see our true power as people.
”

Holistic practices such as meditation, sun dancing, and herbal health help restore the Black identity by helping us see our true power as people. When our identity is restored, so follows the mind, body and spirit.

The return of the Black mind is the return of the Black self. As we return to our true selves, we continue to rediscover the power that was stolen, morphed, repackaged and sold to us—the power that lies within.

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Dr. RS: An Overview of Headaches

By: Dr. Riffat Sadiq



So what exactly are headaches, what causes them and how can we prevent them?

A headache is pain residing in the head or face and there are several types of headaches. There are many reasons people may suffer from headaches including lack of sleep, food sensitivities, hormones, not drinking enough water, excessive movement or lack of exercise, stress, too much noise and not eating enough. In addition, headaches can derive from medical reasons such as migraines and medication side effects. There are ways to help prevent headaches, a few main examples are:

- **Consuming a healthy diet**
- **Getting enough sleep**
- **Quiet spaces**
- **Drinking more water**

Most headaches can be treated effectively with over-the-counter medication but it can also be a sign of a more serious condition. If a headache persists call your primary care physician and schedule an appointment.

Dr. RS: The Importance of Sleep

By: Dr. Riffat Sadiq

Sleep is very important to our overall health. Without sleep we won't be able to concentrate on our daily tasks. Sleep improves our memory, increases our energy and it is also good for our immune system. Lack of sleep can cause:

- **Headaches and migraines**
- **Poor vision**
- **Weight gain**
- **Mood changes**
- **Daytime sleeping**
- **Reduced focus**
- **Fatigue**

In addition to these, lack of sleep can influence your weight and skin. The National Sleep Foundation "recommends adults sleep at least seven to nine hours each night. During sleep, your body releases growth hormones, which help with cell and tissue repair and restore your skin. Sleep also ensures the production of cytokines, which are molecules that help the immune system fight infections, including ones that affect the skin."

"
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which help with cell
and tissue repair and
restore your skin.
"

Research has also shown that lack of sleep can lead to a higher BMI than individuals who have an adequate amount of sleep each night. During the night we are less active, and we tend to eat more in the evening.

"When you have poor sleep or lack of rest, you're setting a whole cascade of events in motion hormonally that could set you up for weight gain," says John M. Jakicic, director of the Physical Activity and Weight Management Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

Here are some helpful tips for falling asleep faster:

- Turn off lights and sleep in a darkened room
- Avoid caffeine close to bedtime
- Stop distractions or stressful situations
- Don't go to bed hungry, a small late-night snack may help satiate your hunger
- Avoid screen time an hour before bed



Check out the Dr.RS channel on YouTube for more information on food as medicine.

YouTube: Dr. RS
TikTok: Dr.Riffat Sadiq
Instagram: DR.RS001
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Paying for College Today

By: Tahir Jaffri, ChFC, CPFA, LUTF, Financial Advisor



For many Americans, providing a college education for their children has long been an important family goal. Paying for that education, however, has never been easy. Over the past few years, it has become even more of a challenge as college costs continue to rise.

Few families seem able to save enough to fully fund four or more years of higher education. For many students, some type of financial aid, in the form of grants, scholarships, loans, or work-study, is needed to make the dream a reality.

As such, financial aid is available. The federal government, through the Department of Education, provides more than \$120 billion a year in student aid, through a variety of programs. Private organizations and foundations, state governments, as well as the schools and universities themselves are additional sources of financial aid.

The vast majority of financial aid is awarded through a standardized process which, in general, proceeds as follows:

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): The student and their family complete the application, the single form used to apply for all types of federal aid; it is also used to apply for state financial aid at many public and private colleges. The FAFSA collects

information such as family size and number of family members in college, in addition to financial data such as income and benefits, and net assets.

Student Aid Report (SAR): Using the information supplied on the FAFSA, the government calculates the amount a family is expected to contribute toward a student's education, known as the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The same information is sent to the financial aid offices of the colleges the student listed on the FAFSA.

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE: A few schools will require a prospective student to complete an additional standardized financial questionnaire known as PROFILE. The data collected on this form is used to award a college's institutional aid.

A majority of financial aid provided to college students in the U.S. is from programs funded and/or administered by the federal government, which much of the support coming in the form of student loans. The major elements in federal student aid include, but are not limited to, Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), the William D. Ford Direct Loan Program, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

“
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In addition to the financial aid programs provided through the federal government, there is a wide range of aid available through other organizations. Some of these include state programs, institutional aid programs, military aid programs, and private scholarships.

