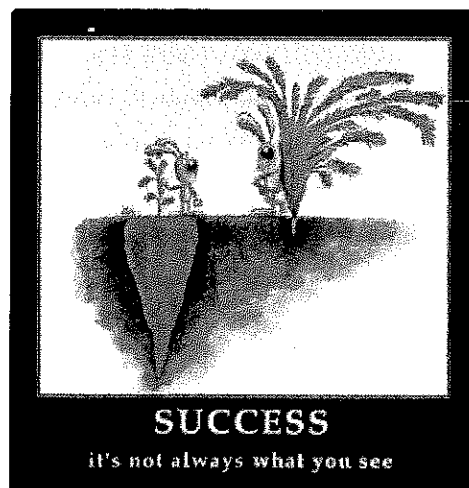


Carrots are symbols of fertility and believed to bring a bride good luck. What area of your life needs fertility?

The bright color of a carrot characterizes the quality of standing out and being unique. Where do you want to stand out?

Harvested from the earth as a root vegetable, the carrot suggests that seeking fulfillment may require a bit of digging or returning to our roots at times. Do you have the patience for this?

Because of its rich nutritional value, the carrot also symbolizes nourishment. Where does your life need more nourishment?



CARROTS

Q: How do you know that carrots are good for your eyesight?

A: Have you ever seen a rabbit with glasses?

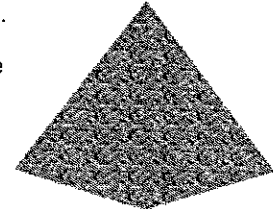
One of the first written evidences of an orange carrot, particularly written in English (and therefore cannot be misinterpreted during translation) is Hortus Medicus Edinburgensis – A Catalogue of plants in the Physical Garden at Edinburgh by James Sutherland intendent of said garden in 1683.

This work makes reference to Orange, Red, Yellow and White carrots, together with the common Wild Carrot. It and also distinguishes them from Parsnip as a separate plant. See extract here). This is a very useful record as it shows what actually existed in the botanic garden in Edinburgh.

DID YOU KNOW:

- Carrot juice is used for many things besides drinking. Ed Ruscha, who is a master printer and artist uses carrot juice instead of printer ink. He has also printed with spinach juice, chocolate and strawberries. Read more about Ed Ruscha here. Read more about the wonder and health benefits of Carrot Juice here.

- a pyramid of carrots containing 3 tons of carrots would be approximately 4 feet square and 4 feet tall. If we take the estimate of 27,500 carrots as 3 tons, and assume an average volume of 1.2 cubic inches for each carrot, then the base of a square pyramid would be approximately 4 feet by 4 feet. The height would be nearly the same. This assumes the carrots on the base are laid out in one direction and alternated for each successive layer. Calculations from Bolthouse Carrots!



- If you dug a hole to the Earth's centre and dropped a carrot in it, it would take just over 40 minutes to reach the middle

- Although, there are many different carrot varieties available, British farmers tend to grow the Nairobi variety, a berlicum-nantes cross, which is reliable, damage resistant and produces a good yield.

Here are Trivia Nos 1 to 45:

- ✂ The Wild Carrot is called Queen Anne's Lace. *Click here to find out why.*
- ✂ The World Longest Carrot recorded in 2007 was 5.839 metres (19 feet 1 7/8 inches) - Joe Atherton, UK
- ✂ The World Heaviest Carrot recorded in 1998 was 18.985 lb (8.61kg) (single root mass) John V. R. Evans, USA See World records page here.
- ✂ The Biggest collection in the world - Romana. *See her own pages here.*
- ✂ There is a carrot pie flavour jelly bean!
- ✂ Both of the words in "Daucus Carota" mean orange.
- ✂ Carrots were first grown as a medicine not a food. History starts here
- ✂ The average person will consume 10,866 carrots in a lifetime see photo here
- ✂ The Ancient Greeks called carrots "Karoto"
- ✂ Carrots, like other food, are travelling nearly 60 per cent further on the UK roads than in the 1970s - read more
- ✂ Carrots flowers are also called Birds nest, Bees nest and the Devils Plague
- ✂ Carrots produce more distilled spirit than potatoes. (read more in this history page - 1788)
- ✂ Le Roi Carotte is an 1872 operetta by Offenbach photo here
- ✂ The crisp texture of carrots is the result of the cell walls being stiffened with the indigestible food fibres cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin.
- ✂ Tobacconists in France used to put a carrot in their bins to keep their tobacco from drying out.
- ✂ Jeff Chipilis, from Cleveland has a collection of over 10,000 carrot items. *See his own page - click here.*
- ✂ The Japanese word for carrot is "ninjin"!
- ✂ In early Celtic literature, the carrot is referred to as the "Honey Underground"!
- ✂ Yes there is a carrot beetle! *more here.*
- ✂ The classic Bugs Bunny carrot is the "Danvers" type.
- ✂ It's a myth that Mel Blanc, the voice of Bugs Bunny, was allergic to carrots - he simply did not like them *More details here.*
- ✂ Carrots are not always orange and can also be found in purple, white, red or yellow. *More information here.*
- ✂ Carrots were the first vegetable to be canned commercially. Napoleon! - read more here.
- ✂ Carrots might unlock the secrets of the universe. *More detail here.*
- ✂ The carrot belongs to the family Umbelliferae.
- ✂ If you dug a hole to the Earth's center and dropped a Baby Carrot in it, it'd take 42 minutes to get to the bottom.
- ✂ Carrots have one of the highest content of beta carotene (vitamin A) of all vegetables.
- ✂ The cultivated variety is classified as Daucus carota, variety sativa.
- ✂ You get between 175,000 and 450,000 seeds in a pound - a teaspoon can hold approximately 2000!
- ✂ The Americans know the wild carrot as Queen Anne's Lace, wild carrot, rattlesnake weed & American carrot.

For example an apple tree flowers, the flower then turns into the actual apple, which in turn contains seeds. Same with a banana, plum etc. Hence a tomato is a fruit.

A vegetable like the carrot, flowers and produces seeds externally, usually in the form of a seed bud from the flower.

Carrot is biennial, flowering in the second year, above ground.

The Peruvian Carrot

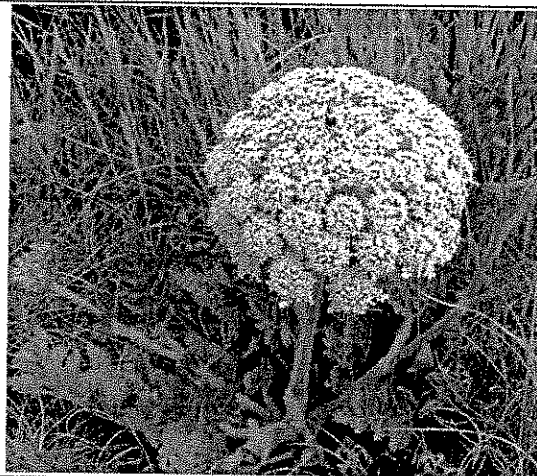
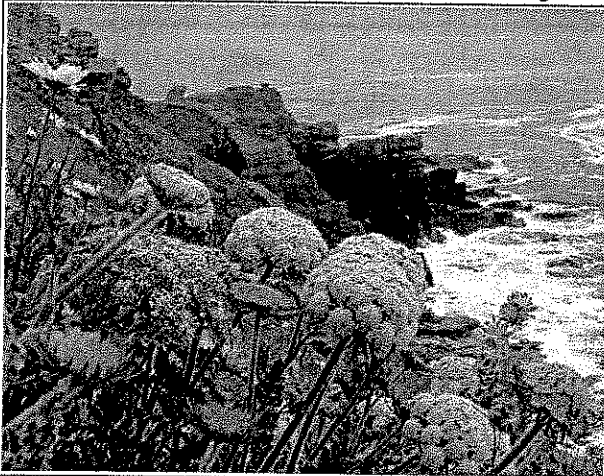
The arracacha (also know as Peruvian carrot) (*Arracacia xanthorriza*) is a garden root vegetable originally from the Andes, somewhat intermediate between the carrot and celery and related to them. Its starchy taproot is a popular food item in South America, especially in Brazil where it is a major commercial crop. The name arracacha (or racacha) was borrowed into Spanish from Quechua, and is used in the Andean region. The plant is also called apio criollo (" Creole celery") in Venezuela, zanahoria blanca ("white carrot") in Ecuador, virraca in Peru, and mandioquinha ("little cassava") or batata-baroa in Brazil. It is sometimes called white carrot in English, but that name properly belongs to white varieties of the common carrot. The leaves are similar to parsley, and vary from dark green to purple. The roots resemble fat short carrots, with lustrous off-white skin. The interior may be white, yellow, or purple.

The Sea Carrot

In the British Isles the only carrot species to grow in the wild is the sea carrot (*Daucus Carota Gummifera*).

It is very similar to Wild Carrot, but Sea Carrot has stouter, more succulent stems, darker green leaves, the fruiting-umbels are more saucer-like in shape and it is confined to the coast. This hairy plant has thick set stems and flat compact umbels with a lilac tint.

The Sea Carrot only grows in the southern counties of England, usually near the sea, where it may be locally abundant. It flowers from May to September and grows to a height of 30 centimetres.



(From: Food collection Bethnal Green Museum – Dr Lankester)

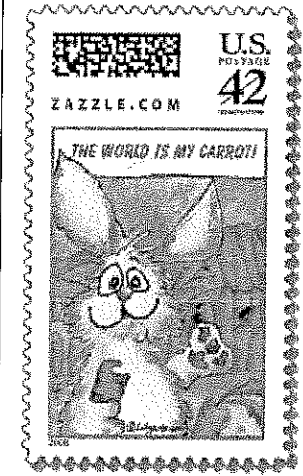
Carrots contain more sugar than any other vegetable, with the exception of beets.

Attempts have also been made to extract sugar from Carrots, but the resulting thick syrup refuses to crystallize, and in competition with either cane sugar or that obtained from the sugar beet, it has not proved commercially successful.

Carrot sugar, got from the inspissated juice of the roots, may be used at table, and is good for the coughs of consumptive children.

From 1 lb. of Carrots we can obtain 1 oz. and 11 grains of sugar

Since the sugars are concentrated in the carrots' core, generally those with larger diameters will have a larger core and therefore be sweeter.




Customised US Postage stamp

Personalize your own message for this cartoon rabbit postage. This rabbit is having some abunnydance.

The world is his carrot. He lives in a carrot house and has a carrot fence. Carrots are his favourite munchie. His friend, the horse, just got him a juicer, so they have tea parties now outside and serve carrot juice.

Life is good, and the livin' is easy 24 carrot-hours per day.

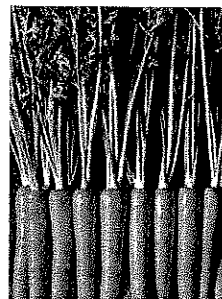
More Carrot Postage Stamps Here

 **Carrot Sunday - The Sunday before Michaelmas 29 September is called carrot Sunday in Scotland.**

On the afternoon of the Sunday preceding Michaelmas, women and girls in the Hebrides gather **St. Michael's wild carrots**. But they don't just dig them up haphazardly - a very special ritual must be observed.

