

FLATTMANN FILES

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"Quality Is No Accident"

FROM THE DESK OF Grady Flattmann

GRADY'S TOP 5 DRIVING PET PEEVES: I don't complain often, but when it comes to driving, here are things that drive me nuts.

NO. 5: WHEN SOMEONE WAVES ANOTHER DRIVER ACROSS LANES OF TRAFFIC Although well-intentioned, it is dangerous to wave to someone else through traffic. Let traffic control actually control traffic. See our June 2019 article.

NO. 4: UNRESTRAINED PETS I love dogs, but when I see one on someone's lap behind the wheel, I have to wonder. What if that dog jumps on the driver's hands or feet and how distracting is this?

NO. 3: WHEN THE GUY IN FRONT OF YOU CLEANS HIS WINDSHIELD It usually happens just after you wash your car. Try to fight the urge to pass them and turn on your own spray.

NO. 2: NOT USING THE TURN SIGNAL The turn signal is there for a reason.

NO. 1: PUTTERING ALONG IN THE LEFT LANE There is nothing more frustrating than being behind an 18-wheeler going below the speed limit while passing another 18-wheeler in the right lane at a snail's pace.

Thanks for letting me get that out! You probably have your own pet peeves, but don't let them distract you from safe driving.



-Grady



WHAT'S SO FUNNY? WHY YOU SHOULD KEEP YOUR KIDS LAUGHING

Humor has always been a valuable social skill. Class clowns and stand-up comedians are praised for their quick wit and their ability to make people laugh. Everyone loves to laugh, and laughing together is a great way to make strong, long-lasting connections. And now, recent studies have shown that a good sense of humor can even aid in a child's development.

Having a healthy sense of humor can help children develop their intellect, health, and problem-solving skills. Some people think that humor is a genetic trait, but it actually develops from recognizing and mimicking humor from other sources. This means that humor can be developed from a very young age with the right influence.

There are a lot of benefits to encouraging your kids to get silly. A strong sense of humor will let them see things from multiple perspectives rather than just the most obvious ones. It can also encourage them to be spontaneous and see the value in unconventional ideas and alternative ways of thinking. They'll enjoy participating in the more playful aspects of life, which will teach them not to take themselves too seriously. These are all useful traits that many adults wish they could foster more easily!

Children with a well-developed sense of humor also tend to have more positive emotions and social interactions. They're generally happier and more optimistic, have higher self-esteem, and are better equipped

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to handle differences between themselves and other children. Kids who can share humor with their peers are often better liked and also more equipped to handle childhood adversities, like playground bullies.

There are a lot of ways to encourage humor and playfulness in your children as they grow, and you should start at a young age. Babies may not fully understand humor, but they do recognize when people around them are happy. That's why they laugh when you make funny noises or silly faces at them. They sense your joy and react. They're highly responsive to physical stimuli too, like tickling.

Toddlers appreciate physical humor nearly as much as babies do, especially if it includes elements of surprise, like peek-a-boo. As they start to develop basic language skills, they'll find humor in nonsensical or rhyming words. This is also the age when kids usually start attempting to make their parents laugh. They may deliberately point to the wrong facial features when you practice with them or run around the house in your oversized clothes.

As kids begin to attend school, they'll find even more humor in the incongruities of the world around them. A picture of a cow wearing sunglasses, silly jokes and puns, or objects that don't make expected noises, like a car horn quacking instead of honking, will be especially entertaining to them.



It's never too early to start developing a child's sense of humor. Be a humor model to your kids by being silly with them and teach them that adults can be funny too. Take their humor seriously, even if it doesn't always make sense. But it's also important to know where to draw the line. Don't laugh at inappropriate jokes — explain why they're not funny instead. As long as you're creating a healthy, humor-rich environment and encouraging your kids to be as funny as they can, you're giving them an important tool they need to thrive.

FINDING MOTIVATION ON THOSE TOUGH DAYS

Top Mental Strategies for Your Fitness Routine

Whether your New Year's workout routine is finally embedded in your schedule or you're still trying to make it happen, always remember that your mind is just as important as your body. On some days, you may feel like anything is possible, and on others, it may feel impossible to even get out of bed. Don't worry, that's totally normal! There's no reason to feel ashamed if you're struggling with gaining steam and motivation for your workout. Here are some mental strategies to help you get firmly into your routine this year and the years to come.

GETTING TO THE GYM

What's the hardest part of working out? For most people, it's not the heavy weights or the long cardio sessions — it's actually stepping



into the gym. Sometimes, people will wake up and think that the gym isn't possible that day as they lay in bed. Some people will psych themselves out of working out because their time is limited, or they worry about how tired they'll be after the workout (especially after or before a busy day).

Instead of thinking of reasons you can't or don't want to go, focus your mind *only* on the task of getting there. Stepping into the gym will often give you the mental push to actually work out. It's also best to leave the all-or-nothing mindset behind — a 45- or 55-minute workout isn't required every single gym session. Life happens, and even if it's a short exercise, your workout will actually energize you for the rest of your day.

PUSHING YOURSELF TO THE LIMIT

Studies have found that the most successful people share grit: the ability to work hard and endure even the most difficult times. Workouts will burn, and the motions may feel uncomfortable or even painful, so it's crucial to have the grit to push yourself to the limit. Rather than give up, you should embrace the pain and see it as a sign you're growing stronger. Adjust your inner vocabulary. Anything that seems "uncomfortable" should be reconsidered as "intense" but something you can work through. Of course, be careful of injury pains!