Congress has passed legislation designed to lighten the burden for paying for higher education. Because the rules surrounding these strategies can be complicated, the counsel of a qualified tax or financial professional is recommended. Two different tax credits are available, as well as interest deductions on education loans.

A number of other approaches can be used to help pay for college expenses. Carefully consider the pros and cons of the following suggestions, including the income tax ramifications, the impact on any possible financial aid, the likelihood that a student might not complete college, and any effect on your long-term financial goals.

Some of these approaches include, but are not limited to, home equity loans, life insurance cash values, borrowing from qualified plans, and choosing a lower cost school.

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The key step in paying for a child’s education is to begin the process as early as possible.
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Overall, the key step in paying for a child’s education is to begin the process as early as possible. A great deal of information, as well as counseling, is available from high schools, colleges, and the various government agencies involved in high education, at little or no cost! Questions involving income, gift, or estate taxes should be carefully reviewed with a Certified Public Accountant (CPA), IRS Enrolled Agent (EA), legal counsel, or other qualified professionals.

Students and parents should be proactive and explore all possibilities for financial assistance as soon as possible. Do your research, ask questions and be prepared with as much information as possible so you can make the best decisions when the time comes.

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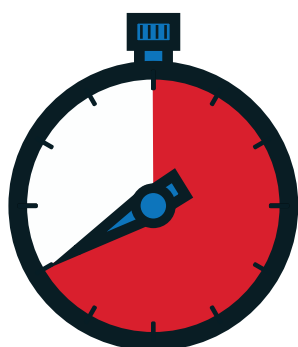
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Heart Disease

Facts and Statistics



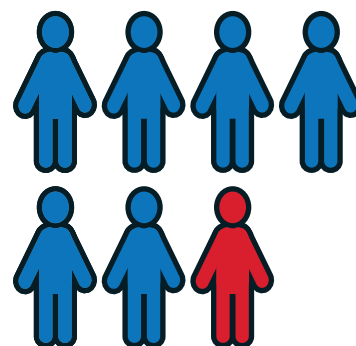
Heart disease is the number 1 cause of death in the U.S.



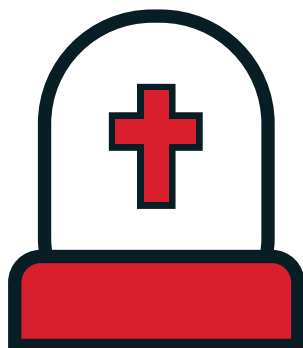
Approximately every 40 seconds an American has a heart attack.



About 790,000 people in the U.S. have heart attacks each year



Coronary heart disease accounts for 1 in 7 deaths in the U.S. killing over 360,000 people a year



Heart Disease accounts for nearly 80,000 deaths in the U.S. That's about 1 of every 3 deaths in the U.S.



About 92.1 million American adults are living with some form of heart disease



5 Tips for a Healthy Heart

By: *Shaneel Ahmed*

Improving and maintaining a healthy heart is essential for living a healthy lifestyle. The heart is the center of the cardiovascular system. It is responsible for pumping blood throughout the body, supplying oxygen and nutrients to the tissues and removing carbon dioxide and other wastes.

A human heart is roughly the size of a large fist and weighs between 10 to 12 ounces in men and 8 to 10 ounces in women. An adult heart beats about 60 to 80 times per minute and about 100,000 times per day. Each minute, the heart pumps about 1.5 gallons of blood.

Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States. However, many forms of heart disease can be prevented or treated with healthy lifestyle choices. Physical inactivity and/or lack of exercise is one of the risk factors for developing heart disease.

Therefore, exercising at least 30 minutes a day on most days of the week or 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week can drastically improve your heart health and reduce your risk of developing heart disease. You can fit in physical activity where you can, such as cycling/walking to work, parking your car farther away, and taking the stairs instead of the elevator.

Additionally, a healthy, balanced diet promotes heart health and lowers risk for disease. Specifically, eating less salt, replacing saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats, and limiting alcohol intake can increase heart health.

Managing blood pressure is another way to increase heart health. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease. When your blood pressure is within a healthy range, the strain on your heart, arteries, and kidneys is reduced. Eating a healthy diet, getting regular physical activity, managing stress, limiting alcohol intake, and avoiding tobacco smoke can all help manage blood pressure and thus, promote a healthy heart.

Smoking is one of the main causes of heart disease and damages the entire circulatory system. In fact, smokers have more than twice the risk of a heart attack than nonsmokers. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do to increase your heart and overall health. Also, avoiding secondhand smoke can increase heart health. Studies have shown that the risk of developing heart disease is about 25 to 30 percent higher for people exposed to secondhand smoke.

