



ink spots: opinions, news, and reviews from an inkjet

...*"Expecting the world to treat you fairly because you are a good person is like expecting the bull not to charge you because you are a vegetarian."* Rabbi Haskall Kuschner, "When all you've counted on is not enough," quoted in *A Treasury of Jewish Quotations*.

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Reducing our food waste, one day at a time

There's probably a generational difference regarding how we relate to food. Those of us who grew up during the Depression are appalled at the amount of food waste in our culture. When I read the following opener in an *Environmental Nutrition* article, "Paying the High Price of Food Waste," I was startled: "We waste enough food to fill the Rose Bowl every day," says Jonathan Bloom MA, who spoke at an American Dietetic Association Food and Nutrition Conference in Denver. Bloom's website is www.WastedFood.com It's a blog and I jotted down a few of his points:

Why are we food wasters? "We're not taught to value food." Mothers no longer admonish children to finish what's on their plates. Bloom believes that's because food is now abundant and cheap. "Food is at 10% of household expenditures; it's at an all-time low." The US grows enough food to provide 3,900 calories per person per day.

Nevertheless, in the US, 50 million people experience food insecurity and lack access to proper nutrition. That's the population of TX times two.

How can we connect the dots between the amount of food wasted and the one in seven people who go to bed hungry at night? I don't know. Each commu-

nity has its own answers to that question. Ours has a food shelf, and every grocery store offers the opportunity for shoppers to give monetary donations or add non-perishable items to the boxes by the door labeled *Food Shelf*. There was a free community meal with a traditional menu on Thanksgiving at Laura Baker School and another at St John's church on Christmas day. I mentioned Thursday's table, a weekly free evening meal, in my last issue.

But these do not address the food that is wasted in restaurants, unless they are doing something to give it away that I don't know about. Most restaurant portions are two to four times too large. When we eat out, we always box half our orders. Tonight we each had a large field greens salad and Dick's vegetarian lasagne, half of what we had ordered at our last meal out. I had been careful not to put dressing on the half I was taking home. Our server put my leftover dressing in a small black plastic container. I warmed Dick's lasagne in a little organic pasta sauce from a recently opened jar, and sometime later this week, we will have spaghetti and two organic meatballs from our freezer, using the rest of the sauce. I toasted the whole wheat bread that came with my salad and we split it. We had an ample

meal from those leftovers: one half of our eat-out meals fed both of us.

Overeating is a bad habit we need to give up. The World Health Organization worries about diminishing supplies and increased prices in poor countries, while the developed world has "lived through a near miraculous period during which the things we ate seemed to grow only more plentiful, more secure, more nutritious, and simply better. In the second half of the 20th century, world output of corn, wheat, and cereal crops nearly tripled. Yet there is not enough to feed the rich, the aspirational, and the poor in the world. A golden age has been transformed quite suddenly into a global crisis." So writes Paul Roberts in *The End of Food*, Houghton Mifflin, 2008.

"For years government subsidies have held down grain prices, making food cheaper....Ruthless price cutting at supermarkets means consumers have grown accustomed to eating too much." Roberts says that every year obesity causes 400,000 premature deaths in the US. Food has become as deadly as tobacco.

"A fruitful start would be to halve the size of portions in all American restaurants, but most consumers are reluctant rethinkers." Our solution was described above. It

is simple, and we get four tasty meals for the price of two, plus the ambiance of eating out at our favorite local restaurant, which we have enjoyed for 26 years. It is not a chain; I like to say that we do not patronize shiny menu establishments.

By 2015, 75% of Americans will be overweight or obese. That's the headline in a recent *VitaJournal*. According to researchers, if we continue gaining weight at our current pace, being overweight will become the norm. A research team at Johns Hopkins examined 20 studies published in journals that surveyed weight and behavior. They determined that 75% of US adults will be overweight and 41% will be obese by 2015. Overweight is defined by Body Mass Index, a standard medical definition. People with a BMI of 25 or above are considered obese and at serious risk for diabetes, some heart diseases, and certain cancers. Is it any wonder that Roberts says that food has become as deadly as tobacco?

