

The JOYFUL INDEPENDENT

JULY 2024

From Dependence to Independence and Back to Dependence on God

By Chaplain, Kurt Stromberg

Many of the early settlers of America had fled their native lands due to religious persecution. They fled to America on the hopes and dreams of being able to practice and worship our Lord Jesus Christ. Under the oppression of their home countries they were dependent on not only God, but also the oppressive, dictating government that would not stand for worshipping Christ.

So, many fled to America and many other places. From the pilgrims to all the others that settled this wonderful land, their number one goal was to be independent from the British government which had been controlling the land and what went on it for many years. One of the main objectives of the 13 colonies was to break free from any association to the British Empire. This led to the American Revolution.

At the core of the settlers' passion was to be able to freely worship and serve Jesus.

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

(2 Corinthians 3:17) No wonder verbiage in the Declaration of Independence states our "unalienable rights" include, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Here in America we are free to pursue a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus without consequences of doing so. Although it feels like things are changing.

As a country we have many freedoms, and the most important one is to seek that relationship with our Savior Jesus, without suffering persecution. In Galatians 5:13-14 we are told, "For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Is it no wonder that America is one of the greatest, if not the greatest nation that has ever existed because of these freedoms.

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So the new settlers had become independent from Britain but they were also now very dependent on God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. So folks, as we spend time with family and friends during this Independence Day, celebrating our freedoms, may we remember that we serve an amazing God. One who cares for every intricate detail of our lives, and a God who desires a personal relationship with you. He is calling you. If you don't have this relationship with Him here in America you are free to be engaged with Father God, Creator of everything: including America.

May we pray for our nation and understand the many blessings that we experience by living here. May we apply this Scripture to our nation. "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14). God Bless each and every one of you!



The Mesa Hometown Heroes Banner Program is a tribute to honor fallen service members, veterans, and active-duty service members of the United States Armed Forces. The Mesa Chamber of Commerce were pleased to honor 88 banner recipients with the downtown display which ran from June 7 - June 28. Among the recipients were three of our own resident veteran's: Larry O'Neill (U.S. Army), Bernie Domskey (U.S. Navy) and Al Moser (U.S. Navy). Congratulations to these gentlemen!

Tips for Self-Care in Honor of International Self-Care Day

Awareness surrounding self-care has increased over the past several years. Self-care is defined as “the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one’s own health.” This year International Self-Care Day takes place on Wednesday, July 24. It was originally established in 2011 by the International Self-Care Foundation (ISF) to promote self-care as an essential component of well-being.

The organization acknowledges seven pillars of self-care to help people carve a path to a healthier, more vibrant lifestyle. These pillars include:

1. Knowledge and health literacy
2. Mental wellbeing
3. Physical activity
4. Healthy eating
5. Risk avoidance
6. Good hygiene
7. Rational and responsible use of products and services

The organization encourages people to practice self-care every day. The ISF encourages people to establish a self-care routine and The Cleveland Clinic suggests ways to do it, using the S-M-A-R-T goal concept:

- Specific: Identify the details about your goals.
- Measurable: Decide how progress will be measured.
- Achievable: Set realistic goals.
- Relevant: The change will make a difference.
- Time-bound: Set a realistic timeframe.

SMART



It is important to understand that self-care isn't selfish, rather it is a vital way for people to preserve their health and wellbeing with small daily actions. The article notes, "Not only can self-care alleviate feelings of stress and anxiety, it better prepares you for the demands of life." Being deliberate in actions and recognizing that "you're only able to help those around you when you've taken proper care of yourself" are two ways to begin a self-care routine. Nutrition, movement and sleep are three vital aspects of physical self-care that people can focus on. People can also focus on reducing bad habits such as excessive screen time or smoking. While it might be intimidating to begin a new routine, it's important to start out slow with a simple plan. Here are some things to consider adding to your daily routine in the name of self-care and mental wellness, according to the National Institute of Mental Health:

- Getting regular exercise—Just 30 minutes of walking can boost mood and improve health.
- Eating healthy regular meals and staying hydrated—Drink plenty of water and enjoy a balanced diet for improved energy and focus.

·Prioritize routine sleep—Create a sleep schedule and get enough rest. Reduce blue light exposure by limiting screen and device time before bedtime.

