

Janet's Journal

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Joyful July

Dear [FirstName],

For July's letter, we set aside the heady stuff and focused on the fun and creative! Consider this one a little break, an opportunity to let your imagination run wild. You'll find words you've never heard before, heart-warming stories about dogs finding their way home, and some helpful mental health tips for Summer.

I do hope you enjoy all the fun silliness this letter offers, I sure enjoyed putting it together! If you're thinking about buy or sell, let me know and we can talk about what you have in mind. Believe it or not, we're past the mid-mark of this year and if there is anything I can do to help you host the holidays in a different space, now is the time to make it happen.

In the meantime, I wish you a joyful and carefree month. Until next time!

Best,

Janet Browning

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The Geese, The Gardener, and a Lesson in Compassion

Medical missionary Albert Schweitzer once wrote a fable about a flock of wild geese who shamed a human with their ethical behavior. As the geese rested near a pond one day, a gardener captured one and clipped its wings. When the geese started to resume their flight, the wounded bird tried frantically to fly off with them, but couldn't get off the ground. Instead of flying off without the bird, the flock settled back on the pond and waited.

Fortunately the gardener's clipping hadn't inflicted permanent damage and after several days, the damaged feathers had grown back well enough to allow the goose to take flight.

The flock's loyalty to its wounded member touched the gardener's heart and made him realize that he had been wrong to hurt a bird that had done him no harm.

In fact, as Schweitzer wrote, the gardener "gladly watched them as they finally rose together and all resumed their long flight."



July Question

Q: What country has the most natural lakes?

June Question

Q: What is the largest airport in the world?

A: The King Fahd International Airport in Saudi Arabia



How Lost Dogs Find Home

It's a happy day when a lost dog finds its way home, but how does it get back? A *New York Times* article offers two explanations. One is that a dogs' hypersensitive sense of smell allows them to create a map of scents around their neighborhood, using gardens or grocery stores and human aroma as markers.



In addition, they may be sensitive to magnetic orientation. One study of dozens of canines observed that dogs tend to adopt a north-south orientation when they 'go potty', but that preference vanished when the magnetic field around them was disturbed.

Going Meatless?

Meat isn't automatically on the menu these days, according to the *Lansing State Journal*. A Michigan State University Food Literacy and Engagement poll found that approximately 41% of Americans say they're likely to buy artificially produced forms of meat that look and taste the same. This is up from 33% in 2018.

The survey looked at people's understanding of the relationship between food and climate change. One finding: Fewer than 50% of people surveyed realized that eating plant-based foods can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Meatless meat was originally made from beans, soy, cauliflower, and the like. Newer versions feature plant-like "meat" designed to resemble traditional meat.

But Americans are becoming more open to eating meat-like products made from other sources, like insects. One 2019 poll found that 25% of Americans are willing to try that.

Meat grown from cells in labs are a potential future option, though none are commercially available in the U.S. right now. Still, 35% of Americans say they're likely to buy some when it comes out.

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July Round Up

Canada Day, July 1. Often informally referred to as "Canada's birthday," Canada Day celebrates the anniversary of Canadian confederation on July 1, 1867.

National Stay Out of The Sun Day, July 3. Grab your visors, sunscreen, umbrellas, and long sleeves and give your skin a much needed break from the sun!

Independence Day, July 4. U.S. holiday commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

World Snake Day, July 18. There are about 3,458 known species of snakes living in almost every climatological region in the world - from the humid rainforests of South/Central America and southern Asia to the icy tundra.

Space Exploration Day, July 20. The day in 1969 when Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin first set foot on the moon as part of the Apollo 11 mission.

A Growth Mindset

To get ahead, you can't keep doing the same things you've always done. You have to adapt in order to grow. Here's how to develop a growth mindset (from the *Very Well Mind* website):

- **Believe your efforts matter.** Take a look at your job and career. Look at how you help people. If you understand that your work makes a difference, you'll be motivated to stick with it and do more.
- **Keep learning new skills.** Look for training to expand your job skills, but also look outside the narrow scope of your occupation to pick up life skills. Take a painting class, volunteer at an animal shelter, or learn a new sport—anything that will get you out of your rut.
- **Learn from your failures.** Everyone makes mistakes. The only shame is repeating them because you didn't find out why they happened. Investigate the causes of your failures to ensure you don't make them again.