Much as we'd like to see the whole world, and people in the US in particular, waste less food, the answer probably lies with each of us. We can determine to eat less, waste less, and share more. Goethe said, "Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do." May it be so. +++

Simplifying our homes; consolidating our work spaces

“Uncomplicate your daily routine. Eliminate stress at home and on the job. Free up time for the things you love, so you can enjoy life to the fullestChoose from among 1,500 real-world solutions guaranteed to end clutter, complexity, and chaos in your life.” — blurb on the back of *The Joy of Simple Living: the ultimate guide to mastering the simple life*, written by Jeff Davidson, founder of BreathingSpace.com, an organization... devoted to helping people live and work at a more comfortable pace, Rodale Press, 1999.

We rarely bring home mementos from our travels, except books. When we visited our family in Dhaka, Bangladesh, during their Christmas/New Year's holiday in 2004-05, we flew in and out of Bangkok. I bought *The Joy of Simple Living* in a glitzy mall and began reading it on our 26-hour flight home.

According to a Toronto reader of the March 2011 *County Living*, which I picked up in November from the “help yourself” rack at the Dundas post office, Leonardo da Vinci said, “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.”

We've all heard about preaching to the choir. Less common is realizing that pastors are often preaching to themselves. Those who write newsletters about organization and the simple life probably wish they had fewer items to organize. Sophistication is not my goal, but being able to find what we need is. My mother liked to say, “a place for everything and everything in its place.”

The Joy of Simple Living is not a book to be read from cover to cover, though if we were building a house, it could work that way. Since this is our last house, I can use it for fine-tuning the space we have. This morning, for example, I repurposed a long wicker box that I had on the back of my rolltop computer desk. It has dividers inside, and since I put on my makeup by the east window in my office anyway, I sorted all my scissors, nail

files, brushes, etc. into the

lifestyle.” Historian Edward Tenner, PhD, Princeton University, in his book *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*, notes that “corporations had hoped automation would produce the *paperless office*. They put a personal computer on every desk, a fax machine in every corner, and a copier at the end of every hall. Yet the first 10 years of the personal computer revolution (starting in 1985) the use of paper in the workplace tripled.” We have two computers, two printers, one of which is a fax, and we buy paper in 10-package quantities, far too often. Plus cartridges.

At the same time that we acknowledge the reality that as our world grows more complex exponentially, we can decide to wrestle with those complexities. We still don't watch TV, but our family put a *Nintendo Wii* in our old TV so that Dick can get his exercise bowling or playing tennis, a game he has been good at since high school. I've cancelled many of my magazine subscriptions; I'm learning to make better use of the internet. We don't want a *Kindle*. We still buy books, but our local bookstore will give me credit for books I no longer need and I can use that to buy new ones. This is the kind of book I will pick up from time to time and implement some of Davidson's ideas. Even though it is 13 years old, it's a keeper. +++

dividers, threw out items I no longer use, and *voila*, the top of my grandmother's carved oak lamp table now corrals all my face and nail tools in a flip-top box hiding a motley collection of items I only use once a day. Recently, I also repurposed the teak roll-top cassette holder on the far side of the same table. Having long since tossed our cassettes, I now keep all my journaling tools in it: pens, journal, Bible, and *Unger's Bible Handbook*. Because of the dividers, I have to leave it open, but related items I need are in one place, behind the flip-top wicker box.

The twenty-four chapters of the book offer hundreds of practical solutions for eliminating unnecessary stuff and arranging what we need intuitively, so that it's where we need it when we need it.

Wanting a simpler life is “not a New Age fad and it didn't start in California,” though simple living has meant different things to different people. The Puritans, the Shakers, the Quakers, Emerson and Thoreau in the 1800s, the Mennonites and other plain peoples have all promoted simple living and limited consumption. Our generation has “teetered back and forth between conspicuous consumption and the seemingly nobler pursuit of voluntary simplicity, which included ecological notions like reduced consumption, recycling, conservation, and a generally simpler

lifestyle.” Historian Edward Tenner, PhD, Princeton University, in his book *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*, notes that “corporations had hoped automation would produce the *paperless office*. They put a personal computer on every desk, a fax machine in every corner, and a copier at the end of every hall. Yet the first 10 years of the personal computer revolution (starting in 1985) the use of paper in the workplace tripled.” We have two computers, two printers, one of which is a fax, and we buy paper in 10-package quantities, far too often. Plus cartridges.

