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## How to be Perfect ~ Just be Yourself!

Journalist and novelist Anna Quindlen says when she was younger and in college, she tried to be perfect in every possible way - every single day. She diligently studied for every class, promptly turned in each of her assignments and cheerfully smiled at everyone she passed in the dorm halls.

In a 1999 commencement address Anna delivered at her alma mater, Barnard College, she said that being perfect was hard work - and that the rules had changed. What constituted perfection in 1970 when she started college (sweaters and pleated skirts) had morphed into her new version (khakis and turtlenecks) as she found herself striving to be the ideal intellectual. But eventually, the burden of trying to always be perfect became too heavy for Anna to bear.

She spoke the following to the graduating class:

## When is Sunscreen Not Enough?



Did you know that the medicine you're taking may be making you more susceptible to sunburns? Certain types of topical creams can make users sun-sensitive. But these aren't the only popular prescription and over-the-counter treatments that should make users sprint for the shade.

Other popular medication taken internally can also cause dangerous reactions to the sun - ranging from severe sunburn to rashes. Some of these products include antidepressants, antihistamines, antibiotics or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (ibuprofen). If you take any of these drugs and plan to be exposed to long periods of sunlight, you might want to consult a physician and take precautionary steps to ensure your safety.

"Trying to be perfect may be inevitable for people who are smart, ambitious, and interested in the world and in its good opinion. But at one level it's too hard, and at another, it's too cheap and easy. It really requires you to read the Zeitgeist of wherever and whenever you happen to be, and assume the masks necessary to be the best of whatever the Zeitgeist requires. Those details are ever-changing, but if you're clever, you can read them and do the imitation necessary.

"Nothing important, meaningful, beautiful, interesting, or great ever came out of imitations. The thing that's really hard - and amazing at the same time - is giving up on being perfect and beginning the work of becoming yourself."

Delight in the fact that nobody is perfect - and realize that's what makes you unique.

## Longer Lives Impact Retirement Years

Did you know that the average person's life expectancy has increased by 30 years in the past century? According to CNNmoney.com, life expectancy for someone born in 1900 would be 47 years. But, if that same person were born in 2002, his or her life expectancy would rise to 77 years.

If a couple wants an annual retirement income of \$85,000 and intends to no longer work after age 65, they'll need to have \$838,000 in savings to supplement what they'd get from Social Security (that assumes a 7% rate of return and 4% inflation rate) for 20 years. However, if that same couple lives to age 100, they'll need one-and-a-half times that much (\$1.3 million) in order to maintain that lifestyle throughout retirement.

~ Adapted from CNNmoney.com

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~ Adapted from Redbook

# Holly's Household Corner



*Saving at the Supermarket*

It's a common belief that people are happier when they feel they're in control of their lives. An easy way to create that feeling is to organize yourself by sitting down and making a list before you shop at the grocery store. Creating a shopping list saves time, and more importantly, saves money. Here are some helpful hints you can employ before your next visit to the market:

- Plan your meals out on separate index cards. Once you've created enough cards, not only is meal planning easy, but making your shopping list is simple, too.
- Keep your recipes and shopping list on your computer. It's easy to keep a list of items you'll repeatedly need, and then add to and subtract from it.
- Grab the sale flyer from your local grocery store and base your list on sale items. Simply put check marks by the items you want to pick up and jot anything else down right on the flyer.
- Reduce those expensive impulse buys. Seriously think about if you really need that box of 18 corn dogs.
- Don't drive for miles to save a dollar on an item. Use common sense and factor in the cost of gasoline and how much your time is worth.

*~ Adapted from The Big Book of Hints by Heloise*

# Gardens and Greenhouses

*July Gardening Tips*



- Annual bedding plants benefit from a summer haircut. Stagger your pruning by cutting back one-third of a bed or container each week. By the third week, the first group of pruned plants will be blooming again, assuring some color during the entire pruning period.
- If you keep them well-watered all summer, roses may be fertilized every four weeks until mid-August. This will keep them blooming well into fall. However, if deep watering is not an option, roses can be rested this month. When cooler temperatures arrive, resume feeding and water them for a fabulous fall display.
- Keep birdbaths full and clean them at least once a week to reduce mosquito population. Scout your property for other sources of standing water and dump them out.
- Keep the bees in mind when spraying insecticides to kill the bad guys. Spray only at dusk, when the bees are at home in bed to avoid harming them.

## Seven Qualities Great Leaders Possess

Do you have what it takes to be an effective leader? Experts have noticed seven specific actions that most successful leaders carry out, regardless of the organization or cause they lead:

**Make others feel important.** If your goals and decisions are self-centered, followers will lose their enthusiasm quickly. Emphasize their strengths and contributions instead of your own.

**Promote a vision.** Followers need a clear idea of where you're leading them, and they need to understand why that goal is valuable to them. Your job as a leader is to provide that vision.

