



## January 2020

Hello and welcome to the January 2020 issue of *Straight from the Horse's Mouth*—an assortment of relevant (and maybe not so relevant) articles.

This issue of *Straight from the Horse's Mouth* is being sent to you courtesy of Winning Strides and Kaleidoscope Copywriting.

It is our way of saying that you are important to us and we truly value your relationship. Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to friends and neighbors. Enjoy!

## Quotes of the Month

Happiness is a risk. If you're not a little scared, then you're not doing it right.

—Sarah Addison Allen

Make a decision, trust yourself, and stick with it.

—Christof Koch

Peace brings with it so many positive emotions that it is worth aiming for in all circumstances.

—Estella Eliot

## See if These Items Are on Your Calendar!

**National Mentoring Month.** You can make a fundamental difference in the life of a young person.

*Winning Strides is beginning the Stable Moments Mentoring Program this month.*

**Presents: *Straight from the Horse's Mouth***



**National Volunteer Blood Donor Month.** Consider donating now and throughout the year.

**Be Kind to Food Servers Month.** Show them the courtesy and appreciation you feel entitled to, and don't forget to tip your server.

**Snow Care for Troops Awareness Week, Jan. 19–25.** Armed with shovels and snow blowers, volunteers are encouraged to clear the sidewalks and driveways of veterans and families of deployed service members.

**New Year's Day, Jan. 1.** London marks the start of the year. You can start celebrating on New Year's Eve 6 hours earlier if you go on London time (great if you don't like staying up late!) No matter how you celebrate this day, be safe and of good cheer.

**National Joy Germ Day, Jan. 8.** It's okay to be contagious when you're spreading joy. Let the good vibes flow.

**National Dress Up Your Pet Day, Jan. 14.**



## National Use Your Gift Card Day, Jan. 18.

**Martin Luther King Day, Jan. 20.** During his lifetime, he was arrested roughly 20 times. His work provoked violent reactions, including the bombing of the home he shared with his wife and family as well as numerous physical assaults. Ultimately, his life would end in tragedy resulting from a sniper's bullet.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a tireless crusader against injustice and inequality. King championed nonviolence to combat hatred and oppression. Four years before his death, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work during the civil rights movement.

Had he survived, Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> would have been his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday.

**Belly Laugh Day, Jan. 24.** At 1:24 pm, wherever you are, stop and laugh out loud and give those around you a reason to do the same.

## Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day, Jan. 27.



## Healthy Living

### The Morning Routine

A healthy morning routine is a good way to cut down on stress, help with time management skills, and result in an overall improvement in mental and physical health.

There are several tips that, when practiced prior to 10:00 a.m., can have a very positive impact on your health.

One good tip is to drink a glass of water the moment you get out of bed. Immediately drinking water after sleeping helps to rehydrate the human body, and the effect can be improved still further with a dash of apple cider vinegar or fresh lemon juice.

Regular intake of apple cider vinegar has been shown to assist with creating a better blood sugar balance in addition to improving cholesterol.

You should also wait at least one hour in the morning in order to optimize your brain prior to clogging up with emails, news, and social media. This helps to cut down on stress and become clearer and more focused.

### Simple Tips for a Healthier Heart

Close to 2,200 people die each day in the United States because of cardiovascular problems. That's one every 40 seconds.

Here's some advice from the *WMC Action News* website on how to keep your heart healthy:

- **Laugh a lot.** Laughter dilates your blood vessels, increases blood flow, and lowers your blood pressure.
- **Snuggle.** Hugging releases oxytocin, a hormone that relieves stress and can reduce blood pressure.
- **Get a pet.** A University of Maryland study found that survivors of a heart attack who had a dog were eight times more likely to be alive a year after their attack.
- **Get the right amount of sleep.** Both oversleeping and getting fewer than six hours of sleep a night raises your heart attack risk. Aim for about eight hours every night.
- **Drink coffee.** Studies suggest that caffeine can stabilize your heart rhythm if you have an abnormal heart rate. Check with your doctor.
- **Move around.** Standing and moving around one hour per day can reduce cardiovascular disease risk in women by 25 percent, according to a University of California, San Diego, study.

### Healthy Work/Life Balance Tips for 40-Something

People who build a better balance between work and

life while they are in their 40s will be also be creating a basis for a much more fulfilling life in their 50s and 60s and beyond.

## Family Matters

### Self-Harm Highest among Older Teenagers

Self-harming is at its highest levels in teenagers between the ages of 15 to 19, according to the results of a new study by Swansea University in the UK. Academics examined 15,739 cases of health services being accessed by youth for self-harming between the years 2003 and 2015, and found girls were more likely to end up going to the hospital than boys. Seventy-six percent of girls who accessed services because they self-harmed ended up in the hospital in comparison to just 49 percent of boys.

Boys often choose not to stay in the hospital, but researchers say that the gender disparity is nonetheless a reason for concern, especially given that 58 percent of those who sought emergency care were young men and boys.

The biggest increase in self-harm cases from 2011 occurred in children aged 10 to 14, especially girls. In deprived areas, cases more than doubled when compared to the statistics in more affluent areas.