First, triangular holes are dug with a three-pronged mattock; the holes represent St. Michael's shield and the mattock is symbolic of his trident. As the carrots are being dug, the following charm is recited:

*Cleft, fruitful, fruitful, fruitful,
Joy of carrots surpassing upon me
Michael the brave endowing me
Bride* the fair be aiding me.*



After the carrots are dug, they are tied into bunches with red thread. These are given as gifts to visitors on Michaelmas Day. Any carrots with forked roots are thought to be especially lucky.

The Eve of St. Michael is the eve of bringing in the carrots, of baking the struan, of killing the lamb, of stealing the horses. The Day of St. Michael is the Day of the early mass, the day of the sacrificial lamb, the day of the oblation struan, the day of the distribution of the lamb, the day of the distribution of the struan, the day of the pilgrimage to the burial-ground of their fathers, the day of the burial-ground service, the day of giving and receiving the carrots with their wishings and acknowledgements, and the day of the oda - the athletics of the men and the racing of the horses. The Night of Michael is

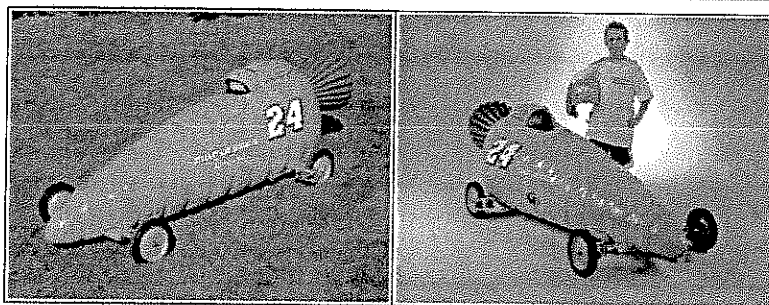
the night of the dance and the song, of the merry-making, of the love-making, and of the love-gifts.

Some days before the festival of St. Michael the women and girls go to the fields and plains of the townland to procure carrots. The afternoon of the Sunday immediately preceding St. Michael's day is specially devoted to this purpose, and on this account is known as Domhnach Curran - Carrot Sunday. The carrot was a fertility symbol usually given from a woman to a man.

An ancient pagan festival, Christianized into the feast day of St. Michael, demonstrates the close relationship of magic to food. Wild carrots, a symbol of fertility were dug in late September to honour St. Michael, patron saint of the sea, a great celebration being held on September 29. The Sunday prior to St. Michael's day the carrots were harvested by women singing special songs, forked roots being especially prized. They were typically dug by removing soil in an equal-sided triangle, using a special three-pronged mattock. They were tied with a red thread in bundles of three and presented by the women to their menfolk. The significance of the number three is believed to have originated as symbolic of the three stages of a woman's life - girl, mother, crone - and later was Christianized to be symbolic of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.



Carrot Soapboxes - You thought you had seen it all - well what about this Carrot Soap Box made for a Soap Box Derby in Vancouver, BC, CANADA. Many thanks to Judson Beaumont Owner & Designer of Straight Line Designs Inc. Great idea Judson.



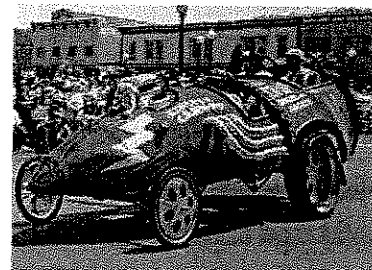
Annual Arrowtown Trolley Grand Prix - near Queenstown NZ

See the Carrot Trolley in action here. ([utube video](#))



Kinetic Carrot Sculpture Cars - Once a simple race down Ferndale's Main Street, the Great Arcata to Ferndale World Championship Kinetic Sculpture Race has grown to become a three-day, all terrain race across 42 miles of roads, mud, water, sand, gravel and more. Held annually on Memorial Day weekend, this local event draws racers and spectators from around the country, and has been televised around the world!

And of course it attracts Carrot Cars! Looks like great fun.



5,139

332

191

38

119

Forget about vitamin A pills. With this orange crunchy powerfood, you get vitamin A and a host of other powerful health benefits including beautiful skin, cancer prevention, and anti-aging. Read how to get maximum benefits from this amazing vegetable.

Benefits of Carrots

1. Improves vision

Western culture's understanding of carrots being "good for the eyes" is one of the few we got right. Carrots are rich in beta-carotene, which is converted into vitamin A in the liver. Vitamin A is transformed in the retina, to rhodopsin, a purple pigment necessary for night vision.

Beta-carotene has also been shown to protect against macular degeneration and senile cataracts. A study found that people who eat the most beta-carotene had 40 percent lower risk of macular degeneration than those who consumed little.

2. Helps prevent cancer

Studies have shown carrots reduce the risk of lung cancer, breast cancer and colon cancer. Researchers have just discovered falcarinol and falcarindiol which they feel cause the anticancer properties.

Falcarinol is a natural pesticide produced by the carrot that protects its roots from fungal diseases. Carrots are one of the only common sources of this compound. A study showed 1/3 lower cancer risk by carrot-eating mice.

3. Slows down aging

The high level of beta-carotene acts as an antioxidant to cell damage done to the body through regular metabolism. It help slows down the aging of cells.

4. Promotes healthier skin

Vitamin A and antioxidants protects the skin from sun damage. Deficiencies of vitamin A cause dryness to the skin, hair and nails. Vitamin A prevents premature wrinkling, acne, dry skin, pigmentation, blemishes, and uneven skin tone.

5. Helps prevent infection

Carrots are known by herbalists to prevent infection. They can be used on cuts – shredded raw or boiled and mashed.

6. Promotes healthier skin (from the outside)

Carrots are used as an inexpensive and very convenient facial mask. Just mix grated carrot with a bit of honey. See the full recipe here: carrot face mask.

7. Prevents heart disease

Studies show that diets high in carotenoids are associated with a lower risk of heart disease. Carrots have not only beta-carotene but also alpha-carotene and lutein.

The regular consumption of carrots also reduces cholesterol levels because the soluble fibers in carrots bind with bile acids.

8. Cleanses the body

Vitamin A assists the liver in flushing out the toxins from the body. It reduces the bile and fat in the liver. The fibers present in carrots help clean out the colon and hasten waste movement.

9. Protects teeth and gums

It's all in the crunch! Carrots clean your teeth and mouth. They scrape off plaque and food particles just

like toothbrushes or toothpaste. Carrots stimulate gums and trigger a lot of saliva, which being alkaline, balances out the acid-forming, cavity-forming bacteria. The minerals in carrots prevent tooth damage.

10. Prevents stroke

From all the above benefits it is no surprise that in a Harvard University study, people who ate more than six carrots a week are less likely to suffer a stroke than those who ate only one carrot a month or less.

Next: Fun facts about carrots

Fun Facts on Carrots

- Rabbits love to eat carrots but they shouldn't eat too much.
Remember that a rabbit eating a single carrot is like us eating over 20! They like the sweetness and carrots are good for their teeth and don't have white sugar but even too too many natural sugars will cause digestive problems and diabetes. They probably would do better with the carrot tops. We would benefit from the tops also but probably won't eat them!
- Carrots are the second most popular type of vegetable after potatoes.
- The biggest carrot recorded is more than 19 pounds and the longest is over 19 feet!
You can see them here: [biggest carrot](#) – but they aren't particularly pretty!
- There are over 100 species of carrots.
Some are big. Some are small and they come in a variety of colors including: orange, purple, white, yellow, and red.
- English women in the 1600's often wore carrot leaves in their hats in place of flowers or feathers.
- The name "carrot" comes from the Greek word "karoton."
The beta-carotene that is found in carrots was actually named for the carrot itself!
- The average American eats about 12 pounds of carrots a year.
That's only one cup per week. We could easily triple that with great benefits if we were also eating a variety of other vegetables.

How To Eat Carrots

The nutrition in carrots are tightly encased in protein sacs that have to be broken by heat (cooking) or mechanical action (grinding, juicing, proper chewing).

Cooking the carrots in fat or oils, or pureeing or juicing them increases the availability of carotenoids by 600 percent.

Fats help the absorption of carotenoids into the blood by 1000 percent as carotenoids are fat soluble.

Recipes with Carrots:



Food Facts



Carrot Facts for Kids

Check out our fun carrot facts for kids. Learn interesting information about the carrot, its use throughout history and different ways carrots are prepared for eating.

Were carrots always orange? What country produces the most carrots? Find out the answers to these questions and much more with our fun carrot facts for kids!

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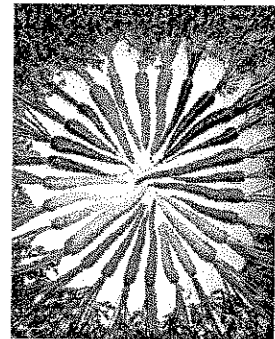
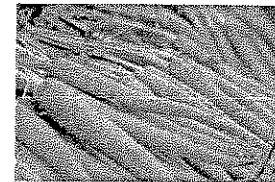
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- The link you are accessing has been blocked by the Barracuda Web Filter because it matches a blocked category. The name of the category is: "advertisement popups"

- The carrot is a root vegetable with the most commonly eaten part being the taproot.
- The carrot is usually orange in colour although purple, red, white, and yellow varieties also exist.
- The domesticated carrot that we know today originated from the wild carrot called *Daucus carota* which was native to Europe and south western Asia.
- The actual plant of a carrot (greens above ground) can grow up to 1 m (3.2 ft) tall and flowers around June to August (northern hemisphere summer) with a bright white flower.
- Cultivated carrots are usually made up of about 88% water, 7% sugar, 1% protein, 1% fibre, 1% ash, and 0.2% fat.
- Carrots are cooked and eaten in various different ways. The vegetable is often pulped, mashed, boiled, puréed, grated, fried, steamed, stewed, baked, juiced or eaten raw. Carrots are typically used in stir-fries and salads but also in soups and added to baby foods or pet foods. They can be dehydrated or deep-fried to make chips, flakes, and powder.
- The natural sugars and sweetness of carrots allow them to be used in carrot cakes of western countries, in India they are used as desserts, while countries such as Portugal use carrots in jam. Carrot juice is widely consumed, especially as a health drink, with or without other fruits and vegetables.
- In fact even the greens are edible as a leaf vegetable although this is rare.
- Ancient Greeks and Romans ate carrots but not the orange varieties we know today, they ate the less cultivated wild varieties of various other colors.
- In the 17th century western carrots first appeared in the Netherlands. Dutch carrot growers invented the orange carrot in honor of the House of Orange, the Dutch Royal Family.
- The orange colour results from abundant carotenes in these cultivars, mainly the beta-carotene which is a strongly colored red-orange pigment found in some plants and fruits.
- The human body turns beta-carotene into vitamin A and carrots are one of the best sources for beta-carotene. Vitamin A is important for the health of our vision (including our night vision) as well as our bones, teeth and skin.
- The urban legend that 'eating large quantities of carrots helps us to see in the dark' was developed from stories started in World War II. British gunners were shooting down German planes at night and to cover up the fact that it was the effective use of radar technologies that was achieving this, the RAF circulated a story about their pilots' high level of carrot consumption.
- The world's largest carrot producer is China, which in 2011, accounted for over 45% of the global output. China was a long way ahead of Russia and the United States who are the second and third highest producers respectively.
- The carrot is in the top 10 of most economically important global vegetable crops.
- It is true that eating massive amounts of carrots can sometimes cause a person's skin to turn yellowish orange. This is most noticeable on the palms or soles of feet and is called carotenemia. But don't worry it requires a high amount of carrot consumption and is completely fixable just by reducing carrot intake.