Lastly, taking care of your mental health can reduce the risk of heart disease and promote a healthy heart. People who have high levels of stress, suffer from depression, are socially isolated, and/or do not have good social support can have a greater risk for heart disease. Having good social support from family and friends and prioritizing your mental health and self-care is essential. These heart healthy tips will help you maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce your chances for heart disease.

“
**Many forms
of heart disease
can be prevented
or treated with
healthy lifestyle
choices.**
”

Haiku Appreciation

Crispy briskly chills.
Leaves are falling from the trees.
Shorter daytime light.

Control, alt, delete.
Type letters on the keyboard.
Power on and off.

Slimy floppy tongue.
Pointy ears and stubby tails.
You are man's best friend.

I love poetry.
Especially a haiku.
Syllables for all.

Tripping on my words.
Tingly stomach butterflies.
I think I love you.

Fluffy cuddly soul.
Whiskers and a bright pink nose.
Purr and purr and purr.



The Power of 3: CPR Knowledge

By: Sara Loft



Did you know that there are 1,000 people in a day who are affected by sudden cardiac arrests? Nearly 90% of those cases are fatal. During a Monday Night Football game on January 2nd this year, the football safety player (number 3) Damar Hamlin from the Buffalo Bills went into a sudden cardiac arrest. Damar Hamlin stood up after tackling the Cincinnati Bengals' wide receiver player, Tee Higgins (number 85). After Damar stood up, he suddenly took 2 steps backwards and then collapsed on site. The sudden moment shocked the entire nation as well as everyone present at the football game. Tee Higgins was not hurt. However, and thankfully, first responders and a trained medical staff are on standby during all sporting events including the NFL. Fortunately, the knowledge of CPR has saved Damar Hamlin's life but he was listed in critical condition after they were able to revive him on the field.



On that same Monday night, paramedics extended care for Damar Hamlin and sent him to the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. These valorous heroes are fully recognized for aiding all from any trauma and injury.

“
CPR is a technique open to all, not just for first responders and health care workers!
”

Did you know that being trained in CPR could help save a person's life? It most definitely helped the 24-year-old football star, Damar Hamlin. CPR (or the long term: cardiopulmonary resuscitation) is a technique that could help someone who has suddenly stopped breathing and/or if their heart stops beating. Even so, animals have a method of CPR that could help save their lives also.

Did you know that you can be certified as first aid in CPR? Yes, you can make a difference to help another in distress! CPR is a technique open to all, not just for first responders and health care workers! Listed below are some websites where you can register to be more knowledgeable about CPR within your area and to possibly save someone's life! After all the training exercises, you will receive a certificate of completion that is valid for 2 years. You can renew this certification, also.

1. **American Heart Association:** cpr.heart.org/en
2. **American Red Cross:** redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr
3. **CPR - The Pulse Center:** cprthepulsecenter.com/
4. **WNY Healthcare Education:** wnyhe.com
5. **C4CPR:** c4cpr.com/index.php/en/

Buffalo Bills image courtesy of stock.adobe.com

Ten Date Night Ideas for Valentine's Day & Beyond

By: Lauren Antkowiak



Planning a date night can be a tough task. You don't want to do the same thing all the time and are struggling to come up with something different, especially with Valentine's Day right around the corner. Well, we've got you covered. Here is a list of 10 fun and unique date night ideas for every type of person, whether you are a homebody, outdoorsy, adventurous, or old-school, that takes full advantage of what Buffalo, inside and out, has to offer.

1. You can never go wrong with the classic dinner and a movie, but you may find it more interesting if you mix it up a little. Instead of a movie, go ice-skating or curling at Canalside then head to dinner at Buffalo Riverworks.

2. Nothing says fun like staying home in your pajamas. Have a movie marathon, binge your favorite TV show, or start watching a new show which will lend itself to future date nights.

3. Make a personalized scavenger hunt to explore the places that holds special meaning to your relationship. Reminisce about the past and end the night at someplace new; you can think about your future.

4. For some outdoor fun, take a trip to Holiday Valley for snowboarding, skiing, and tubing. To end your day, surprise your date with a romantic cuddle by the fire.

5. If creativity is more your style, find your local Painting with a Twist. You don't have to be a

professional artist to enjoy this night, just find the fun in the abstract art you create together.