Q&A: simple, free strategies that can improve your life

Q. How can I combat winter weight gain?

A. In vegetariantimes.com, Katherine Talmadge, MA, RD, says, "In the animal kingdom, fattening up for the cold winter months is critical for survival..... Maybe humans [needed to] years ago when food was inaccessible in winter and shivering in the cold caused us to burn our fat stores quickly. But now with temperature control, [different] agricultural techniques, and a Starbucks on every corner, that leftover instinct just causes trouble. Today, we just fatten up for the fun of it....[T]here are more complex—and controllable causes too. **Physical activity.** When it's cold, we tend to cut back on subtle calorie burning activity such as walks and outdoor chores. These caloric expenditures may add up to a 100 calories not burned per day but this translates into a 3-4 lb weight gain during the winter months. **Sunlight.** About 5% of the population become markedly depressed with seasonal affective disorder (SAD). About 1/5th of us are affected to some degree, prompting increased food cravings in susceptible people, says Norman Rosenthal MD, a SAD expert and author of *Winter Blues*. These food cravings may be the result of seasonal changes in the brain chemical serotonin, caused by the decrease in daylight hours during the winter, particularly in the northern third of the country." To improve your mood and your cravings, you'll want to take advantage of any available sunlight on short walks outside, use brighter light bulbs, [especially *Chromalux*, or *Reveal* full spectrum bulbs, if you can still find them; try Menards], and increase your intake of healthy carbohydrates like sweet potatoes and squash, rather than junk food. Carbs increase serotonin production and enhance a feeling of well-being.

Q. Does the way I sleep matter?

A. Robert J. Rowen MD thinks so. A friend lent me his *Second Opinion: Healing Volume*. I have been trying this, and I am sleeping better:

A 16th century philosopher, Sarvagna Vachana, recommended that you sleep on your left side. Doing so, says Rowen, can improve your brain function, help your heart, and has many other health benefits. [1] When you sleep on your left side, venous blood from the body and the pulmonary system will enter the heart with an assist from gravity. [2] Gravity will also allow easier penetration of blood into the coronary arteries to repair and restore your heart. [3] Sleeping on your left also allows gravity to move the intestines away from the thin walled inferior vena cava, the great vein bringing blood back to the heart from the lower part of the body. Then less pressure is needed for your blood to move through it, speeding up return to your heart. [4] Less stagnation causes less risk of clot formation, reducing the risk of deep

venous thrombosis. [5] Also the peculiar anatomy of the lymphatic drainage from the abdomen into the thoracic cage is enhanced by lying on your left. [6] sleeping on the left keeps blood in the left side of the stomach away from the exit on the right. This allows more complete digestion of any contents still there at bedtime. [7] The liver and the gallbladder, high up on the right, can more easily drain themselves of bile, resulting in less accumulation of old bile in these organs. Pancreatitis is a dreadful inflammation of that organ often caused by bile entering into its duct. Sleeping on your left prevents this by retarding the pancreatic juices from being dumped directly from this left-sided organ into the duodenum. [8] Finally, sleeping on your left allows easier movement, via gravity, of large bowel contents from the right side to the left for elimination the next day. If you sleep on your right, the large bowel may be more prone to accumulating too much food, requiring excess pressure to move it along, possibly resulting in diverticulosis.

Q. Are there any good cookbooks for cooking simple food?

A. I have had a Mennonite *More-with-Less* cookbook for 35 years. Susan Olasky, *World*, October 22, 2011, says the book has sold 740,000 copies. "Its recipes stress cooking from scratch with whole grains, beans, and vegetables. Many of the recipes use less meat than Americans are accustomed to eating." The publisher just released the 3rd edition with updated statistics and nutritional information.