**Follow the Golden Rule.** Treat your followers the way you enjoy being treated. An abusive leader attracts few loyal followers.

**Admit mistakes.** If people suspect that you're covering up your own errors, they'll hide their mistakes, too, and you'll lack valuable information for making decisions.

**Criticize others only in private.** Public praise encourages others to excel, but public criticism only embarrasses and alienates everyone.

**Stay close to the action.** You need to be visible to the members of your organization. Talk to people, visit other offices and work sites, ask questions, and observe how employees handle their business. Often you'll gain new insights into your work and find new opportunities for motivating your followers.

**Make a game of competition.** The competitive drive can be a valuable tool if you use it correctly. Set team goals and reward those who meet or exceed them. Examine your failures and celebrate your groups' successes.

*~ Adapted from The Toastmaster*

- If late-winter pruning encouraged undesirable shoot growth, prune trees and shrubs now. Summer pruning is less likely to produce weak growth. Discontinue pruning by August 1st, so any new growth will harden off before frost.
- Mature vines of poison ivy, trumpet creeper, English ivy and wisteria that climb your trees can be killed at this time. Cut a chunk from the vine near the base of the plant, being careful not to cut into the resident tree. Apply brush killer to the fresh cut -- no more than 15 minutes old.

## Buyer's Market!

I have time right now to work with three (3) new buyers and three (3) new sellers.

Who do you know that is thinking of buying or selling a home?  
Please call me with their name and number.

It is a Buyer's Market right now!  
This is the time to take advantage of the abundant inventory that is available.

Thanks for your referrals!

*Referrals are the ♥ of my Business!*

## Movin' Out?

**Pack your bags...there's a new home waiting for you!**

**5076 Fitch Drive** - Clean and pretty 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath colonial built in 2002. Oak kitchen, morning room. All appliances stay, sprinkler & security system. \$209,900.

**10311 Foxwood Drive** - Bright 10 yr. young center hall colonial on 106 x 144 lot. 4 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, Finished rec room and 3-car garage. \$299,900.

**33612 St. Francis Drive** - French country stone & stucco home built in 2000. Very warm, rich decor! 3 bedrooms, loft, den, 1st floor master with glamour bath. Charming! Priced below market at \$359,900.

**16991 Sheldon** - 4 bedrm, 2.5 bath, traditional center hall colonial on half acre+ lot. Mint condition! Enhanced garage and drive-in shed with ample storage for your toys & stuff. \$239,900.

**1549/1551 Warren Road** - 2,770 SF double. 5 bedrms, 2 baths up; 3 bedrms, 1 bath down. Many, many updates! \$175,000.

**1543/1545 Warren Road** - 2,300 SF double. 2 bedrms each unit, 3-car garage. Well cared for and many updates! \$142,900.

**25345 Country Club Blvd** - Well maintained 3 bedrm, 1.5 bath townhouse condo w/sun porch. Within walking distance to mall, library, schools, pool, playground and more. Updated kitchen. \$97,900.

**19815 Trapper Trail** - Do a little, save a lot! Make your investment grow. 4 bedrm, 2.5 bath colonial. Needs TLC. \$234,900.

**4123 Gifford** - Charming and well maintained 3 bedrm colonial with 2 full baths. Updated kitchen & baths, beautiful natural woodwork and refinished flooring. Close to highways. \$99,900.

**4841 Grafton** - Clean and updated. 2 bedrm townhouse with finished rec. rm. Remodeled kitchen & more. \$102,900.



## Positive Thinking Corner

Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit home and think about it. Go out and get busy. ~ Dale Carnegie

You only get a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity so many times. ~ Ike Taylor

I would rather have a good plan today than a perfect plan two weeks from now. ~ General George S. Patton

Do not anticipate trouble, or worry about what may never happen. ~ Benjamin Franklin

They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel. ~ Carl W. Buechner

It's good to be clever, but not to show it. ~ French Proverb



**6788 Beresford** - 2300+ SF tudor colonial with fenced yard. Lots of charm and lots of potential. Bring your ideas to enhance this 1920s home. \$279,900. **PENDING!**

**26898 Redwood** - 3 bedrm Split on park-like lot. 2-car attached garage. Updated kitchen and bath. Newer roof, furnace and A/C. \$149,900.

**5015 Burrell** - 4 bedrm, 2.5 bath colonial. Built in 2003 and backs to private woods. \$129,900. **SOLD!**

## If You're in the Market...

The internet is a great resource for home buyers and sellers. But don't let that replace the importance of using a professional Realtor. There are all kinds of free reports and important topics to learn about; not to mention easy access to see all of the homes available for sale. But this does not mean that you should go it alone! There are a lot of issues that can come up along the way in a transaction that your professional Realtor will know how to handle. Be cautious not to get caught up in a website that is only going to sell your name to an agent. Choose your Realtor carefully. Don't be afraid to interview. Work with someone you like, trust and feel comfortable with.