6. If jeans and a t-shirt are your normal date attire, change it up by getting all dressed up for a reservation at a fancy restaurant and tickets to the theatre.

7. Plan a throwback night with some of your favorite childhood games, movies, TV shows and music. Find embarrassing photos to reminisce about growing up and swap stories.

8. Don't let the winter months interfere with your hiking; head to Beaver Meadow Audubon Center. Rent snowshoes and travel the 324-acre nature preserve with over 8 miles of trails.

9. Change up Sunday brunch by having Saturday brunch at Horsefeathers Market. Afterwards take a stroll through the Winter Market which is conveniently located right downstairs.

10. Take a game night date to the next level by playing board games at bars such as Aurora Brew Works. Enjoy delicious food and drinks while supporting your local businesses.

Just remember, you don't have to go crazy planning the night to impress your date. If you are relaxed and having fun, the night will take care of itself. And when in doubt, do something you've never done before. It will make your date night memorable and that much more special.

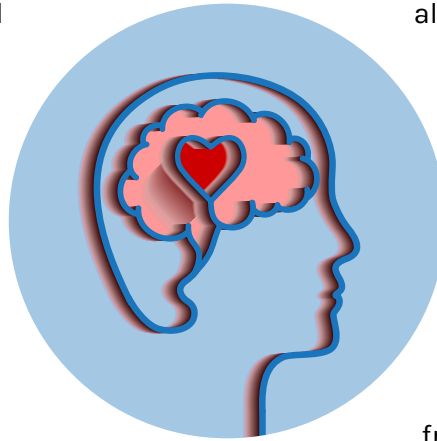
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Mental Health: Effects on the Heart

By: Sue Perbody

For many years, doctors thought the connection between mental health and heart health was strictly behavioral. Chemical factors that cause mental health issues can trigger heart problems. There is a growing belief that there is a biochemical connection between mental health and heart disease, according to the American Heart Association. Nieca Goldberg, M.D. states that stress can increase hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, and can impact your blood pressure and heart rate. These factors work in both directions. Having heart disease can cause depression and anxiety. It's more complex than not wanting to eat or drink anything. The individual doesn't have the energy to get out of bed and go to appointments, and complete other daily tasks needed to regain a good physical health.

There are a variety of effects that heart disease has on those who suffer from it. According to the British Heart Foundation, 77 percent of those with heart disease have felt anxious from their disease. Nearly one third of people said their



condition has affected their ability to work. Depressed patients with heart disease have death rates twice as high as those who do not suffer with similar issues. Depression isn't the only factor linked to heart complications. There are also links with anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. If you put a patient through the procedures needed to ease cardiac problems, it can worsen psychiatric symptoms due to the additional stress factors.

Despite all the trauma and stress factors, the most important thing to know is that there is help out there for people who are suffering with these issues. If you are suffering from any factors of depression or anxiety, do not be afraid to seek help. You may feel alone, but I promise there is somebody out there that can relate to and help your situation. If you have a family history of cardiac problems, speak with your doctor about steps you can take to ease possible complications. Visit heart.org for additional information on the human heart.

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A Review of Letterkenny (S11) & Alice in Borderland (S2)

By: Alex Tilton

Letterkenny: Season 11

I had mixed feelings about this Season. It took me a minute to figure out why, but when I did it made me sad. Season 11 does **not** exhibit any decline in quality. It is, in fact, the same old *Letterkenny*. Just like always, the show is mostly centered around exchanges of snappy dialogue. And, just like always...a lot of it is mean.

In particular I take issue with the last episode of the Season. Two of the core characters, Katy and Rosie are crapping on two other main characters, Dan and Daryl for following fads. Gail the bartender, and local drug dealers Roald and Stuart are also doing this. The problem is that while Gail is insane and the drug dealers are supposed to be jerks, as far as this show is concerned Katy and Rosie are essentially never wrong. They're the 'voice of what's right'. But here they're just flat out bullying two guys over nothing. It would be one thing if the show called this out, but it doesn't. They're correct 'on the facts', so it makes whatever their doing acceptable no matter how horrible it is, just like a Harry Potter book. I don't expect good behavior from characters in an adult comedy, but when they're being horrible I expect the show to at least acknowledge that it is horrible, which they didn't. It's an internal incongruity, and it bothered me.

The rest of the Season is pretty good. *Letterkenny* is at its best when it weaves a single, clearly identifiable plot thread through the rest of the self-contained hijinks and this Season it focused on a 'degen' that Wayne hires to work on his farm. I liked this character and how he was handled. The core cast all did their usual excellent job, the jokes are tight and edgy. But nothing can change the fact that they've been following this formula for 74 episodes now. They either need to change or stop. But for the moment, it's still one of the best comedies going.