More Food Facts:

[Apple Facts](#)
[Banana Facts](#)
[Carbohydrate Facts](#)
[Carrot Facts](#)
[Coconut Facts](#)
[Corn Facts](#)
[Fast Food Facts](#)
[Fat Facts](#)
[Lemon Facts](#)
[Mango Facts](#)
[Mushroom Facts](#)
[Orange Facts](#)
[Pineapple Facts](#)
[Potato Facts](#)
[Protein Facts](#)
[Pumpkin Facts](#)
[Strawberry Facts](#)
[Tomato Facts](#)
[Watermelon Facts](#)

Objective :Participants will use the symbol of a duck to remind themselves of the need for detachment

Lesson Plan

1. Ask how participants used last weeks tool
2. Introduce detachment, talking about what it is and the situations where it would be helpful
3. Introduce DUCK Detach with Understanding Compassion and Kindness
4. Talk about each of these qualities asking participants to share a situation in their life that needs these qualities and how they could use them.
5. Summarize and give each participant a duck

[Home](#) - [About Me](#) - [Salvation](#) - [Statement of Faith](#) - [Links](#)
[Testimonies](#) - [Encouragement](#) - [Inspiration](#) - [Message Archive](#)

304th -- Barnyard Duck

The temptations that come before God's children are much greater than that of the world. The people of the world who don't know Christ don't offer the same threat to the devil that Christians do and so he has less reason to bring his temptations before them. Even though the believer has power through the blood of Jesus Christ, if he does not stand in his authority, the enemy will find a way to enter his life through his temptations. It is important that we realize we have a real enemy who is trying to take our life off course and into the course of destruction and death. We must be vigilant in keeping our mind and heart focused on the Lord and determined to not allow the enemy to sidetrack the plans and purposes that God has for us. Through the Blood of Christ and the positive confession of our mouth, we can be victorious over every obstacle of the enemy. (Revelation 12:10-11)

I hope this story ministers to your heart and challenges you to never allow the devil to make you want to quit following the Lord.

BARNYARD DUCK

A flock of wild ducks were flying in formation, heading south for the winter. They formed a beautiful V in the sky, and were admired by everyone who saw them from below.

One day, Wally, one of the wild ducks in the formation, spotted something on the ground that caught his eye. It was a barnyard with a flock of tame ducks who lived on the farm. They were waddling around on the ground, quacking merrily and eating corn that was thrown on the ground for them every day. Wally liked what he saw. "It sure would be nice to have some of that corn," he thought to himself. "And all this flying is very tiring. I'd like to just waddle around for a while."

So after thinking it over a while, Wally left the formation of wild ducks, made a sharp dive to the left, and headed for the barnyard. He landed

among the tame ducks, and began to waddle around and quack merrily. He also started eating corn. The formation of wild ducks continued their journey South, but Wally didn't care. "I'll rejoin them when they come back North in a few months", he said to himself.

Several months went by and sure enough, Wally looked up and spotted the flock of wild ducks in formation, heading north. They looked beautiful up there. And Wally was tired of the barnyard. It was muddy and everywhere he waddled, nothing but duck doo doo. "It's time to leave," said Wally.

So Wally flapped his wings furiously and tried to get airborne. But he had gained some weight from all his corn-eating, and he hadn't exercised his wings much either. He finally got off the ground, but he was flying too low and slammed into the side of the barn. He fell to the ground with a thud and said to himself, "Oh, well, I'll just wait until they fly south in a few months. Then I'll rejoin them and become a wild duck again."

But when the flock flew overhead once more, Wally again tried to lift himself out of the barnyard, but failed. He simply didn't have the strength. Every winter and every spring, he saw his wild duck friends flying overhead, and they would call out to him. But his attempts to leave were all in vain.

Eventually Wally no longer paid any attention to the wild ducks flying overhead. He hardly even noticed them. He had, after all, become a barnyard duck.

Author Unknown

Sin may look good for a season, but in the end there will be nothing left but heartbreak. The devil will keep you longer than you wanted to stay, destroy every gift and talent that you possess and will use you until there is nothing left. I encourage you to be determined in your quest of following the Lord. The temptations of the devil come very subtly and seem harmless in the beginning, but when pursued will ultimately ruin your life. Don't allow that to happen. Stay in formation with your brothers and sisters in Christ and know that following the straight and narrow path is not only pleasing to the Lord, but will also help protect you from the enemy's traps and temptations. (James 1:13-17) (John 10:10) (Matthew 7:13-14)

Read and meditate on these scriptures:

DUCK

Detach

Understanding

Compassion

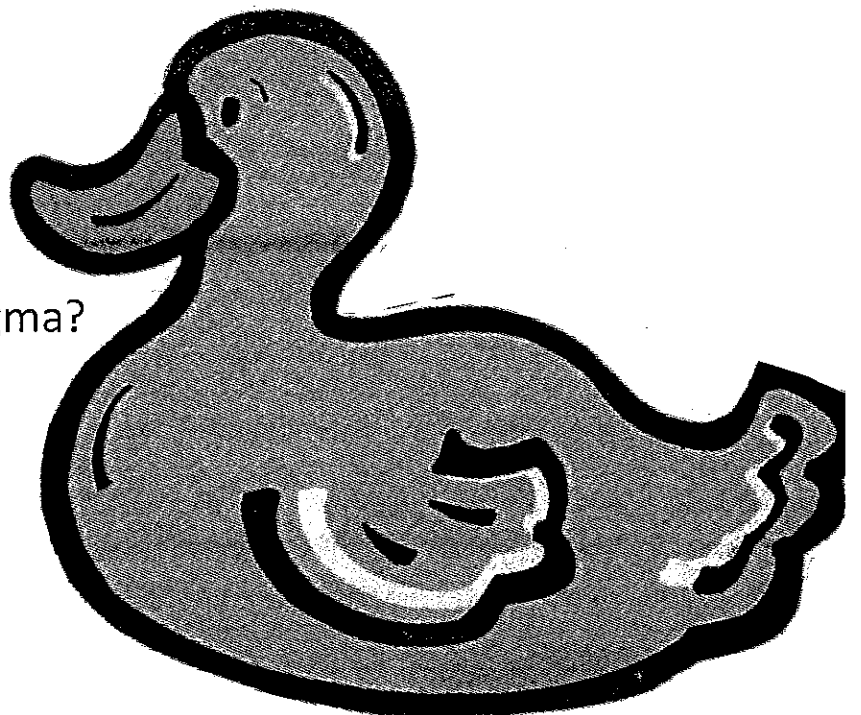
Kindness

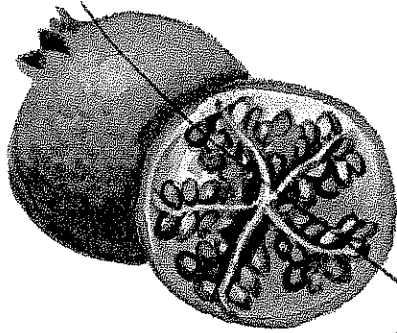
How will you DUCK from the illness?

How will you DUCK from family?

How will you DUCK from negativity?

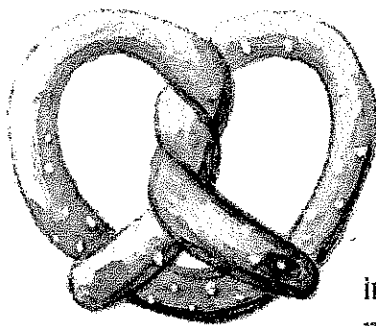
How will you DUCK from stigma?





Symbol of the Pomegranate

Throughout the ages, the pomegranate, with its abundant seeds, has represented fertility, health and rebirth. A symbol of resurrection and everlasting life, the pomegranate is often pictured in Christian art with the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus. Parts of the plant have been used medicinally, and the pomegranate is featured in the coat of arms of several medical associations.



Tradition of the Pretzel

Pretzels had their beginning in the 6th century at an Italian monastery. A young monk was preparing unleavened bread for Lent and creatively twisted scraps of bread dough to resemble arms folded in prayer. He named his creation "pretiola," a Latin word meaning "little reward," and gave it as a treat to children who recited their prayers. The pretzel is often served during Lent to remind Christians of their faith.

*Pretzels
under
desk*



How Did the Pretzel Get Its Shape?

#200 WONDER OF THE DAY

< PREVIOUS | NEXT >



As you're probably already aware, pretzels are a type of baked snack food made from dough. They come in both hard and soft varieties, as well as salty and sweet flavors.

Most pretzels have a signature shape that resembles a knot. The pretzel's unique shape is a symmetrical loop created by intertwining the ends of a long strip of dough and then folding them back on each other, forming a "pretzel loop."

Legend has it that the pretzel was invented by an Italian monk in the year 610 A.D. To reward young children for learning their prayers, he supposedly folded strips of bread dough to resemble the crossed arms of praying children. He called his creation *pretiola*, which meant "little rewards."

Whether this legend is the true origin of the pretzel, no one knows for sure. Most experts agree, though, that the pretzel does have Christian origins.

For example, in the Catholic Church, pretzels held religious significance because of their ingredients. When made with a simple recipe of only flour and water, they could be eaten during Lent, when Christians were forbidden to eat certain foods.

Over time, pretzels became associated with both Lent and Easter. In fact, pretzels were often hunted on Easter morning just like many children hunt eggs today.

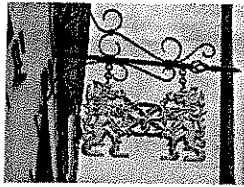
German and Swiss immigrants introduced the pretzel to North America in the 19th century. In 1858, Casper Gloor, a Swiss baker and member of the Swiss Colonization Society, settled in Tell City, Indiana.

He soon became famous for his pretzels, which he baked from a secret Swiss recipe. Today, the recipe remains a secret, and Tell City Pretzels still attract pretzel lovers from all over the world.

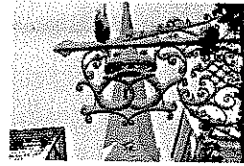
It wasn't until pretzels were introduced to America that hard pretzels came into existence. In 1850, the first commercial hard pretzel bakery opened in Lititz, Pennsylvania. Hard pretzels became popular as a snack food since they were more durable than soft pretzels when kept in an airtight container.

In the 20th century, pretzels became very popular in large cities. In particular, the large Italian-American population of Philadelphia made pretzels an integral part of its local cuisine. Today, the average Philadelphia resident eats approximately 12 times more pretzels than the average American.

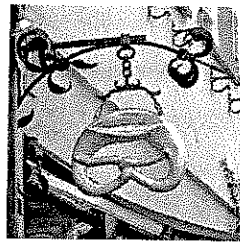
Pennsylvania remains the center of pretzel production in the United States today, making 80 percent of the nation's supply. The U.S. pretzel industry is worth more than \$550 million annually, and the average American eats more than 1.5 pounds of pretzels each year.



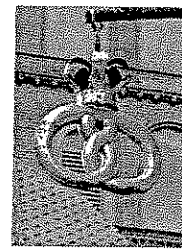
The pretzel has been in use as an emblem of bakers, here with two lions, in Görlitz, Germany.



The emblem of the bakers Hattingen.



Bakery emblem with a cut in Pretzel Ravensburg.