Q. I understand the *why* of *simplify*, but not the *how*. What are some specific ideas?

A. Bradley Wright PhD, whose book *Upside* I reviewed last quarter, says. "How do you pursue a simple life? You can find many practical suggestions online. Just search for terms like *voluntary simplicity*, *radical simplicity*, or *downshifting*. Sociologist Juliet Schor recommends the following strategies: distinguishing between needs and wants, finding support from others, sharing rather than buying, not purchasing things for every holiday and social occasion, [and] spending more time on meaningful activities.....Many of the world's problems today stem from overconsumption. For much of history, humans have struggled against scarcity—not having enough food, shelter, and clothing. Now most people, certainly here in the US, have that pretty much taken care of. At this point in history we need to transition from external constraints on consumption—such as [not] having resources—to internal constraints—*saying no, that's enough, and I can do without*. In some ways, refusing to consume is more difficult than acquiring more things to consume; however, the road to progress is one of voluntary, rather than forced simplicity." To simplify is to consume less. +++

Let's Be Well, Inc

"Skip the fads. The key is moderation." Blurb to introduce the story by Mehmet Oz, heart surgeon. See below.

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currently available and must not be construed as prescriptive. Those who use our materials must judiciously evaluate and compare them with other resources. *Let's Be Well Inc* is not responsible for their use. Those who have physical disorders should consult a qualified medical practitioner. +++

Notable Quotables

- **Fat tax.** "Danes, traditionally big fans of pork and pastries, now have to pay a tax on those and many other favorite foods. The government last week launched a \$1.29 per lb tax on saturated fat, which will apply to all foods with a fat content of more than 2.3%. The measure is expected to raise the price of a bag of chips by 12 cents and a hamburger by about 40 cents. The government projects that the new tax will reduce fat consumption and increase the average lifespan by three years over the next decade." *THE WEEK*, October 14, 2011.
- **The weight of the world.** Obesity has gone global, and overweight kills more people than hunger does. According to WHO, there are approximately 1.6 billion overweight or obese people in the world; at least 2.5 million deaths are attributable to these conditions annually. Nearly 18 million children under age 5 are estimated to be overweight. readersdigest.com, February 2010.
- **80 is the new 65.** "Nearly 3/4 of Americans say they expect to work into their retirement years, according to a Wells Fargo poll of 1,500 middle-class Americans between the ages of 25 and 75.....On average, those polled had saved only 7% of their desired retirement goal, and three in 10 people had saved less than \$25,000." *THE WEEK*, "Making money: what the experts say," December 2, 2011.
- **Hunger is closer than you think.** With unemployment and underemployment on the rise, *FeedingAmerica's* food banks are serving 50% more people than in 2006. Of clients served, 10% are homeless, 40% are in households where one adult works. Because of the deficit, federal nutrition programs are at risk. 600 corporations help. You can help; see feedingamerica.org +++

It's time to re-imagine our dinner plates

When I was about 10 years old, the Fiesta pottery company brought out divided dinner plates. My friend Phyllis had a green one, and I had a blue one. At that age neither of us wanted our mashed potatoes to touch our creamed peas or our chopped Salisbury steak, so it was perfect. I still like Fiesta pottery. I have some serving pieces, and I have 16 bread trays in all their colors, which I use to hold a mug and a snack when I serve tea.

The US Dept of Agriculture has designed a graphic similar to my childhood plate, but we'll have to use our imaginations instead of having actual raised dividers. The MyPlate icon replaces the previous MyPyramid graphic which people found difficult to interpret. MyPlate is easier to understand, and it helps promote the message of the 2011 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Since the new icon builds on a familiar image, a plate, it helps consumers envision how to make healthy food choices in proportions that keep them from overeating meat and other high calorie foods. See icon at left; substitute water for dairy? For more information, visit: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/QandA/index.html> +++

"What to eat now: uncovering the myths about food" with Dr Oz

Every time the cost of postage goes up, I think about scrapping my print newsletter and just writing an internet blog or my e-mail edition. Then I think of the 300 of you who apparently don't use the internet. I wish I could invite you to sit at my kitchen table to fold, and to paste stamps and labels. You could also go to the library and read *TIME's* 7-page cover story, title above, 12 Sept 2011. I don't have room for much, but **here are some highlights:**

There's a history of Dietary Guidelines from the seven food groups in the 40s to the MyPlate icon of 2011. There's a "Not all calories are created equal" chart, comparing nuts to French fries, based on a study showing that over four years, different foods led to different outcomes. For example, **Nuts:** take longer to chew; contain fat

and fiber that need more time to digest; your stomach stays fuller; you feel satisfied longer; so you eat less at the next meal; you lose 0.57 lbs. **Fries:** cooked starch is quickly broken down; cause a spike in sugar in the blood stream; the body secretes insulin, leading to hunger signals; so you eat more at your next meal; you gain 3.35 lbs. There are few surprises in the Oz diet, unless you haven't been reading my newsletter.