·Enjoy a relaxing activity—Try meditation, relaxation techniques or breathing exercises.

Schedule time for these things in your calendar just like any other appointment.

·Create new goals and set your priorities—Challenge yourself to accomplish new things.

·Be grateful—Think about the many things you have to be thankful for. Be specific and even write them down. Remember the seemingly simple things such as waking up each day!

·Be positive—A positive mindset is a powerful thing. Try to identify and challenge negative and unhelpful thoughts.

Self-care is a very individualized thing, so take your time developing a routine that you truly enjoy. Whether it's finding a new hobby or taking some quiet time to meditate, small practices of self-care can greatly impact your quality of life.



Can you hear me now? Hey, listen up!



Did you know that July 18 is World Listening Day? But what in the world is that? According to the World Listening Day website, World Listening Day, organized by the World Listening Project, “celebrates the art of actively listening to the sounds of the environment. ”The project aims to “raise awareness about the significance of listening as a cultural practice and promotes sonic stewardship of the environment.”

The organization encourages participation in events such as soundwalks, field recordings and listening parties, acoustic ecology workshops, listening meditation, sound art installations and reflective listening. Each of these experiences is designed to help people deepen their relationship with and appreciation for the soundscape around them to connect to their environment and community.

Many people can find tranquility in natural surroundings from the forest to the seas, whether or not they are particularly tuned into the practice of listening. However, purposefully engaging in active listening could help people further relax and find peace of mind.

According to headspace.com, “Nature sounds specifically can help promote relaxation by signifying that it’s time for us to turn off and ease into the element we’re in.” An article on the site shares specific benefits that the sounds of nature can have, including increased productivity, improved overall mood and deeper relaxation. The article references a specific study: “In a 2017 study at the University of Sussex, it was shown that playing natural sounds can affect the bodily system that controls the flight-or-fright response, resulting in greater bodily relaxation and less physiological reaction to stressors.

Whether you’re beginning a meditation practice or going through daily activities, nature sounds may help keep your mind in a balanced state for improved decision-making skills throughout the day.”

The good news is that even if people don't have access to nature, relaxing nature sounds or music can create similar results. For those who want to start tuning in more to the sounds of nature or the conversations they are having with friends and loved ones, a visit to the doctor for a hearing check is a good place to start! The Johns Hopkins Medicine website explains that presbycusis, age-related hearing loss, is a common problem linked to aging. The site states: "One in three adults over age 65 has hearing loss. Because of the gradual change in hearing, some people are not aware of the change at first." The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association recommends that "adults be screened by an audiologist once per decade and every 3 years after age 50 or more frequently in those with known exposures or risk factors associated with hearing loss."



Here are some ways to enjoy the sounds of nature in honor of National Listening Day:

- Turn off all electronic noise such as the TV and radio.
- Wake up early to enjoy the sounds of the birds chirping or listen to the sounds of the crickets on a summer evening.



- Walk through a park or garden and listen to the sounds of buzzing bees or the wind rustling through the leaves. Sit in a quiet spot, close your eyes and simply allow your ears to tune into the sounds.
- Listen to a recording of nature sounds such as rain falling or the tide crashing into the shore.



Tips for Healthy Vision Month

Proper care of every part of the body, both physical and mental, is super important at every age - but especially as we age. That is true when it comes to eye health, too. In honor of July's designation as Healthy Vision Month, here are some tips for maintaining eye health with age.

According to an article titled, "[Eye Health Information for Adults Over 65](#)" on the American Academy of Ophthalmology website, "Your vision changes with time—this is why regular eye exams with an ophthalmologist are even more crucial for preserving healthy vision in your senior years." This is for several reasons. For example, some eye diseases don't have symptoms, some changes in vision don't have obvious symptoms and an eye chart does not measure contrast sensitivity, which is a key metric of visual function, according to the organization.

The [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) recommends that people over the age of 65 have a complete eye exam with an ophthalmologist every year or two. "Keeping up with regular eye exams allows your ophthalmologist to catch problems early. The sooner a problem is detected, the more likely it can be treated.

