

What's your happy? *Imagine...*

April 2016 Newsletter



Go places you can
only imagine

Do you need an
energy tune-up?

Reconnecting at the family
dinner table

e-Thoughts — *Imagine if
we were all the same...*



Unleash and enjoy your creative
side. **More...**

If you wake up tired, it may not
be more sleep that you need.
More...

Turn off distractions and tune in
to each other. **More...**

What would the world be like?
More...

Getting help

Confidential support, information and resource referrals are available for a variety of concerns — both work and personal. Call for assistance for you, your household members or your adult children under age 26, whether they live at home or not. Call or visit us online today!

Go places you can only imagine

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Renowned scientist Albert Einstein once said, “Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.”¹ And he showed us how.

His imagination opened new worlds. He developed concepts about light, mass, energy and time. He theorized about the physics of space travel sixty years before the first manned space launch even took place.²

Many of Einstein’s ideas are still revolutionary today — more than half a century after his death. He gave us advanced insights into our natural world and laid the groundwork for things we use every day like computers, cell phones, digital cameras, smoke detectors and TVs.

Imagination and creativity: the keys to discovery

Creative minds lead the way to:

- Ideas
- Possibilities
- Inventions
- Achievements

We all have the ability to imagine. It’s just a matter of nurturing the seeds of our creativity.

The world needs creative thinkers

Creative people think “out of the box.” They see opportunities and inspirations. They solve problems, produce ideas and communicate in unique ways. They fashion the future.

Ways to nurture your creative side

Would you like to improve your imagination and creativity? Here are some steps that may help:

- **Be curious.** Children are curious from infancy. That’s how they learn about the people and things around them and develop

language, motor skills and more. As adults, our hectic daily lives may not leave much time for curiosity. But it’s important to stay curious. That’s how we learn, change and grow.

- **Keep an open mind.** Look for the unique, unexpected and colorful in life. Don’t reject the unfamiliar. Instead, explore it. Each time you try a different path, you grow your creative side.
- **Read.** Have you ever read a book and then gone to see the movie made from it? If so, you may have found that reading it was more enjoyable than seeing it. Why? Because when you’re reading, your imagination helps create your own “customized” characters, action, sights and sounds. Reading also gives you quiet, alone time with your thoughts and ideas.
- **Do new things.** Challenge yourself. Did you ever want to paint? Get a paint brush and go for it. Ever thought about writing? Give it a shot. You may find surprising talents, passions and interests when you try things that seem like a stretch.
- **Spend time with people who are creative.** Creativity may not “rub off.” But being around creative people can help you see things through their eyes. Brainstorming with them can open whole new areas of thought. Their fresh perspectives can help you expand your own.

Enrich your imagination to enhance your life

Keep your senses alive and your mind open. We can’t all be Albert Einstein, but we can all expand our imaginations.

¹www.brainyquotes.com

²www.nasa.gov

Do you need an energy tune-up?

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Many people say they wake up feeling exhausted even after a full night's sleep. Does that mean they need more sleep? Maybe not...

Tired? It may not be sleep you're lacking

Today's lifestyles are very demanding. It takes a lot of effort to work, parent, run a household, manage your finances and, perhaps, care for family members too. Add in time for important relationships — and for yourself — and it can get pretty draining.

Many people say they feel physically worn out much of the time. They're mentally and emotionally tired too. It may not be that they need more sleep but more energy.

Ready, set, energize!

Imagine waking up feeling refreshed, renewed and ready to go. It's not a dream — it's possible. Here are three ideas that may help.

1. Be good to yourself. Do you feel badly about what you can't get done or worry about letting people down? Working parents often struggle with guilt because of the time and attention they think they should be giving their children. Similarly, adult children may feel guilty about not doing more for their older parents.

Guilt is non-productive and uses up a lot of energy. Instead of getting stuck on what you can't get done, focus on what you are accomplishing and who you are pleasing (including you!) Give yourself credit for the everyday successes in your life.

And, although you've heard it before: Don't forget the importance of good nutrition and fitness.

2. Focus on what's really important to you. What matters most to you on a basic human level? Do you love animals, care deeply about education or the needs of less fortunate people?

Use some of your time to volunteer for organizations that address concerns like these. It can make you feel fulfilled and energized. For example:

- Donate some time at a local animal shelter
- Tutor students for an hour a week
- Help cook or serve a meal at a local soup kitchen

3. Make time for fun. Do you know that many of us are fun-deprived? We have so much on our minds — and “plates” — that it's easy to lose sight of how important fun is for feeling upbeat and alive.

Make fun a priority. Plan time for exercising, socializing, going to a movie or doing anything else you enjoy. Spend more time with people who make you laugh. Think of small ways to inject fun into your everyday routine.

Build your energy awareness

Add meaning, happy times — and a healthy dose of self-appreciation — to each day. Don't forget exercise and good eating. Tune up your energy awareness and become your own best friend and energy coach.

Reconnecting at the family dinner table

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In many households, dinnertime isn't any different from the rest of the day. Cellphones ring and beep, TVs blare and family members come and go. No one can sit down for more than five minutes or even hear themselves think, much less talk to, anyone else.

If this sounds like your house, it may be time to bring some “law and order” to dinnertime. It's also time to rediscover one of the basic reasons why couples and families sit and eat together: to reconnect.

Pick one night a week for family dinner

Family members often have commitments and distractions that can keep dinner from being a relaxing time together. So just try for one night a week for starters.

Take a vote to find a night and time when you can sit down for at least 30 minutes. Once you've agreed to a time, plan an easy dinner. This isn't about a gourmet meal. It's about spending time together.

Turn off all screens and electrical devices

No TV, cellphones, iPods, tablets, laptops or earphones at the table. The best way to connect with each other is to disconnect from everything else for a little while.

Each person takes a turn to share

Ask each person to share something from his or her day. This can help you learn more about each other's interests and challenges.

Look around the table and be in the moment

Sure, couples and families have lots to deal with. But time moves on. Most older people will tell you it moves on much more quickly than you expect.

Jobs and health can change. Kids grow up and leave the nest. Things vary from year to year and day to day. Remind yourself to enjoy the moment because life is always shifting.

Compliment the cook and share cleanup time

Be sure to thank the person who prepared the meal. Cleaning up can be more fun if you work together, too. Appreciation and help go a long way.

What do you get out of these efforts?

Imagine having a calm, quiet dinnertime one night a week. It can be the start of a happy new tradition. Don't feel defeated if one week slips by and it doesn't happen. Just get back into your new routine the next week.

Family dinners can help you feel more connected. Eating together and sharing your stories gives you all nourishment — of body and mind.

e-Thoughts — *Imagine if we were all the same...*

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Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

I don't know about you, but sometimes I catch myself thinking it would be much easier if everyone thought the way I did. No arguments, no problems getting along. Everything would flow smoothly.

Then I stop fantasizing and really think it through: Wait! How boring! No one would ever learn anything new if we all thought the same, looked the same, acted the same and did the same thing day after day. I don't think I could stand it. Could you?

Differences make our lives richer and more interesting. Working as part of a team really drives this point home for me.

When I share an idea or problem with a coworker, I often come away with a new, helpful perspective. Why? The other person has a whole lifetime of experiences and ideas that are different from my own. I almost always find that two heads are better than one!

So let's be thankful for others who:

- Challenge our thinking
- Bring creative ideas to our work and home life because they see things from their own perspective
- Dress differently
- Eat different foods
- Have unique strengths and skills
- Look and act differently from us

Appreciate how differences add a spark to your day. Life without variety would be a very dull reality. Enjoy the diversity around you — it makes the world a more exciting place.

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