Up is down. "Want to get healthy? Forget about diet soda and lowfat foods. Eat some eggs, whole milk, salt, fat, nuts, wine, chocolate, and coffee. It's true. Despite conventional wisdom, all those foods and many more can be beneficial to your body. **But overindulge in them, and they can be as problematic as you have**

always been led to believe." You will want to eat the right kind of fats, which he defines. Some saturated fats, like coconut oil, may be good for you. Understanding fats, has also led to the redeeming of the egg. Most physicians are now comfortable with recommending one egg with the yolk per day as an inexpensive source of protein. Red meat and whole milk have nutrients. "When you take the fat out of milk, you are left with too high a concentration of natural sugars, which interacts like candy with your hormones, especially insulin."

Eat in moderation. Be an omnivore; there are multiple food groups for a reason. "Human beings are in complete control of [our] food supply. The challenge is to make sure that food doesn't take control of us." +++

"The Lord's eyes scan the whole world to find those whose hearts are committed to him, to strengthen them."
2 Chronicles 16: 9; *"The Lord...observes the sons of men; his eyes examine them."* Psalm 11:4

circle of influence

winter 2012

LET'S TALK ABOUT VISION

♥ *Sustainable development is that special kind of development that does not depend on the whims of donors or on the vagaries of political fluctuations or market, but that is anchored in a shared vision that the people themselves can be the drivers of good policy and action.* UN Millenium Project, 2004.

♥ *If each one of you would use the same drive you use in building your business and use it to help others—just think what a force that would be and what a difference you could make for a better world for all.* Mother Teresa, New Delhi, 1988.

♥ *In the developing world, more than 1.2 billion people currently live below the international poverty line, earning less than \$1 per day.*

I believe that the only long-term solution to world poverty is business. That is because businesses produce goods, and businesses produce jobs. And businesses continue producing goods year after year, continue providing jobs year after year, and paying wages year after year. Therefore if we are ever to see long-term solutions to world poverty, I believe it will come though starting and maintaining productive, profitable businesses. Wayne Grudem, *Business for the Glory of God*.

♥ *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* Solomon, *Proverbs 29:18*.

♥ *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* African proverb.

As soon as Christmas is over, the ♥-shaped chocolates appear in stores, and another Hallmark holiday bombards consumers. When we were children, we made our own valentines. What if we did that, or saved our greeting cards from year to year and gave them again? Dick makes the cards he gives me on his computer, and I'm blessed when he has found an old picture from our courtship, scanned it, and written his own thoughts. Dick has a February birthday. This year he will get the valentine card I gave him in 1982, and the birthday card I gave him in 2000. [I date the backs.]

We talk about simplicity. For many people, it's not an option. Charity can be demeaning. What if we could help people provide for their families? For several years at Christmas, we gave animals through Heifer.org/gift so that recipients could not only feed their families but also share with neighbors when the animals reproduced. This year we gave a sewing machine to a family in Asia in honor of our grandchildren and their grandmothers who sewed. We have seen men sewing on sidewalks in Turkey and Bangladesh. The dignity of providing for one's own family is better than a handout. I like to shop for fair trade items, because I know that somewhere in the world men and women are being paid fairer wages for their work, and no children have been exploited to produce our chocolate or coffee. The poor want to be valued, to participate in forming co-ops, not patronized.

Most North Americans we know who have businesses have them because they want to have additional income so that that they can be generous givers. The Mother Teresa and the Wayne Grudem quotes above urge us to pursue our businesses diligently and also help others succeed in having productive, profitable businesses. Some mission organizations use donated funds to provide micro loans that are used to form co-ops that produce and market local crafts; when loans are paid back, others can borrow for the similar purposes. Pioneers.org teaches uneducated women in Southeast Asia the skills to make patterns, and to sew quilts and dolls. Visit www.heartcraft.org

Worldwide, Lions are involved in vision projects, including sending physicians who do eye surgery. A recent Lions magazine noted that when people are asked which of their senses would be most difficult to live without, the answer was universally **vision**.