Alice in Borderland: Season 2

I loved this show. Season 1 was awesome in almost every respect, and Season 2 lived up to all my expectations.

To briefly recap. In Season 1, our characters find themselves mysteriously transported from Tokyo where

they live to an abandoned alternate Tokyo where they're forced to compete in lethal games for their lives. A lot of characters die, but a few of them manage to make it all the way through into what turns out to be a second round of the game which makes up Season 2.

The series does an excellent job of showing how people handle hopelessness and danger and find courage in horrible situations. The death games also serve as a platform for various characters to expound about their worldviews. Is this alternate Tokyo really any worse than the real world? Many characters confront this question through flashbacks or frank discussions about their previous lives. Some arrive at the conclusion that this place, however violent, is also a lot more honest. Some of them actually prefer it. They debate whether they would go back, given the choice. And it's a choice they're fighting to have. Each game the players survive gives them a playing card, the number of which extends how many days they have left before they're killed by a mysterious laser from the sky. Once the players collectively assemble all of the numbered cards (Season 1) all of the survivors move on to the second round where they have to play games directly against the 'face cards' who are players that won previous incarnations of this game.

Our main character Arisu competes in the face card games, not just to survive, but also for the opportunity to ask the face cards themselves about the nature of this world they're in, and if it is ever possible to go back. And while he does eventually get his answer, the show makes a point of leaving some things unaddressed. The nature of the world our characters are in is only explained up to a point, and the mysterious force that enables the events of the series is never directly confronted. The ending is mostly clear, but also somewhat left up to the audience to decide. All in all it was extremely satisfying. But that being said, *I do not want a Season 3. Don't do this.* The ending was just right and there's nowhere to really go from here. It was damn near perfect, leave it alone please.



Image sources:

[murphysmultiverse.com](https://www.murphysmultiverse.com) & [thedigitalfix.com](https://www.thedigitalfix.com)

Time is Money

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



People often say time is money. In fact money is time. Let's do it better than that. Money is a resource with which you buy time and this is why. As a society, we like to get paid hourly or we hire people on a per hour rate; we buy their time. Then we expect during that paid time period to achieve certain goals with specific skill sets which can have monetary value. And with that monetary value that's created, we sell services; this is how businesses work. Money is Time.

We also invest a lot of money in technology and gadgets so they can help us save time. The money spent on technology we use to buy time for ourselves, whether to do more work or for leisure. The challenge is to see how you are spending your currency of time and what you are buying in return. This currency, in its basic unit, comes in finite supply. Basic unit such as years, months and weeks to even days, hours and seconds. If you are a worker who is getting paid hourly and let's suppose you make \$20 an hour and you end up spending \$10 dollars on a cup of coffee. You just turned half an hour of life unit into a cup of coffee. Was it worth it?



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Tofu & Snow Pea Stir-Fry with Peanut Sauce

Recipe Source: eatingwell.com

Directions

Step 1

Combine peanut butter, vinegar, soy sauce, sugar, and hot sauce in a medium bowl; whisk until smooth. Set aside.

Step 2

Drain tofu; pat dry with a paper towel. Cut into 3/4-inch cubes; pat dry again.

Step 3

Heat 2 tsp. oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add half the tofu and let cook, undisturbed, until lightly browned underneath, about 2 minutes. Stir and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until browned all over, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add 1 tsp. oil to the pan, then the remaining tofu; repeat.

Step 4

Add the remaining 1 tsp. oil to the pan. Add frozen vegetables, ginger, and garlic; stir-fry until the ginger and garlic are fragrant and the vegetables have thawed, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in snow peas. Add water, cover and cook until the peas are crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes.

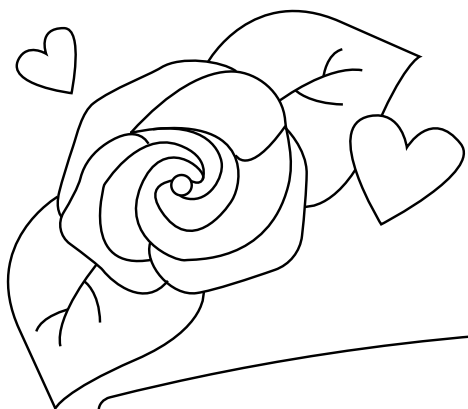
Step 5

Push the vegetables to the edges of the pan. Add the reserved peanut sauce to the center and cook, stirring, until hot, about 30 seconds. Stir the vegetables into the sauce. Add the reserved tofu and cook, stirring, until heated through, 30 to 60 seconds. If necessary, add more water to make a creamy sauce. Sprinkle each serving with 1 Tbsp. peanuts; serve with rice.