Pretzel with a crown. Royal Bakery emblem in Ribe, Denmark.

Franconia and Upper-German-speaking regions

Pretzel baking has most firmly taken root in the region of Franconia and adjoining Upper German-speaking areas, and pretzels have been an integral part of German baking traditions for centuries.

Lye pretzels are popular in southern Germany, Alsace, Austria and German-speaking Switzerland as a variety of bread, a side dish or a snack, and come in many local varieties. Almost every region and even city has its own way of baking them. Examples for pretzel names in various Upper-German dialects are *Brezn*, *Bretzel*, *Brezl*, *Brezgen*, *Bretzga*, *Bretzet*, *Bretschl*, *Kringel*, *Silserli* and *Sülzerli*.

^[11] Baked for consumption on the same day, they are sold in every bakery and in special booths or stands in downtown streets. Often, they are sliced horizontally, buttered, and sold as *Butterbrezel*, or come with slices of cold meats or cheese. Sesame, poppy, sunflower, pumpkin or caraway seeds, melted cheese and bacon bits are other popular toppings. Some bakeries offer pretzels made of different flours, such as whole wheat, rye or spelt. In Bavaria, lye pretzels accompany a main dish such as Weisswurst sausage. The same dough and baking procedure with lye and salt is used to make other kinds of "lye pastry" (*Laugengebäck*): lye rolls, buns, croissants and even loaves (*Laugenbrötchen*, *Laugenstangen*, *Laugencroissants*, *Laugenbrot*).^{[5][11]} Yet, in some parts of Bavaria, especially in lower Bavaria, unglazed "white" pretzels, sprinkled with salt and caraway seeds are still popular. Basically with the same ingredients, lye pretzels come in numerous local varieties. Sizes are usually similar; the main differences are the thickness of the dough, the content of fat and the degree of baking. Typical Swabian pretzels, for example, have very thin "arms" and a "fat belly" with a split, and a higher fat content. The thicker part makes it easier to slice them for the use of sandwiches. In Bavarian pretzels, the arms are left thicker so they do not bake to a crisp and contain very little fat.^[12]

The pretzel shape is used for a variety of sweet pastries made of different types of dough (flaky, brittle, soft, crispy) with a variety of toppings (icing, nuts, seeds, cinnamon). Around Christmas they can be made of soft gingerbread ("Lebkuchen") with chocolate coating.

In southern Germany and adjoining German-speaking areas, pretzels have retained their original religious meanings and are still used in various traditions and festivals.

In some areas, on January 1, people give each other lightly sweetened yeast pretzels for good luck and good fortune. These "New-Years pretzels" are made in different sizes and can have a width of 50 centimetres (20 in) and more. Sometimes children visit their godparents to fetch their New Years pretzel. On May 1, love-struck boys used to paint a pretzel on the doors of the adored. On the other hand, an upside-down pretzel would have been a sign of disgrace. Especially Catholic areas, such as Austria, Bavaria or some parts of Swabia, the "Palm pretzel" is made for Palm Sunday celebrations. Sizes can range from 30 cm (1 ft) up to 1 m (3 ft 3 in) and they can weigh up to 2.5 kg (6 lbs).^{[13][14]} An old tradition on Palm Sunday dating back to 1533 is the outdoor pretzel market (*Brezgenmarkt*) in the Hungerbrunnen Valley near Heldenfingen.

In the Rhineland region, sweet pretzels are made with pudding-filled loops (pudding pretzels).

On Laetare Sunday in Luxembourg, the fourth Sunday in Lent, there is a festival called "Pretzel Sunday". Boys give their girlfriends pretzels or cakes in pretzel form.^[15] The size symbolizes how much he likes her. In return, if a girl wants to increase his attention, she will give him a decorated egg on Easter. The pretzel custom is reversed on Pretzel Sunday during leap years.^[16] This custom also still exists in some areas of the Swabian Alb.^[17]

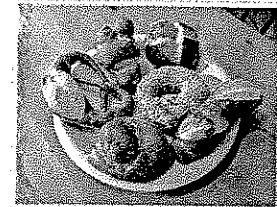
On the same occasion in Rhenish Hesse and the Palatinate, people have parades carrying big pretzels mounted on colourful decorated poles.^[17]

Popular during Lent in Biberach are "Lent pretzels", which are shortly boiled in water before baking and afterwards sprinkled with salt.

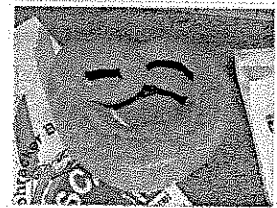
Schloss Burg is renowned for a 200-year-old speciality, the "Burger pretzel". Its texture and flavour resembles rusk or zwieback. A local story says that the recipe came from a grateful Napoleonic soldier in 1795, whose wounds were treated by a baker's family in the little town of Burg.^[18] The cultural importance of the pretzel for Burg is expressed by a monument in honour of the pretzel bakers, and by an 18-km hiking trail nearby called "Pretzel Hiking Trail".^[19]

A variety typical for Upper Franconia is the "anise pretzel". The town of Weidenberg celebrates the "Pretzel weeks" during the carnival season, when anise flavored pretzels are served with special dishes such as cooked meat with horseradish or roast. In the city of Lübeck, the 500-year old guild of boatmen on the Stecknitz Canal call their annual meetings in January *Kringelhöge* (Pretzelfun). The elaborate affair, with about 200 participants, is celebrated as a breakfast with beer, and includes Mass in the Lübeck Cathedral and a presentation of songs by a children's choir. In earlier times, the children were very poor, coming from an orphanage, and each received a *Kringel* (pretzel) as a reward. Hence, the name "Pretzelfun" was adopted, because this gift was considered a highlight. Today, the children come from schools, but they still get the pretzels.^[20]

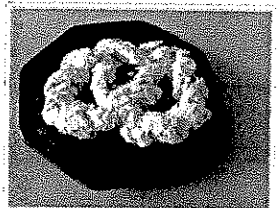
The city of Osnabrück celebrates the anniversary of the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and organizes an annual hobby horse race for grade-four children. On finishing the race,



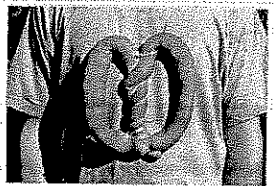
Variety of Southern German lye breads (*Laugengebäck*)



New Year's pretzel in a Stuttgart bakery (Swabia)



Sweet pretzel with almonds



Pretzel from Burg, typically carried around the neck

they are presented with a sweet pretzel.^[21] In Heraldry the city seal of Nörten dates from around 1550 and depicts two facing lions holding a pretzel at the center.^[22]

The lye pretzel is the theme for a number of festivals in Germany. The city of Speyer prides itself to be the "pretzel town", and around the second weekend of July, from Friday to Tuesday, it holds an annual funfair and festival called "*Brezelfest*", which is the largest beer festival in the Upper Rhine region, and attracts around 300,000 visitors. The festival includes a parade with over 100 bands, floats and clubs participating from the whole region, and 22,000 pretzels are thrown among the crowds.^[23] On the market square of Speyer, there is a fountain with a statue of a boy selling pretzels. The pretzel booths on the main street are permanently installed and were specially designed when the whole downtown area was redone for the 2000th anniversary.^{[24][25]} One-day pretzel fests and markets in other German towns are in Kirchhellen,^[26] a borough of Bottrop, or in Kornwestheim.^[27]

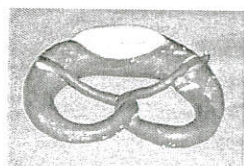


Christmas market in Strasbourg with hot food and pretzel sold

In 2003 and 2004, "Peace Pretzels" were baked for a UNICEF charity event and other charity purposes in Munich.^{[28][29]} Instead of the typical pretzel loop, they were made in the similar shape of a peace symbol.



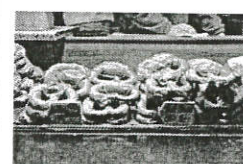
Traditional Weisswurst meal, served with sweet mustard and soft pretzels.



Laugenbrezel, observe the cut.



Fastenbrezel



Pretzels at Christmas market

United States

In the late 18th century, southern German and Swiss German immigrants introduced the pretzel to North America. The immigrants became known as the Pennsylvania Dutch, and in time, many handmade pretzel bakeries populated the central Pennsylvania countryside, and the pretzel's popularity spread.^[30]

In the 20th century, soft pretzels became popular in other regions of the United States. Cities like Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York became renowned for their soft pretzels.^{[31][32]} The key to success was the introduction of the new mass production methods of the industrialized age, which increased the availability and quantity, and the opening up of multiple points of distribution at schools, convenience and grocery stores, and entertainment venues such as movie theaters, arenas, concert halls, and sport stadiums. Prior to that, street vendors used to sell pretzels on street corners in wooden glass-enclosed cases.^[33]

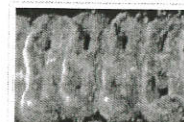
In particular, the S-shaped soft pretzel, often served with brown mustard, became iconic in Philadelphia and was established as a part of Philadelphia's cuisine for snacking at school, work, or home, and considered by most to be a quick meal. The average Philadelphian today consumes about twelve times as many pretzels as the national average.^[34]

Pennsylvania today is the center of American pretzel production for both the hard crispy and the soft bread types of pretzels.^[31] Southeastern Pennsylvania, with its large population of German background, is considered the birthplace of the American pretzel industry, and many pretzel bakers are still located in the area. Pennsylvania produces 80% of the nation's pretzels.^[35]

The annual United States pretzel industry is worth over \$550 million.^[36] The average American consumes about 1.5 pounds (0.7 kg) of pretzels per year.^[37]



Pretzel sticks and varieties



Philadelphia style soft pretzel

The privately run "Pretzel Museum" opened in Philadelphia in 1993.^[31] In 2003, Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell declared April 26 "National Pretzel Day" to acknowledge the importance of the pretzel to the state's history and economy.^[38] Philly Pretzel Factory stores offer a free pretzel to each customer on this day.^[39]

In Tell City, Indiana, the Tell City Pretzels originated over 100 years ago. In 1858 Casper Gloor, a baker from Switzerland settled in Tell City, Indiana. Gloor was a member of the Swiss Colonization Society. He soon became known for the pretzels that he baked from a recipe brought from Switzerland. Today, the recipe remains in use.

Hard pretzels originated in the United States, where, in 1850, the Sturgis bakery in Lititz, Pennsylvania, became the first commercial hard pretzel bakery. Snack food hard pretzels were shaped as sticks (around 3 millimetres (0.12 in) thick and 12 centimetres (4.7 in) long), loops, braids, letters or little pretzels; they have become a popular snack in many countries around the world. A thicker variety of sticks can be 1 centimetre (0.39 in) thick; in the U. S. these are called Bavarian pretzels. Unlike the soft pretzels, these were durable when kept in an airtight environment and marketable in a variety of convenience stores. Large scale production began in the first half of the 1900s, more so during 1930 to 1950. A prime example is in 1949 when highly innovative American Machine and Foundry Co., of New York City, developed the "pretzel bender" a new automatic crispy styled baked pretzel-twisting machine that rolled and tied them at the rate of 50 a minute, more than twice as fast as skilled hand twisters could make them, and conveyed them through the baking and salting process.^[40] In Europe, snack food pretzels are usually sprinkled with salt, but also with sesame seed, poppy seed or cheese. In the U.S., they come in many varieties of flavors and coatings, such as yogurt, chocolate, strawberry, mustard, cheese and others, and chocolate-covered hard pretzels are popular around Christmas time and given as gifts. The variety of shapes and sizes became contest of imagination in the marketing of the pretzels taste. During the 1900s, people in Philadelphia would use the small slender pretzel stick as a common accompaniment to ice cream or would crumble pretzels as a topping. This combination of cold sweet and salty taste was very popular for many years. Eventually this led to the development of an ice cream cone tasting like a pretzel. More recently Mars, Incorporated manufactures M&M's with a small spherical pretzel covered in milk chocolate and candy coated in all of the standard M&M's colors, called "Pretzel M&M's".