Recently, I have been using this page to encourage you to try different AIM products. Here's another one: **Just Carrots®**. Without question, beta carotene is the best known dietary carotenoid. Many of us have juiced carrots. There is no doubt that freshly juiced carrots are inimitable. Just Carrots does not taste quite like carrot juice from Champion or Green Power juicers. We have used both, but juicing requires strength we no longer have. Not to mention the mess and the cleanup. At 77, and for the past several years, we have had annual comprehensive eye exams. Although we eat approximately the same foods, my eyes are different from Dick's. He has had cataract surgery; I have not, nor is it on the horizon for me any time soon, according to our ophthalmologist. Dick has been watched for macular degeneration for several years. I think our doctor is surprised that it doesn't worsen. He is certainly amazed every year when he looks at my eyes. Even though my mother and all her brothers had severe glaucoma, my eyes show no signs of it, nor is there any tendency toward macular degeneration. I enjoy asking him, "How do you account for that?" He always smiles and says, "It must be all those antioxidants in your diet and supplementation."

Sometimes when I mention Just Carrots to a BarleyLife™ user, she will say, "Oh, I eat a lot of carrots." Yes, but... Did you know that when you eat raw carrots, only one percent of the beta carotene is absorbed in the body? Did you know that lightly steaming your carrots will break down the fibrous walls and increase your body's absorption to 19 percent? The process of juicing removes much of the fiber, depending on the quality of your juicer. Masticating juicers, like the two I mentioned, produce an excellent juice, leaving behind a very dry fiber. Juicing also adds water to your diet, which is important for the digestion and for transporting of food, elimination of waste, lubrication of joints, regulation of body temperature, and other cellular functions.

So what are the advantages of Just Carrots? Well, it's not messy. Besides, who wants to juice 25 pounds of carrots? AIM's Just Carrots is made from 100% natural carrot juice with only the fiber removed. The powder is concentrated 25 times, which means that 25 pounds of carrots are used to make one pound of AIM's Just Carrots powder. One tbsp provides 420% of the RDA for vitamin A. Beta carotene, by the way, is much more than merely a natural source of vitamin A. It's also an important antioxidant. Antioxidants boost the immune system, and help prevent free radicals from causing membrane damage, DNA mutation, and lipid oxidation—all of which can lead to degenerative diseases, such as cataracts or macular degeneration.

Besides beta carotene, alpha carotene is also found in carrots. In an article in *Cancer Research* [1992], Dr Michiaki Murakoshi, who lead a team of biochemists at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine, reported that alpha carotene is very protective against liver cancer and two-stage lung cancer in mice, and also protective against the proliferation of human malignant tumor cells. Previously, in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, Dr Murakoshi had reported that alpha carotene is ten times more protective against cancer than beta carotene. Dick and I have never been interested in isolated beta carotene supplements. A real carrot has more than one nutrient. For example, lutein, another antioxidant in the carotenoid family, is found in carrots. Lutein is the primary carotenoid present in the macula of the eye. Scientists think that lutein may act as a filler to protect the macula from potentially damaging forms of light; sunlight triggers oxidative damage to the macula. So lutein may be helpful in defending against age-related macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in older adults. Researchers have also found a link between low dietary intake of lutein and risk of cataracts. My sources are AIM's data sheet. More information is available online.

By the way, if you are concerned about your vision, find AIM's **GinkoSense™** on your AIM website, or use ours, <http://myaimstore.com/letsbewellinc>, if you do not have one. You will learn that at one capsule a day, nutrients in GinkoSense can help you maintain your mental acuity, and also address your vision: 120 mg of ginkgo biloba extract, 40 mg of bilberry extract, 400 mcg of lutein, 18 mcg of zeaxanthin, and 2.5 mg of DHA, all from sources in nature.

God's eyes are everywhere present. Ours are finite and mortal. Let's take care of them.

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