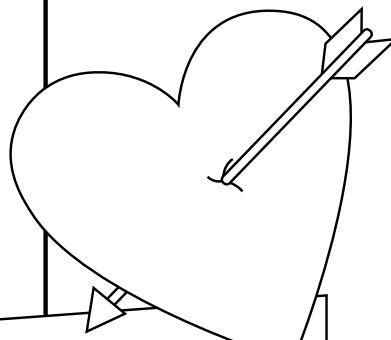
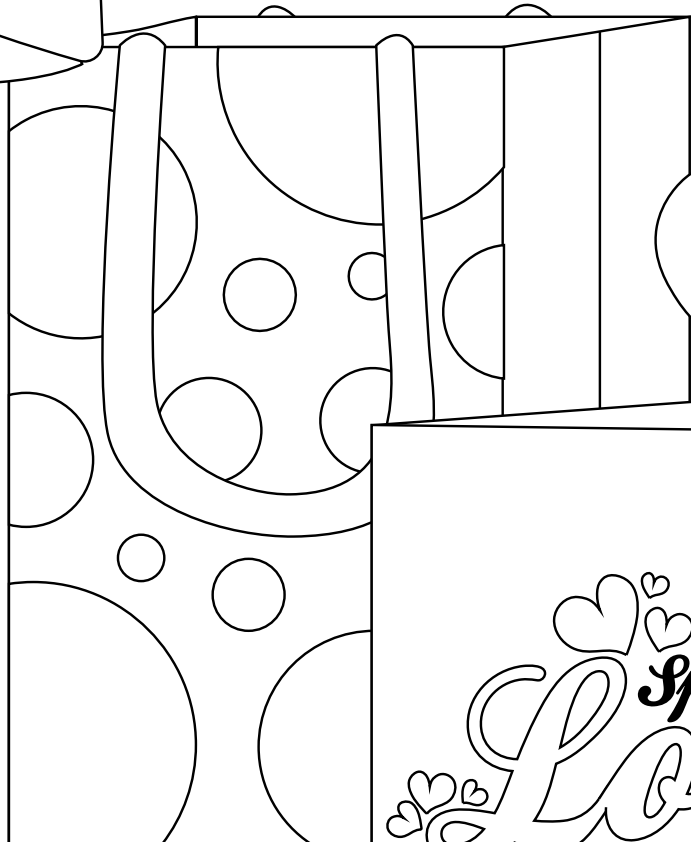
Ingredients

- 1/3 cup unsalted natural peanut butter
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce, such as Sriracha
- 1 (14 ounce) package extra-firm or firm tofu
- 4 teaspoons canola oil, divided
- 1 (14 ounce) package frozen (not thawed) pepper stir-fry vegetables
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped or grated fresh ginger
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups fresh snow peas, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons water, plus more if needed
- 4 tablespoons unsalted roasted peanuts
- 2 cups cooked brown rice

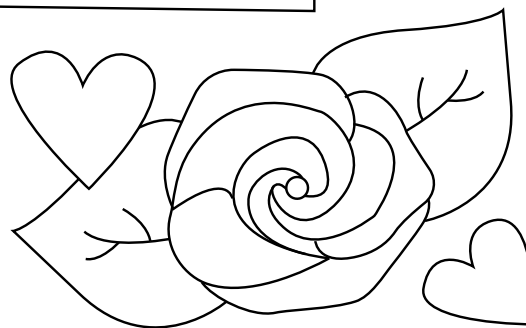
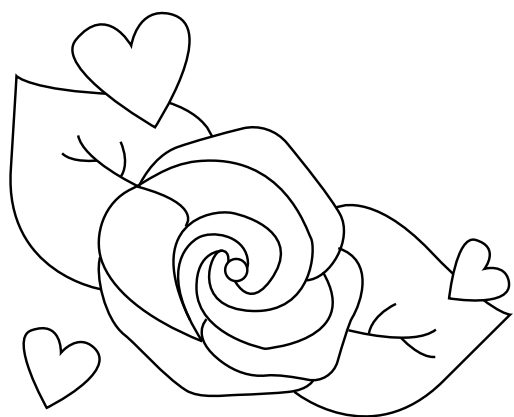
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