Soft pretzels are frequently sold in shopping malls, with notable chains including Auntie Anne's and Pretzelmaker/Pretzel Time.

Pennsylvania milestones

1800s

Southern German and Swiss German immigrants who became known as the Pennsylvania Dutch introduced soft pretzels and pretzel bakery businesses.

1861

Sturgis Pretzel House in Lititz, Pennsylvania becomes the first commercial hard pretzel bakery in the United States.^[41]

1889

The Anderson Pretzel Factory in Lancaster, Pennsylvania is founded. Today it calls itself the world's largest, producing 65 tons of hard pretzels daily.^[42]

1935

The Reading Pretzel Machinery Company in Reading, Pennsylvania introduced the first automatic hard pretzel twisting machine.^[30]

1963

The largest soft pretzel of its time, weighing 40 pounds and measuring 5 feet across, is baked by Joseph Nacchio of the Federal Pretzel Baking Company^[30] for film *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*.

1978

The first machine-produced stamped cut soft pretzel was innovated at Federal Pretzel Baking Company.^[32]

1993

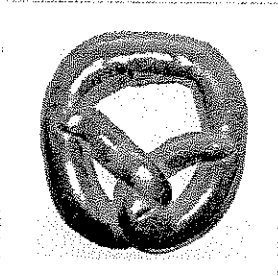
The first Pretzel Museum of soft pretzels is opened in Philadelphia. A 7 minute film, demonstration of championship hand twisting at 57 per minute and tasting were highlights.^[31]

2003

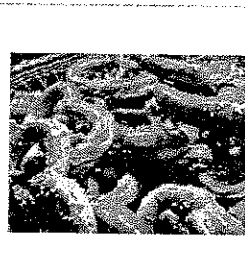
Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell declares April 26 National Pretzel Day to acknowledge the importance of the pretzel to the state's history and economy.^[38]

Other countries

Although not as popular as among German speakers and Americans, the looped pretzel is known in other European countries and in other countries around the world. In the Czech Republic, the pretzel is known as *praclík*, in Finland as *viipurinrinkeli*, in Slovakia it's called *praclík*. The Spanish, French and Italians call it *pretzel*, *bretzel* or *brezel*, the Dutch favor sweet variants called *krakeling*, Norwegian and Danish call it a *kringle*, in Polish it is *precel*, in Hungarian and Croatian it is *perec*, and in Serbian it is *pereca*.^[11] In Romania the pretzel is known as *covrigi* and it's a very popular fast food in urban areas and also as a holiday gift.



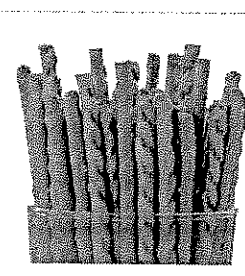
Viipurinrinkeli, a pretzel from Viipuri, Finland (now Vyborg, Russia)



Pretzels in Hungary



French Pretzels in Colmar, Alsace.



Party-food in Japan, pretzel sticks called pretz

In popular culture

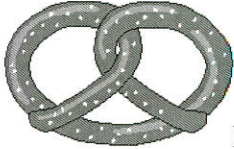
The pretzel has become an element in popular culture, both as a food staple and its unique knotted twist shape which has inspired ideas, perspectives, attitudes, memes,^[43] images and other phenomena. Although historically, the pretzel has influenced culture it has recently been heavily influenced by mass media.

- Landscape architecture and sculpture memorialized the strong identity that the City of Philadelphia had with pretzel cuisine of local bakers and popularity in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Recreation Department renamed in 2004 a facility formerly identified as Manayunk Park, located on the 4300 block of Silverwood Street as "Pretzel Park."^[44] The re-designed park includes pretzel like looped pathways and a public art statue in the shape of a pretzel sculpted by Warren C. Holzman.^{[45][46]}
- Municipal government adopts pretzel logo as trademark by the City of Freeport, Illinois, also known as "Pretzel City USA".^[47]
- Dance steps developed in swing dancing became the "pretzel dance move", which dates back to the 1920s.^[48]
- Furniture Design inspired Pretzel Chair designed in 1952 by George Nelson.
- Amusement ride of the Pretzel Loop design in Roller coaster elements maximizes the g-forces on riders, increasing the "thrill element" of riding a roller coaster. On a pretzel loop, riders are upside down at the beginning, and on their backs and going backwards at the bottom.
- Fashion inspired sling bikini is a pretzel bathing suit design emerged in the early 1990s, as a new fashion product of Spandex. It is a bikini variant, haltered maillot that criss-crosses the front and fastens to the waistline. With the advent of the 1990s fabric known as Lycra, these bikinis first emerged and became most popular on the beaches of Europe, including Saint Tropez, Marbella, Mykonos and Ibiza.^[49]
- "Pretzel Logic" is the name of a single released by the pop music group Steely Dan from their album *Pretzel Logic*, originally released in 1974. *Pretzel Nugget* is a 1994 EP by the Beastie Boys, released on the Grand Royal records label.
- Slang "Pretzelphyte" meaning a follower loyal to soft pretzels; or a soft pretzel aficionado.^[34]
- Ecosystem ecology The "SolVin-Pretzel" because of its shape was the name given to the inflatable United Nations Global Canopy Programme's light weight research platform which is placed on top of the canopy of rainforests to study the ecology below.

Pretzel History

[[Home](#)]

Historically Speaking!



Down through the years we have learned many stories about the origin of the pretzel. One particular story goes.....

Traditionally, *pretzels* are made out of long strips of dough folded over into a loose knot before being baked. They have been shaped this way since the seventh century. Thought to bring good luck and prosperity, pretzels have been called the *world's oldest snack food*.



Invented by monks, pretzels carry deep, religious meanings. The folded strips of dough resemble the folded arms of someone who is praying in the usual manner in those days, while the three holes represent the Christian Holy Trinity.



In medieval times, pretzels were given to children as rewards for learning their prayers. Today, they have lost the religious meanings, but *pretzels are still among the world's most popular snacks*.

[Top of Page](#)

What are the little rewards you give yourself?

What do you want to reward yourself for?

What aspect of yourself do you need to harden so you can become more durable?

What does snack food do for you?

Do you use it with meaning or mindlessly?

Class 2

Objective: Participants will use the image of a rock to talk about the things that are really important to them in their lives and assess how much time they give to these things

Lesson Plan

1. Ask participants how they used the starfish during the week
2. Read the story "Don't Forget The Big Rocks " and talk about the significance using the handout sheet.
3. Talk about how many ways rocks are used in our lives
4. Talk about the rock of resistance if time allows
5. Give each participant a rock to use as a reminder during the week

What are the big rocks in your life?

What is the gravel in your life?

What is the sand in your life?

Are you taking care of the big rocks or wasting precious time and space on the gravel and sand?

Don't Forget The Big Rocks In Your Life

One day an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget. As he stood in front of the group of high powered overachievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz."

Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouthed Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class said, "Yes." Then he said, "Really?"

He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the space between the big rocks. Then he asked the group once more,

"Is the jar full?" By this time the class was on to him.

"Probably not," one of them answered.

"Good!" he replied.

He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel.

Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good."

Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"

One eager beaver raised her hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point."

The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all. What are the 'big rocks' in your life? Your children; Your loved ones; Your education; Your dreams; A worthy cause; Teaching or mentoring others; Doing things that you love; Time for yourself; your health; your significant other.

Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you'll never get them in at all. If you sweat the little stuff (the gravel, the sand) then you'll fill your life with little things you worry about that don't really matter, and you'll never have the real quality time you need to spend on the big, important stuff (the big rocks). So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the 'big rocks' in my life? Then, put those in your jar first.

days like that

Rock Gardens

Rock Pools

Castles

Caves

Churches

Graves

Dams

Rock Walls

Tunnels

Fire Pits

Water Falls

Skipping Rocks

Drawing Rocks

Sitting Rocks

Wishing Rocks

Scooping Rocks

Worry Rocks

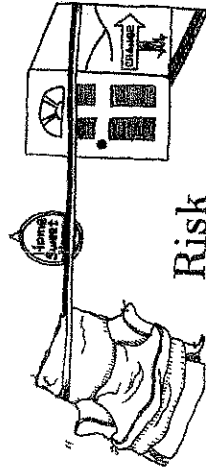
Hiding Rocks

Climbing Rocks

Fossil Rocks

Walking Rocks

An Elastic Band



An elastic band is a tiny item, capable of being stretched or expanded. Sometimes it takes only a minor pull for the elastic band to change. At other times we need to really tug to get the band the size we want. Just like an elastic band, we need to stretch ourselves by being open to both change and appropriate risk-taking in our lives.

Often we need some pressure exerted on us before we will risk growth or expansion. In fact, because we are resistant to change, most of the time many of us would prefer to sit in our easy chair and stay exactly as we are.

"There are only two things in life that

we can be sure of," according to author Dr. Leo Buscaglia, "death and change, and we don't like either very much." Only when we expand, grow, and take some risks do we increase our awareness and

And the day came
when the risk to
remain tight in the
bud became more
painful than the risk it
took to blossom.

— Anais Nin

raise our self-esteem. We then find ourselves enjoying new an life and walking down new streets.

When an elastic band is pulled, there's inherent tension. Outside pressures prompt us to change, we may feel anxious. Perhaps you have a baby on the way, and you need change jobs to make ends meet. It can be difficult learning to live with this tension and balance. Balance is the key ingredient to taking. We want to embrace change, but we want to stretch beyond our capabilities and apart like a dry, old rubber band.

When I talk about risk, many of my clients assume I'm talking only about dangerous, physical risks, such as bungee jumping or mountain climbing. Appropriate physical risk might actually be of interest to you. Perhaps you want to learn to ski or take a spinning class at a local gym. If so, that's fine. Understand, however, that risk-taking can also be emotional, intellectual, financial, or spiritual.

An emotional risk might be telling a person, for the first time you love him or her. An intellectual risk may be taking a class in philosophy of the ancient Greeks. A spiritual risk could be going to a weekend meditation retreat. A financial risk might be a first-time market investment or starting your own business.

Many of the most successful entrepreneurs and millionaires have been bankrupt numerous times. They continued to risk. Walt Disney went bankrupt five times and was never able to raise the money for Epcot Center. Yet he continued to risk and follow his dream

One can
never consent
to creep when
one feels an
impulse to
soar.

— Helen Keller

today ^{has} legacy enriches millions of lives.

The type of risk we are inclined to take often varies with our gender and our personality. For example, after a death in the family, a woman is more likely to share her emotions about the loss than is a man. An extrovert is more inclined to talk to strangers than is an introvert.