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Mental Health in Summer

You can reduce anxiety and let yourself go with this advice from the *University of Colorado* website:

- **Let yourself feel everything.** Don't try to force happiness. Allow yourself to feel a full range of emotions—excitement, anxiety, joy, sadness, and everything else. You're able to experience multiple emotions at the same time, after all. You can be excited about traveling, yet nervous about flying on an airplane, for example. Learn to balance your emotions so a single feeling doesn't overwhelm you.
- **Take a proactive approach.** Confront your fears openly. This can be as simple as brainstorming summer projects or just making a packing list for a trip. Come up with a list of friends you can depend on for support if things get emotionally tough.
- **Accept what you can't control.** Things happen. Don't try to take on everything. For example, you don't know what the weather will bring on a day you've planned for a hike, so be prepared with a raincoat and umbrella, or be ready to postpone activities until the day is more welcoming.
- **Find ways to cope.** Practice meditation and mindfulness. Try journaling, or talk to a close friend you trust. Remember that exercise is good for the mind as well as the body, so get outside as much as you can. Spend time with friends and family you care about, and don't forget to celebrate the small victories.
- **Take care of yourself.** Eat healthy food and exercise regularly. Get plenty of rest and sleep, whatever else you're up to. Identify sources of stress so you can take steps to alleviate it before it becomes too much to handle.

A Morning Routine is Key

Are you as productive as you could be at work? It depends on how you start your day. To get off on the right foot, follow this advice from the *Resume.io* website:

- **Empty your mind.** Get rid of extraneous thoughts that might distract you up front. If necessary, write down any ideas or worries, and then set them aside so you can focus on your first task.
- **Don't check your email right away.** Spend 30 minutes or so on something productive before looking at your emails. You'll avoid getting sucked into nonessential tasks.
- **Avoid meetings.** Don't call a meeting first thing in the morning. We spend enough unproductive time in meetings as it is. Block out a meeting-free zone on your schedule, and attend only the most essential early morning meetings.
- **Stand up.** Instead of settling into your chair first thing, take a short walk or use a standing desk for the first 10 minutes of your day. This can help you feel more energetic and empowered.
- **Use Natural Light.** Open your blinds to let in the sunshine. It'll help you wake up and feel more alert. If that's not an option at your workspace, invest in a lamp that simulates sunlight.
- **Set and share deadlines.** Let someone else know when you expect to finish an important task. Keeping it to yourself makes letting it slide too easy. Having someone in on it will help you feel accountable, even though it's just a co-worker with no authority over you.
- **Start one at a time.** Don't try to accomplish several morning tasks at once, no matter how easy they are. Focus on just one, finish it, and move onto the next. Allocate blocks of time for specific tasks, with shorter spans in between for miscellaneous jobs.

Benefits of Day Dreaming

Some people think daydreaming is a waste of time, but it can be a powerful tool for sharpening your creativity. *The Entrepreneur* magazine website spells out why:

- **Motivation.** Daydreaming about something you'd like to do can increase your motivation to go out and do it. It helps you visualize your goals and structure your thoughts.
- **Visualization.** Use your daydreams to go into detail about your goals so you can identify possibilities and options.
- **Problem Solving.** You can't always attack a problem with logic and brute force. Spend some time letting your mind roam. Daydreaming relaxes you and reduces stress, so it might help you spot a solution you'd otherwise miss.

Work-Place Safety Myths

Safety is nothing to take for granted, but too many organizations don't pay enough attention to it because of myths and misunderstandings. *The OSHA Education Center website* highlights some all-too-common misconceptions about workplace safety:

- **Safety training is too expensive.** Yes, it may require some upfront costs, but the cost of an injury to an employee can be even worse, not to mention the potential downtime if your organization has to shut down to investigate an accident and fix things.
- **Accidents will happen no matter what.** Accidents may indeed happen unexpectedly, but that's no reason not to take precautions. A proactive approach to safety will make employees feel empowered to head off potential accidents before they happen.
- **Employees already know how to protect themselves.** Don't take anything for granted when it comes to workplace safety. Training is essential even for experienced employees. Everyone needs a refresher now and then, and changes in tools and technology call for new training so employees are fully equipped to take care of themselves effectively.
- **Offices don't have to worry about safety.** You may not work in a manufacturing plant or warehouse, but the traditional office environment has lots of room for accidents. Trips/falls, falling objects, electrical cords, and health issues associated with sitting at a desk all day are all problems to confront in an office setting. Healthy employees mean fewer sick days and insurance claims.

Fascinating Facts!

You think high school algebra was hard? Try wrapping your mind around these amazing numbers, courtesy of the *Cracked* website:

- To write the largest known prime number in a straight line, you would need a sheet of paper 23 miles long.
- Americans use 100,000,000,000 plastic shopping bags a year, enough to stretch end to end around the equator twice every day.
- A blue whale can eat up to 40 million small krill a day—about 7,900 pounds, which is more than the weight of a Hummer.
- A Rubik's Cube has 45,252,003,274,489,856,000 possible configurations.
- Beetles represent 30% of all known animal species, with more than 300,000 species currently identified.
- People send 205 billion emails every day. If you were to print out each one on a separate sheet of office paper—which would consume 25 million trees—the stack would stretch halfway around the equator.



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