SEE SPRING BLOOM

In These Beautiful Locations

Spring is here, which means beautiful flowers are finally showing themselves after a long winter. Here are some of the best places in the U.S. to see flower blossoms and welcome the season.

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park stretches across North Carolina and Tennessee, and while its scenery is beautiful year-round, the park is especially alluring to nature enthusiasts during the spring. Through this season, miles of lady's-slipper orchids, irises, cardinal flowers, and lilies dot its lush green landscape. It's dubbed "Wildflower National Park" throughout this time of year, and you can experience it by car or on foot. The park also offers expert-led tours that weave through the flowers during their peak bloom.



CRESTED BUTTE

Crested Butte, Colorado, is best known for its winter sports and summer hikes. But recently it has drawn the attention of flower enthusiasts for its unique pink, orange, and gold alpine wildflowers that appear in the spring. This natural phenomenon even inspired the creation of the annual Wildflower Festival in midsummer, which features nature walks, art, photography, culinary experiences, and more. For a truly unique experience, you can even ascend the town's titular Crested Butte to spot some rare alpine sunflowers next to the picturesque West Elk Mountains.

ANTELOPE VALLEY

The California Poppy Reserve in Lancaster, California, is a 1,780-acre park that features sloping hills covered with fields of vibrant orange, yellow, and red poppies in the spring. Warm temperatures and heavy rainfall across Southern California during this time of year create a brief period of thick blooms as far as the eye can see. And while the poppies can be enjoyed from the comfort of your car, the best way to experience them is to walk the leisurely Antelope Loop Trail for a breathtaking, up-close adventure.

Spring flora is gorgeous and naturally attracts large crowds of people every year. If you plan to visit any of these destinations, just remember that their ecosystems are delicate. Respect park signs, stay on designated trails, and do your part to make sure these flowers return year after year for future generations to enjoy.

Take a Break!

P	H	N	B	L	C	N	K	D	C	R	H
S	A	G	E	Y	O	G	N	A	V	A	D
K	K	S	N	L	S	F	A	I	Q	M	H
O	F	N	S	T	L	E	R	S	D	A	M
C	U	H	E	O	A	O	P	Y	C	D	L
B	E	C	O	S	V	X	P	L	H	A	R
E	A	R	T	H	H	E	E	F	J	N	F
M	N	E	D	R	A	G	R	S	B	O	S
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Y	O	K	A	H	S	Q	N	G	S	K	I
Y	S	M	B	G	Q	N	T	V	A	G	M

BUNNY
DAISY
EARTH
EASTER

EGGS
FOOL
GARDEN
PASSOVER

POLLEN
PRANK
RAMADAN
TAXES



While the kids hunt for Easter eggs in the yard, whip up this easy deviled egg recipe for a hearty snack that's sure to satisfy any craving.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsp milk
- 1 tsp dried parsley flakes
- 1/2 tsp dill weed
- 1/2 tsp fresh chives, minced
- 1/2 tsp ground mustard
- Salt, paprika, garlic powder, and pepper, to taste
- 12 large eggs, hard-boiled
- Fresh parsley, minced, and paprika for garnish

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine mayonnaise, milk, parsley flakes, dill, chives, mustard, salt, paprika, garlic powder, and pepper. Mix well and set aside.
2. Cut eggs lengthwise and remove yolks carefully to preserve egg whites.
3. In a small bowl, mash yolks.
4. Mix mashed yolks with mayonnaise mixture.
5. Spoon or pipe the mixture back into the egg whites.
6. Garnish with fresh parsley and paprika. Refrigerate before serving.



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THE AGE OF STRESS

Helping Your Child Overcome Anxiety

It's hard to imagine kids as anything but carefree, happy, and eager to explore the world around them. However, children experience stress just like adults do, which can severely impact their typically cheerful dispositions. Since April is National Stress Awareness Month, now is an opportune time to familiarize yourself with tools and information that can help you alleviate your child's stress.

WHAT ARE THEIR STRESSORS? Any number of everyday factors can lead to stress, and stress can plague anyone who feels overwhelmed. Toddlers and young children going to day care or school for the first time may experience separation anxiety due to being apart from their parents. Older kids and teenagers may feel mounting social and academic pressure. Even something as simple as overhearing loved ones arguing or seeing a sad news report can add to a child's stress levels.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS STRESSED?

When a kid is stressed, they will exhibit odd behavior and even undergo physical changes. Depending on your child's age, watch for mood swings, changes in sleep patterns, headaches, trouble focusing, or withdrawal from the people around them. According to KidsHealth.org, younger children may also pick up habits like twirling their hair or sucking their thumb, while older kids may start to bully others, lie, or rebel.

CAN I HELP REDUCE THEIR STRESS?

According to KidsHealth.org, good nutrition, proper rest, and healthy attention are great ways to help kids manage their stress. Set time aside each day to talk and spend time with your children; talking about worries will reduce or relieve anxieties. If you know about an upcoming stressful situation, like a school



exam or a health checkup, prepare your child by studying with them or talking to them about what to expect.

Don't stop here. For more tools and information regarding stress reduction in children, visit KidsHealth.org or contact your doctor.