The process of planned risk-taking, however, is similar for everyone. First, acknowledge that you want to change. Next, make a decision to take an appropriate risk. Third, make a plan, identify alternatives, and consider consequences. Finally, act and follow through with perseverance.

All things are possible
until they are proven
impossible — and
even the impossible
may only be so
as of now.

— Pearl S. Buck

I moved to Florida in 1990 and didn't know a single person. My dream was to start my own private marriage-and-family practice.

People said, "Are you crazy? You don't know anyone. You have no contacts."

I said, "It's my dream. I want to follow my dream."

For over twenty years, I had been a teacher and guidance counselor in public schools. I always worked for someone else but received a steady paycheck.

I was risking a lot—no salary, no benefits, no support system. It was one of the most frightening and exciting times of my life. I stretched out of my comfort zone in all areas—emotional, financial, intellectual, spiritual, and physical. "Sometimes you just have to jump and grow your wings on the way down." I painted that quote on my

office wall to remind both my clients and me of the importance of risk-taking. Today, after years of hard work and risk-taking, I am blessed with a wonderful, successful counseling practice. I jumped and learned to fly.

Do one thing
every day that
scares you.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

I invite you to expand your comfort zone. Once you take a risk in one area, and you are successful, it's easier to take on a challenge in another part of your life.

Once the elastic band stretches, it may look the same, but it never returns to exactly the same size. It is changed forever. We, too, are changed forever every time we take a risk.

The elasticity of the rubber band reminds us to be open and expand into calculated risks. It reminds us to face fear and just do it. Fear is the greatest enemy of change and risk-taking. Anthony Mello, in *The Heart of the Enlightened*, tells the following parable of Pestilence speeding to Damascus on his way to kill a thousand people.

Upon leaving town, he was stopped and asked, "Why did you kill fifty thousand? You said you were taking only a thousand." Pestilence replied, "I took only a thousand. Fear took the rest."

It is often our fear that stops us from seeing our options. F.E.A.R. is Forgetting Everything is All Right. It takes courage to break out of the fear trap. The word "courage" comes from the Greek word for heart, "cœur." Take heart (courage) and risk changing.

Soar, eat ether, see
what has never been
seen; depart, be lost
but climb.

— Edna St. Vincent
Millay

Activities for Developing Appropriate Risk-Taking

1. Begin the process. ☺

Think of your present life and situation. Can you think of an area in which you need to be open to taking a risk? What can you do today to expand yourself? Use this four-step process for risk-taking:

Step 1: Identify what needs to be changed.

I'm going to die on the vine if I stay in this job.

Step 2: Make the decision to take a risk, and write it down.

I will actively seek and find a better paying job that I enjoy.

I enjoy x, y, and z.

Step 3: Make a plan.

I will:

- Send out letters to friends
- Go to the library and research job opportunities
- Read the classified ads
- Take a course on career development

Step 4: Act and follow through. Take baby steps. If you run into a wall, continue to take baby steps in a parallel direction.

2. Create a risk chart. ☹

Copy the chart on the next page and fill it in with six things you love to do. Check the appropriate column to indicate which category of risk is stretched when you participate in each activity.

Activity	Physical	Emotional	Intellectual	Spiritual	Financial
♦ Tennis	✓				
♦ Study Spanish					
♦ Take Meditation Class			✓		
♦ Invest in Stock Market					
♦ Therapy/Counseling		✓		✓	✓

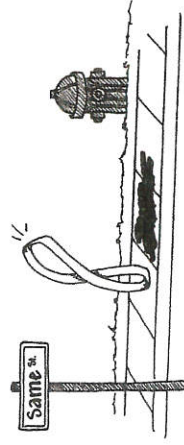
Example: Maybe one of the things you love to do is play tennis, and that physical risk for you. By risk, I don't mean dangerous to your health, I mean challenging. Perhaps most of the things you enjoy fall under the physical & intellectual risk categories, so you may need to take more emotional, spiritual, financial risks.

3. Take small, new risks. ?

Engage in a few small risks outside of your priority area. Do one thing differently today. Listen to new music, and really listen to the tone and the words. Wear different color clothes, or put clothes you have never worn together. Go for a walk in a new place. Take the scenic route to work. Talk to the person in the elevator, the bank, or the grocery checkout line. Try your hair parted in a different place, or wear your hair in a new style. Go to a lecture on something about which you know nothing.

An Elastic Band

Resiliency



An elastic band is a symbol of our resiliency, our ability to bounce back, to bend and not break. The willow tree bends and sways in a storm, whereas the rigid oak may snap in half if the winds are too strong.

We all stumble in life. The challenge is to pick ourselves up, brush off the dirt, and come out of the fall with only minor injuries. We learn to take another street. Obstacles and problems in life often force us to transcend pain, suffering, frustrations, or loss, so we may survive, flourish, and reach our goals.

The anonymous poem on the next page, "Autobiography in Five Short Chapters," speaks to the feelings many of us share about change and our resilient nature.

Much research has been done on resilient individuals, which has helped to turn the focus of psychology away from what causes damage to people (a victim model), and toward an attempt to understand

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS

CHAPTER I

I walk down the street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.

I am lost . . . I am helpless.

It isn't my fault.

It takes forever to find my way out.

CHAPTER II

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I pretend I don't see it.

I fall in again.

I can't believe I'm in the same place,
but it isn't my fault.

It still takes a long time to find my way out.

CHAPTER III

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I see it there.

I still fall in . . . it's a habit.

My eyes are open.

I know where I am.

It's my fault.

I get out immediately.

CHAPTER IV

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I walk around it.

CHAPTER V

I walk down another street.

what makes them strong healthy model).

The Chinese symbol for crisis is a combination of two symbols: one is opportunity and the other is growth. In the summer of 2001, my daughter and I went to China for a month. We took Yangtze River cruise, one the last before the dam was completed and the river was allowed to flood hundreds of villages. Villages that existed for thousands of years would be flooded! The government planned to relocate millions of people, moving them to the side of the mountain higher ground and rebuilding their villages there. My daughter and I were amazed at the positive attitude and silence of some of the villagers we met. They tried to seem to view this crisis as an opportunity for growth.

How many of us could do the same?

In 2004, many people had the opportunity to view crisis as an opportunity for growth. Thousands of people in Florida survived four hurricanes and rebuilt their lives. A tsunami in Asia took the lives of hundreds of thousands. In 2005, hundreds of thousands relocated after Hurricane Katrina. Still, the human spirit re-bounds. It is truly amazing.

Psychologist Sybil Wolin, Ph.D., and her husband, psychiatrist Steve Wolin, M.D., co-authored the popular book, *The Resilient Self*. The Wolins have identified six qualities of resilient people: insight, humor, independence, initiative, creativity, and morality. In their work, the Wolins encourage individuals to discover their "Survivor's Pride," which means to reframe the way they see themselves. People learn to acknowledge their strengths as well as the coping skills they develop during the rough times.

Other research supports the finding that resilient people share common traits.

- They have a basic belief in their ability to set goals and to change.
- They recognize their strengths and see themselves as strategists.
- They have an ability to perceive bad times as temporary and have faith in the future or a higher power.
- They see failure as a friend and try to learn from it.
- They take action to reduce their fear and try not to go it alone.

For a righteous
man falls
seven times,
and rises again.

— Proverbs
24:16

- The most important characteristic of resilient people is the ability to create or expand their circle of support, even if the didn't start out in a loving environment.

One of the most interesting outcomes of this research is that experts now believe resiliency isn't only innate but can be learned.

Every day I work with my clients helping them learn or relearn some of these resilient traits. Many years ago I had a client who was fearful of being on her own. Although she was married to an abusive alcoholic, she believed it was better than being alone. As we explored her childhood, she told me a story that haunts me today, twenty years later. When she was a three-month-old baby her parents left her with a babysitter and went away for the weekend. While bathing her, the sitter had a heart attack and died immediately. This little baby lay alone in the bathtub all weekend until her parents returned Sunday night. No wonder she is afraid of being alone!

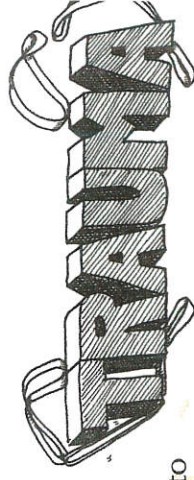
Never give in,
never give in,
never, never,
never...

— Winston Churchill

knowing she was a survivor.

The elasticity of the rubber band reminds us to be flexible and that we can learn to

bounce back from a trauma. An elastic band is shaped like a circle that can be expanded. This reminds us to expand our circle of friends and mentors so we can support one another in realizing our dreams.



Activities for Developing Resiliency

1. Take a resiliency inventory. ☒

Think of your life in blocks of five years. Jot down names of people who influenced you during those years, significant positive events (a great college experience) or challenging situations (losing a job). Certain time frames may have more than one event. Add as many as you like. Note the most growth-producing time(s) in your life.

0-----5-----10-----15-----20-----
 25-----30-----35-----40-----45-----
 50-----55-----60-----65-----70-----
 75-----80-----85-----90-----95-----

Which of the following resiliency traits did you use to bounce back during the rough times?

Insight	Humor	Creativity
Independence	Initiative	Morality

2. Describe a past event. ☒

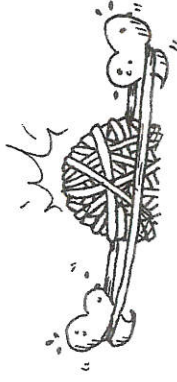
Think of a situation when you were resilient. Then write which resiliency traits you used to recover.

Example: (author's personal story) When I was visiting Washington, D.C., my luggage was stolen from my rental car. I had just been to the Holocaust Museum and realized that the inconvenience of being robbed was nothing

compared to what happened to the people in the concentration camps (insight). The good news was that I didn't have to get in the luggage line at the airport and I got to buy all new clothes (humor). I temporarily fixed the broken window using borrowed cardboard and masking tape so I could drive the car in the rain (creativity).

An Elastic Band

Stretch



The way an elastic band stretches symbolizes the importance of physical motion for a healthy body and mind. Doctors tell us that regular exercise does more than just combat fat and bad cholesterol. It can lift our moods. We can also view exercise as a first-line treatment for depression.

I used to facilitate a depression support group for our local mental health association. Every week we began the meetings with gentle stretches, reaching for the sky, bending and touching the earth at our toes, and then opening up our diaphragms and chests with arm stretches out from our sides. The participants often joked that the session was more like an exercise class than a depression support group. But they soon began stretching on their own as part of their daily rituals and found that their depression lessened.

Emotional support, stretching, and medication might all be necessary to help cure depression. Drugs may help a depressed person feel functional, but exercise helps a person feel vibrant.

When I lecture, one of my audience participation routines goes like this:

“Try it with me now. Stand up and bend at the waist. Look at your feet and say, ‘I’m happy,’ three times out loud.

“Now stand up straight. Reach toward the sky. Look up. Raise one arm above your head, then the other, reach for the stars. Say, ‘I’m depressed,’ as you march in place, looking and reaching for the stars. Do this three times, too. It is almost impossible to be sad when your diaphragm is open and the energy moving through your body.”

Doctors are now handing out written prescriptions that instruct their patients to start an exercise regime. If you have couch-pot tendencies, then exercise regularly with a friend or join a class. Just as an elastic band holds things together, when we have an exercise buddy it helps us hold our commitment together.