" It's important during these routine checks that a professional checks for age-related eye diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma and cataracts. Ophthalmologists can even identify other health problems such as diabetes or stroke through eye exams and detect age-related vision changes that complicate your daily activities and routine.

In addition to making routine visits to your ophthalmologist, the [National Institute on Aging](#) offers tips for healthy eyes at any age including:

- Don't be blinded by the light. Protecting your eyes from sunlight by wearing sunglasses that block UV radiation and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Clear the air. If you smoke, stop. While this is easier said than done, there are resources available to help you get there.
- Eat right. Make healthy choices such as enjoying nutrient-dense foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains and nuts, choosing water over soda and maintaining portion control.
- Keep on movin'. Staying physically active is an important part of healthy aging and maintaining an appropriate weight is also key for eye health.



- Pause the screen time. “If you spend a lot of time at the computer or focused on one thing, take a break every 20 minutes to look about 20 feet away for 20 seconds to prevent eye strain.”
- The organization states that it’s also important to maintain normal blood pressure and manage diabetes if you have it.



In addition to these, the American Academy of Ophthalmology says you can help prevent serious vision loss and blindness from glaucoma by avoiding head-down positions (in which your head is below your heart for long periods of time) and avoiding sleeping with your eyes against your pillow or on your arm.

Hats off to National Day of the Cowboy!



This July 27 marks the 20-year anniversary of the founding of the National Day of the Cowboy organization, which was established to preserve cowboy culture and history in Wyoming.

Since that time, the National Day of the Cowboy bill has been passed in 15 state legislatures... and more. According to nationaldayofthecowboy.com, “We saw our National Day of the Cowboy flag fly to the International Space Station aboard the space shuttle, Discovery. We’ve watched as one-day events grow to huge 3-day happenings all over the country. We continue to encourage the establishment of celebrations and to promote those that already exist.



“We’ve said sad goodbyes to friends, donors, spokespersons, honorees and volunteers who have passed away. We’ve had the privilege of learning about and recognizing many wonderful Cowboy Keeper Award recipients.”

Thereisadayforthat.com states “The National Day of the Cowboy was established to recognize the Cowboy culture, which originated in Mexico and progressively spread across the United States. Every year on the fourth Saturday in July, the day is commemorated to encourage people to contribute to the preservation of the rich cowboy history.”

Arizona has a rich cowboy culture. Cattle ranching began to rise after 1880, quickly growing to necessitate the development of the Arizona Rangers. This group was formed in 1901 to stop cattle thieves. Different from sheriffs, the Arizona Rangers could cross county lines to make their arrests, even heading south of the border if needed.

Cowboys and cowhands of this era were generally employees of cowmen, who owned cattle. Cattle were even more prevalent in Arizona than people until the 1950s.

An article on weanimalsmedia.com reported that as of 2023, Arizona had an estimated 960,000 cattle with approximately 80 dairy farms that use 195,000 cows for milk production and hundreds of thousands more cattle living on CAFOs [concentrated animal feeding operations] and ranches throughout the state.

Towns around Arizona such as Tombstone, Bisbee, Douglas, Wickenburg, Jerome, Prescott and even Scottsdale have rich cowboy history that remains a part of each area’s charm.

From exhibits and museums to landmarks and historic hotels, Arizona cowboy culture is alive and well. There are festivals and events that honor the state’s cowboy heritage, from the Rex Allen Days event in Willcox to Scottsdale’s Annual Western Week, which includes time honored events such as the arrival of the Hashknife Pony Express, the Scottsdale Parada del Sol Historic Parade and Trail’s End Festival.





Celebrate National Day of the Cowboy

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Visit a historic museum such as Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the West or Desert Caballeros Western Museum in Wickenburg, stream an old western movie, stroll around

Prescott’s Courthouse Plaza and surrounding shops to pick up a pair of authentic cowboy boots or a hat or take a guided horseback ride. The cowboy lifestyle is a way of life that is alive and well throughout Arizona. On July 27, celebrate cowboy culture and the Old West heritage that helped shape our fine state!



Did you know that July 1st is International Joke Day?

We put a call out to our residents for their best jokes. Congratulations to John Adlesic for his winner: **What can you eat for Breakfast and drink for Dinner?**

Answer on Last Page.