## Success & Personal Growth

### Preventing Burnout

Inspiration can often seem hard to come by, but creative types dread burnout more than anything else. The feeling of being exhausted and overwhelmed can turn a former source of joy into something that causes anxiety and stress. However, the good news is there are ways to continue to be inspired and avoid burnout.

- One of the simplest pieces of advice is simply to take a break.
- It is also important for creative types, particularly introverts, not to go into hiding but come out into the world when this feeling begins to develop.

- Another good idea is to do something that is creative yet unrelated to your current project or usual work.

### The Key to Having a More Productive Day

There is an antidote for all of you who dread Mondays or the start of any other workday—reattachment. New research suggests that the act of reattaching oneself to work every morning plays a crucial role in our motivation and engagement, much the same way detaching from work in the evenings leads to more work/life balance.

To reattach to work, start by simply reflecting on a few key areas of your professional life:

- **Significance.** The work you do has meaning and so does the position you hold in your organization. Allow these positive thoughts to set the tone for the next eight hours.
- **Network.** Who are your mentors, cheerleaders, advocates, and peers? These are the people you turn to for guidance and support in challenging times. Always remember that you're not in this alone.
- **Daily goals.** Determine what your focus should be this day and visualize yourself accomplishing it.

## Your Creative Side

### Creative Thought Starts in Bed

Creativity is a vital skill that can enhance your career success. You can't always summon it out of the blue, so this advice from the *Study Finds* website should help: A survey of 2,000 British residents commissioned by Microsoft Surface found many of people's best ideas tend to occur as they're dozing off, when they first wake up in the morning, and sometimes in the middle of the night. Pay attention to your thoughts in bed, write them down when ideas and solutions come to you, and keep rolling through problems before and after you sleep. You might discover some surprising answers.

### Thoughts on Creativity

Writer Austin Kleon has this advice for those of us trying to tap our creative wells: "Let go of the thing that you're trying to be (the noun), and focus on the

actual work you need to be doing (the verb). Doing the verb will take you someplace further and far more interesting.”

If your goal is to be more creative, then embrace creativity in everything you do. Creativity is about fun and playfulness and being open to new possibilities. You can inject a bit of creativity into everything you do, from housework to grocery shopping to managing a process that is becoming mundane.

Don't fall into the habit trap. Use your imagination to push boundaries, explore new options, and gather unlikely resources that will allow you thrive.

## Travel Tips

### Mental Health Travel Tips

People who suffer from mental health issues such as *anxiety* and *depression* should not assume that those disorders will go on vacation just because they do. Traveling can be very overwhelming as well as mentally and physically demanding.

However, these issues do not have to spoil or put off your vacation so long as a few basic pieces of mental health advice are followed on your travels.

Travel anxiety can manifest itself on vacation but can be dealt with in the same way you handle anxiety at home. The likes of exercise, positive affirmations, deep breathing, and other self-care practices such as listening to a playlist of favorite songs should be just as effective away from home.

Packing a journal to take on vacation with you can also help. Writing in a journal can turn the experiences and feelings during travel into a coherent narrative and help you feel more grounded and in control.

Anyone can get homesick while away, so make plans to contact friends and family at some point during your vacation. Ensure you have the right phone plan in place to allow for texting, calling, etc. and let friends and family know ahead of time that you will be getting in touch while you are away.

## Odds & Ends

### The Beginning of an Era

At 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1, 1946, the birth of Kathleen Casey Wilkens, in Pennsylvania, would herald a generation known as the “baby boom.” Following the end of World War II, more than 76 million people were born in the U.S. from 1946 to 1964. This surge in population and the demands it created helped to shape the way communities were developed throughout the country. This generation accounts for roughly 20 percent of the U.S. population and—depending on your age—are our parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and maybe you.

### A Better Way to Say,

#### “Thank You for Your Service”

Ninety percent of Americans say they've thanked a veteran for their service, but a recent survey suggests that the best way to thank veterans may not be to say, “Thank you for your service.”

The survey was commissioned by the Cohen Veterans Network (CVN), a national nonprofit network of mental health clinics for post-9/11 veterans and military families. The survey found that 49 percent of active and former military service members grow uneasy when told, “Thank you for your service.”

What to do instead? The survey found that veterans and current service members prefer questions about when they served, where they were stationed, and what kinds of jobs they did.

## Monthly Humor

### Suggested Reading

As the pastor finished his sermon, he said, “For next Sunday, I want all of you to read Mark chapter 17. It's going to tie in with the theme of my sermon.”

The next week as the pastor stood before the congregation, he said, “Let me see a show of hands for those of you who reviewed the suggested reading of Mark chapter 17?”

Every member of the congregation raised a hand.

“Well, amen, brothers and sisters,” the pastor responded. “Now I want you to pull out your Bibles and turn to Mark 17. I’ll wait.”

The sound of ruffling pages began to fill the sanctuary. Members of the congregation whispered among themselves.

“What’s that? You can’t find the passage?” the pastor asked. “That’s because Mark 17 doesn’t exist, and that brings me to the topic of today’s sermon—dishonesty!”

*Happy New Year*