Our society is becoming increasingly technological and, as a result, more sedentary. Yet stretching, exercising, and breathing are essential to keep the brain functioning efficiently. The brain needs one quarter of your body’s total supply. It also needs oxygen. You can get a quick boost by yawning a few times or breathing deeply.

My work as a therapist is quite sedentary. I often sit for eight to nine hours a day with only five-minute breaks between each session. This lifestyle caught up with me when I entered menopause. I found

Stimulated by exercise, our life-flame burns with a clearer ray, and we are charged with the joy of being wholly alive.

— Gene Tunney

myself in one of the deepest depressions I had ever experienced. I was almost immobile. In a desperate attempt to feel better, I joined a health club and began to work out. I dragged myself to the club first thing in the morning, got on the treadmill or bike, and began lifting weights and stretching. I'm not going to say that I breezed through menopause, but at least I *breathed* through it with more serenity, lightness, and control.

Now I awake at 5:15 a.m. three days a week and go to a 6:00 a.m.

"aerobics class. The exercise to music in a dark room starts my day in a fun way. Something about the energy from the class gives me a lift. We begin and end with stretches.

Stretching is essential to keep you flexible. Stretches should be gentle and slow. The goal is to ease the tension in tight muscles and work toward a flexible body. Part of any exercise routine should involve stretching. You can do stretches anytime, anywhere, and stay flexible. Try it; you'll

like it!

An elastic band reminds us to stretch, exercise, and breathe for mental and physical health.

Activities for Stretching the Body

1. Exercise regularly.

Find a partner and exercise together. This could be a personal trainer, a neighbor, a class, a group of runners, a dog, or a baby in a stroller. Make a plan to exercise for at least thirty minutes, three to five times per week.

2. Take a yoga class.

Buy or rent a yoga tape/DVD; many excellent videos are available.

3. Stretch frequently.

Stand up and reach for the sky, feel your vertebrae open up, bend forward and let your arms and neck dangle, and relax into the stretch. If you're like me and can't touch your toes, don't strain; just feel the stretch. Bend from side to side.

4. Remember to breathe.

Most people's breathing becomes very shallow or even stops briefly when they are scared or anxious. Take a deep breath in through your nose, hold for the count of five, and slowly blow the breath

An Elastic Band Reminds Us:

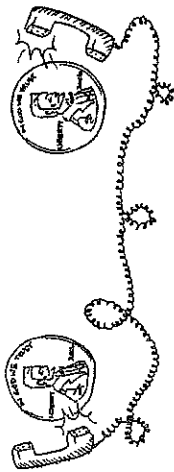
- To expand our comfort zone
- That we can snap back into place
- To exercise and breathe

Describe in your journal what a rubber band symbolizes to you.



A Penny

Communication



When you think about the first symbol, the penny, perhaps the old saying, "A penny for your thoughts," comes to mind. This phrase emphasizes the importance of *communication*, sharing our thoughts and ideas with others. When we share, a listener needs to be present, as well as a speaker. How often in our daily lives do we hear people rattling off their thoughts, always talking, but with no one listening?

Imagine the secrets that stay locked within us because we cannot find someone to open their ears and hearts to hear us. I tell people I have the job in the world; I am paid to listen! My day is spent listening to secrets that people have locked within. I am honored to be able to listen with an understanding ear. I know most of you also have capacity but don't always take the time to listen carefully to what is being said.

To hear(t)
with the heart
and the
heart(t) is an
(he)art.

Cliff Durfee

Try these three simple listening basics:

- Make eye contact. Look at the person who is speaking.
- Lean forward.
- Keep your mouth closed—ears and eyes open. Remember, the same letters are in both words—you must get S-I-L-L-E-N-T to L-I-S-T-E-N.

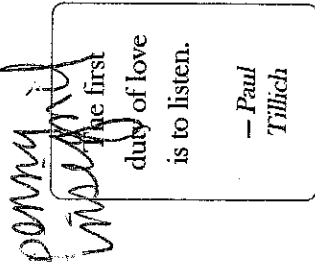
We don't have to provide a solution to their problem or offer a wise comment. Usually, people just want to be heard, so practice listening.

Do we remember to listen to ourselves? A penny for your thoughts and my thoughts, too. How important it is to pay attention to ourselves. When we value what we say to ourselves, others will value what we say to them. So much of our self talk is negative and critical. We compare ourselves to others and usually come up "less than" or "not as good."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could stop the comparisons and be in our own corner, cheerleading for ourselves? We can!

When you talk to yourself, talk in positive terms. Encourage yourself. Compliment yourself. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done. Pay extra attention to what you say to yourself in times of distress or adversity.

One final word on communication. Often in therapy, when couples come in, one partner will say, "I shouldn't have to tell her what I want, we've been together for nine years. She should know." Get serious! No one is a mind reader. We need to take responsibility for ourselves and ask for what we need. Communicate it clearly. We also need to ask other people what they need



from us. So often in relationships, listening and being present are tough. Asking takes courage and trust. So be brave—and ask!

“A penny for your thoughts?” reminds us to communicate clearly.



Activities for Enhancing Communication

1. Learn to listen. 🎧

You have two ears and one mouth. Use them in that ratio.

- a) Pick a day and practice listening. Imagine you have laryngitis and can't talk. Listen for one day without talking.
- b) Actively listen, repeat what people say, and then state your comment.

Example:

Tom complains, "What a terrible day at work!"

Mary responds, "Sounds like you really had an awful day. Do you want to talk about it?" Then she listens. Later, Mary asks Tom for a few minutes to share her thoughts.

2. Understand body language. 🗣️

Your body language can “speak” with more impact than your words. Imagine you are on TV, and watch yourself as you talk to others. Notice your facial expressions, where your arms are, your eye contact. “I love you” said with your arms crossed is a lot different than “I love you” said in an embrace, looking deeply into your loved one’s eyes.

Experts indicate that communication is:

56% body language

36% tone of voice

8% actual words!

Exploring different types of communication. *

Pay attention to the three levels of communication:

- What you mean to say
- How you say it—tone and body language
- How the listener interprets what you have said

Learn and use 'I messages.' *

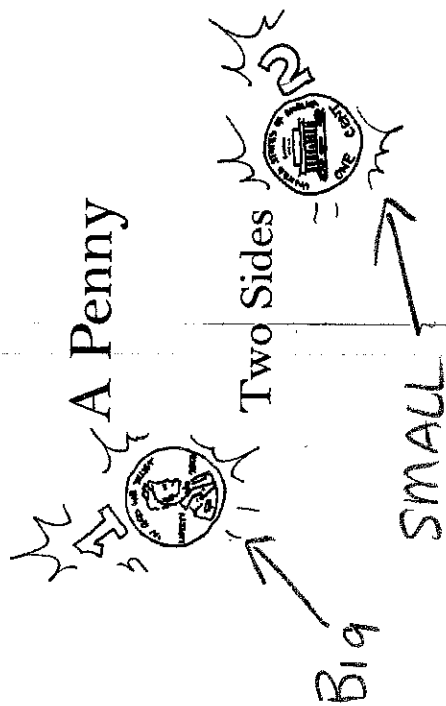
An "I message" is a simple, clear, and effective form of communication, especially when you have strong feelings about an issue. The following format is good for an "I message."

"When you (*describe action*), I feel (*state your feeling*), because (*how action affects you*). What I need from you is (*describe behavior you want from person*)."

This helps the communicator clearly describe the offensive behavior and accept her feelings as a result of the behavior.

Example:

Mary explains to Tom, "When you are late for dinner, I feel scared, because I am afraid you may have gotten into an accident. What I need is for you to call if you will be more than thirty minutes late."



I used to teach a college sociology course called "Love and Relationships." In class, I held up a penny and invited suggestions from the students on how this penny could symbolize something we need in life. One of them, a police officer, suggested, "A penny has two sides, and you need to remember to look at both sides." How true.

Actually, we must remember to look at *numerous* sides of an issue. Brainstorm. Be creative. Explore many dimensions to find a resolution to your problems. Expand your vision. Call in experts, if need be. Talk to friends. Consciously look for viewpoints different from yours.

Consider what your adversaries would do. In fact, talk to people who disagree with you and listen to find out how they arrived at their conclusions. Take in as much information as you can. Broaden your vision.

Minds are like
parachutes: they
only function
when they're
open.

— Thomas Dewar

When I work with couples in marriage counseling, they often get stuck and look at only their viewpoint. I make them change seats, actually sit in the other's chair, and repeat what they heard. Shifting viewpoints is not that easy, but it can make a big difference. If it's hard to understand another's point of view, visualize yourself holding the thought in your hands, away from your body. Don't take it personally. Imagine you are a mediator trying to hear both sides.

The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas.

— Linus Pauling

It's healthy to try to look from another's perspective. It reminds us that people see the world as *they* are, wearing gray-, amber-, or rose-colored glasses. We set ourselves free of judgmental behavior when we choose a vision that respects differences. Everyone wins when we accept one another's right to freedom of choice.

Seeing from another's perspective could also activate your unconscious, and allow you to listen to your inner voice—your intuition. There are some

conscious steps we can take to strengthen our intuition. Listen to your body. Your mind continually sends signals to your body. Try to become more attuned to the twinges—fleeting feelings of intuition. Keep an open mind. Pay attention to details and record what you notice. Developing your intuition takes time and effort, but it provides another amazing viewpoint for your decisions.

Great Spirit, grant that I may not criticize my neighbor until I have walked a mile in his moccasins.

— Native American Saying

Activities for Seeing Different Sides

1. Agree to disagree. ■ ■ ■

The next time you are in a heated conflict with someone, call a "time out" and say, "I guess we need to agree to disagree." This creates a win-win situation rather than a win-lose event. If a decision needs to be made, flip a coin (a penny) and whoever wins gets their way. Or you could solve conflicts by choosing even/odd days: Monday Wednesday, Friday—it's your way; Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday—it's mine. This works great for minor family feuds.

2. Walk a mile in their moccasins or wingtips. ■

a) If you're alone:

To view life from another perspective, imagine you *are* the other person. Stand or sit the way they do. Try to debate the issue from their viewpoint. Attempt to see and understand the issue from their perspective, with their background of experiences.

b) If you're with a friend:

You need thirty minutes for this activity. Follow your friend (literally) as they go about their daily activities. Whether they are shopping or strolling through the park, walk behind and mirror them. Notice their breathing, their body motion or openness, and try to copy it. Then switch roles. Each person follows for ten minutes and then discusses what he or she has discovered.

Brainstorm.

Sit with a group. Name the issue or problem you are exploring. List all of the ways this issue could be viewed, no matter how crazy or ridiculous. Let one idea lead you to another. Keep it flowing, and write down everything.

Example:

My problem is that I'm broke, in debt, and need money. I could:

- *Move to another state where there are more jobs*
- *Borrow from my family*
- *Borrow against my house*
- *Cut my expenses*
- *Have a roommate*
- *Enter a credit-counseling program*
- *Declare bankruptcy*
- *Sell my possessions and start over*
- *Work two jobs*
- *Go back to school*
- *Win the lottery*
- *Start a home business*

No censoring or comments at this point, just list everything that comes to mind. After you have explored all the options and made your list of all the sides, identify the ones you want to attempt, then try them.