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A Sweet Treat to Beat the Summer Heat

Jayne Reynolds, BCHN®

www.sycamoreandsagenutrition.com

July in Arizona. It's stifling and muggy; the humidity percentage looks more like numbers you would rather see as the temperature and we're actually relieved because it's going to drop from 114° to 106°!

We're doing anything we can to cool down. In the heat, we actually burn more calories as our bodies try to cool themselves down so we tend to reach for cool sweet treats that quickly replenish our carbs and cool us off.

The Trouble with Traditional Treats

A few years ago, as I drove to work, I saw an ad posted at a bus stop. It was a local fast-food company advertising their very inexpensive soft-serve cone. I believe the tagline was "cool is just around the corner." We're inundated with advertisements enticing us to indulge in icy treats to cool us off. And they evoke sweet childhood memories of the ice-cream shop, or a tall, sweet, frosty root beer float.

That brings us to today and begs the question: "What's the problem with the occasional syrupy indulgence?"

The first issue is that most of us can't "eat just one." So the popsicles or the ice cream sit in the freezer and whisper your name until little by little, bowl by bowl, the whole thing disappears. Why would it do that? Because refined sugar is as addictive as cocaine and lights up all the same receptors in your brain!

On top of that, many of the ice creams we choose are full of additives, preservatives, colorings, flavorings, and high fructose corn syrup which are chemical storms in our bodies.

Ice cream's primary ingredient is milk, which is often full of hormones, pesticides, and genetically modified chemicals, and was designed to fatten up a baby cow, so it's kind of hard for us to maintain a healthy weight when we are consuming it.

What Are Our Cravings Trying to Tell Us?

When we crave sweets our stomach, spleen, and pancreas are trying to tell us that we need a little sweet balance in our lives.



When we reach for unhealthy ways to fulfill those needs, we actually throw our bodies further into an acidic state, fueling cravings and making our health worse.

Reaching for something that has a sweet flavor, like mint, bell peppers, carrots, or a piece of fruit is a much better way to bring your body into balance. Or you can take those ingredients and get a little bit creative to make something that will support your body, increase your alkalinity, and bring you to a place where you can heal.



Blueberry & Peach Cream

July is National Ice Cream Month and National Peach Month, and July 8th is National Blueberry Day, so in celebration, this article comes with a simple recipe.

- In a blender, place 2 organic frozen bananas, 1 cup of frozen organic blueberries, and 1 cup of frozen organic peaches, and optionally, add 3 tablespoons of your favorite protein powder. (Makes 4 servings)
- Blend the fruit until it is well mixed. You may need to scrape down the sides of the blender from time to time to incorporate all the fruit back in.
- Once blended, it will be very soft; simply place it in a freezer-safe container for a couple of hours to harden.

This recipe contains 0.6g of fat, 22.8g of carbs, 13.9g of sugars (no added sugars), 5.5g of protein, and 3.6g of fiber.

It's still a sweet treat, but the fiber and protein will help blunt the way your body takes up the sugar. It's wise to have this at the end of your meal to minimize the impact on your blood sugars.



In July, you'll find our family in the heart of Tillamook County, surrounded by happy cows and LOTS of dairy products. Our friends and family take the opportunity to stock up on ice cream while we're there. And while the Tillamook company keeps their products relatively clean, if you compare the nutrient facts of their Peaches and Cream Ice Cream to this homemade recipe, you'll see some clear benefits.

A serving of Tillamook's ice cream contains 10g of fat, 26g of carbs, 22g of sugars (17g of those are added), 3g of protein, and 0g of fiber.



Final Thoughts

Peaches and cream ice cream is a delicious treat, but it's not the best choice for those looking to lose weight or manage their blood sugars. It contains a lot of fat and added sugars, which can lead to weight gain and high blood sugar levels. So be a peach and treat yourself to something healthy to help you beat the summer heat!



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TOAST!

From the Editor



We hope you enjoy this issue. Our newsletter is for residents and others who are interested in learning more about our community as well as important issues facing seniors and their loved ones.

Our goal is to provide encouragement and solutions to relieve the stress of aging for seniors and those who love them.

If you have any comments or suggestions, I welcome you to email me at Tracey.Biggerstaff@christiancare.org