4. Enhance your intuition. ?

If you are interested in simple ways to be more aware and develop your intuition, I'd like to share two of mine. When I call my answering machine for messages, before I find out how many messages are waiting, I predict the number I will receive—two, three, four. When I hear the number, I can immediately validate my intuition. Or when my cell phone rings, before I pick it up, I guess who is calling. Try little ways to make daily predictions. Practice enhances our intuition.

A Penny



More Than Luck



“Find a penny, pick it up. All the day you’ll have good luck.” What is luck? According to *Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, luck is “the ability to prosper or succeed, especially through chance or good fortune.” Yet, people who believe they are lucky act very differently than people who believe they are not lucky. It really is a mindset, a way of thinking, believing, and acting, that creates one’s reality.

Our mind has tremendous power to affect our reality. Richard Wiseman, in his book *The Luck Factor*, identifies lucky people as those who are open and look for positive things. They also listen to lucky hunches/intuition and adjust their attitude to *expect* good fortune. They are able to be positive and resilient against misfortune.

In 1914, when Thomas Edison was sixty-seven years old, his New Jersey laboratory burned to the ground. Much of his life’s work went

If you think you
can, or you think
you can’t,
you’re right.

— Henry Ford

up in spectacular flames that night. The next morning he looked at the ruins and declared, “There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew.” Three weeks later, despite losing everything, he managed to finish one of his major inventions and was able to deliver his first phonograph.

What a difference an attitude of gratitude and positive thinking can make! Research shows us that optimists live longer and that positive emotions are needed for long-term memory. Being positive can lengthen our life and help us remember the wonderful life we have had.

So, this “lucky” penny can represent the need to *think positively*. Our society has a difficult time with this concept. From our earliest years, we are taught to think, “What’s wrong with me?” not, “What’s right?” In school, teachers check off all the errors with red ink, rather than putting “C” for “correct” on all the answers that are right.

If we truly wanted to change and grow, we would focus much more on the positive. We would look for the healthy aspects of ourselves and others, rather than the unhealthy qualities. We would be mindful of the words we use and speak only in positive ways to others as well as to ourselves. We would use uplifting words to describe or label—words like “beautiful, smart,” and “happy”—rather than destructive words such as “ugly, stupid,” and “lazy.” Uplifting words create a peaceful environment.

Remember that labels stick. Perhaps some of us have once said,

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me," and suffered in silence from unkind words. Words *do* hurt. They break our spirits, not our bones.

Years ago I heard a wonderful story about a little boy who was often angry and spoke mean

words to others. One day, his father gave him a bag of nails and a hammer. Dad said, "Every time you want to say something mean or angry, go out to the backyard and hammer nails into the fence."

So the little boy did just that. Days and weeks passed, and the boy hammered. It was hard work. Soon he was able to control his anger and his tongue, and he returned to his father and said, "I'm much kinder and not as angry now, Dad. Can I stop hammering?"

His father answered, "Yes, you may stop. But now, every day you are kind and control your temper, please take out one nail."

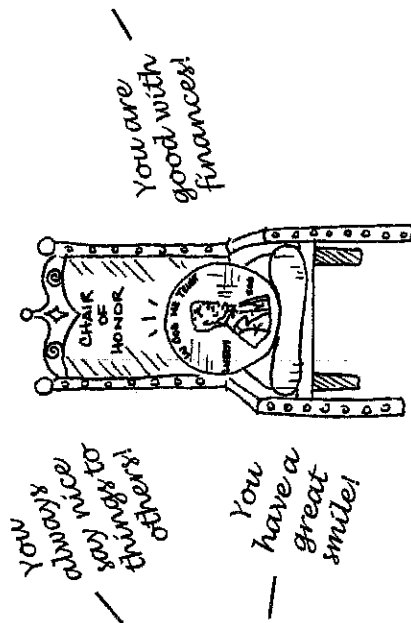
Finally the boy had removed all the nails.

The father took his son by the hand and they went to look at the fence together. "You have done well, my son; but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say mean things, they leave a scar just like these holes in the fence. No matter how many times you say, 'I'm sorry,' the wound is still there."

Research on relationships has suggested that, for every negative comment, we need five positive comments to create a healthy balance. Often, when I have families in for therapy, each family member gets a chance to sit in the "honored person" spot and receive honor, respect, and praise for a few minutes. I can almost see this person growing an inch taller. The honored person must only listen and ac-

cept the positive comments, which is not an easy task. Family members rarely hear such praise and find it difficult, at first, to accept; however, everyone agrees that the positive feedback feels great.

Let the penny remind you to be optimistic and notice the positive in everyday life.



Activities for Developing an 'I Can' Attitude

1. Spend a day without denouncing anyone or speaking negatively. ☹

If we spoke to our friends as we do to our family, we'd have no friends. This Sunday, practice speaking kindly and positively to your family. Try to say only positive phrases:

- "Walk carefully and slowly" instead of "Don't run."
- "Remember your appointment," instead of "Don't forget."
- "I need your help with the groceries," instead of "You're lazy; you never help."

2. Think of your childhood and of all the names people called you (the labels). ☹☐

Which of those labels have stuck? Make a list and rename yourself in more positive terms.

- Lazy—Relaxed
- Slow—Methodical
- Stubborn—Persistent
- Hardheaded—Determined

3. Change the labels. ☹✓

Think of your spouse, child, or a good friend. Turn all the negative labels imposed on them into positive ones.

4. Pay attention to your words. ☹*

For one day, list all the times you say, "No" or "I can't," and all the times you say, "Yes" or "I can." Strive to be an "I can" person.

A Penny

Money Dynamics



A penny is just a penny, the smallest denomination of our currency. It is worth only one percent of a dollar. It is such a small unit of exchange that we rarely pay attention to it. Who stops to pick up a penny on the sidewalk anymore? Often, containers of pennies are kept by cash registers and “given” to customers to help make exact change.

The penny appears insignificant, but it is a reminder of an important relationship—with money. As a marriage counselor, I am often amazed that my clients disclose in dramatic detail their most intimate sexual secrets but rarely reveal their money secrets, concerns, or conflicts.

The relationship with money is such an emotionally volatile issue that it remains too private for many of us to share, even with a therapist (and certainly not with a significant other). This money relationship can be the most hostile and confusing relationship individuals have.

To generate prosperity
in your own life, you
must open your mind
to it.

— Catherine Ponder

The money secrets, buried so deeply inside, begin to grow and control all aspects of our lives. Money secrets can be more destructive to a relationship than a sexual affair. Marriage counselors often identify money as “the other infidelity.”

Our first teachers about money values are our parents. We often handle our money affairs the way we saw our parents handle theirs.

When I was growing up, I remember my parents fighting only once a month—when the checkbook needed to be balanced. My mother wanted to balance to the penny, while my father habitually forgot to tell her about checks he had written. When I married, I decided I didn’t want to fight about money, so we never balanced the checkbook. Not a very wise financial decision, but we never fought over money.

For the past fifteen years, I have been offering money workshops for women. These programs are conducted with financial planners, family law attorneys, accountants, and me (a marriage counselor). I am amazed at the low level of knowledge and interest from married women on the topic of money. They still feel that managing money is a man’s job. Women born before World War II seem to be most in the dark about money.

One of my mother’s friends, Mary, found herself a widow at age eighty. She had never paid a bill or written a check. Mother wrote all of Mary’s checks until Mary died five years later.

One of the saddest money cases I have ever encountered involved a sixty-five-year-old female client from my New Jersey practice. She

arrived at my office one day in tears. Her seventy-year-old husband had just told her that they had no money left. They owned two large homes in very affluent communities, belonged to country and sailing clubs, and had been living very well. He controlled all the money, and she had no idea they were destitute. Her "ignorance is bliss" mentality turned into sudden death for her way of life.

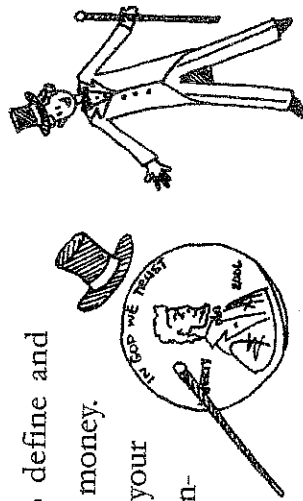
People feel controlled by money, but we are actually controlled by fear. Fear blinds us and keeps us from looking openly at our relationship with money. Anything unknown can be fearful and mysterious. If we keep money locked in the deep, secret vault of fear, it will continue to cause pain and control us.

Money permeates every area of our lives. It represents power, freedom, and security. It defines who we are, where we live, what we do and don't do. It influences our dreams and goals.

We trade the time in our lives for money, so time *is* money. Yet we rarely stop long enough to realize what that means. If I spend eight hours working for one hundred dollars and then go out and buy a pair of designer shoes for ninety dollars, is that what I am working for? If we are going to trade time for money, let's make sure we value the things on which we spend the money, just as we value the time it took to earn it.

The penny reminds us to define and evaluate our relationship with money.

Take control by learning about your finances. Invest in a money management course and take a look at how you might bal-



ance saving and spending. Be grateful for the prosperity that comes your way.

A penny reminds us to pay attention to our relationship with money. If you lead, you can have a delightful dance with money. Enjoy the dance.

Activities for Understanding Your Money Dynamics

1. Watch your expenses. ☺

For one week, write down everything on which you spend money, down to the last penny. Carry a small notebook with you for accuracy. At the end of the week, take a sheet of paper and list your expenses in the appropriate categories.

<i>Basic Needs</i>	<i>Wants/Desires</i>	<i>Pure Extravagance</i>
food at grocery store	movie tickets	chauffeured limousine

What does the week's spending show you about what you value? How much life energy did you trade for wants and extravagances? Were they worth the price, both figuratively and literally?

2. Examine the money patterns you learned from your parents. ☹

Write down the messages they gave you. Now rewrite some messages you'd like to give yourself.

Example:

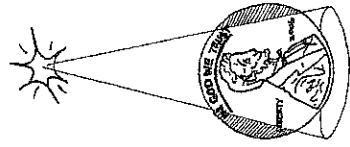
Old Message: "You'll never have enough money."

Rewrite: "I will have all the money I need in order to feel that my life is financially secure."

Write the messages you are passing on to your children. If you don't have children, just pretend you do.

3. Be aware of your actions. ☹ ☹ ☹

Notice how you react mentally and physically when you are in a bank or around wealthy people.



A Penny In God We Trust

One last thought on the penny: "In God We Trust," written on the front side, is a reminder to trust in God or a higher power. What does it mean to trust in God? It means we have faith that there is a larger purpose or order in life.

Our forefathers founded this nation as a refuge for those who were persecuted for their beliefs. To them, the right to choose their religion was as vital as life itself. Over the past two hundred years, religion has continued to play a major role in America, though it has changed greatly. This is a country with diverse religious and spiritual practices.

Spirituality speaks to the soul, the core or center of each of us. Our values and beliefs govern our existence and our actions. For many, these beliefs are private; others are more vocal. But almost all of us hold our spiritual notions dear to our hearts.

The most beautiful
thing we can experience
is the mysterious. It is
the source of all true art
and science.

— *Albert Einstein*

Some people express their spirituality through prayer, meditation, or the reading of scriptures. For others, art, literature, or music can speak to the soul. Many find spiritual awakening in their connection to nature or animals. Spirituality can be a combination of any and all of these. The renewal of our spirit through our spirituality refreshes our being and keeps us moving forward. It transforms our daily lives to a more meaningful existence of connection and oneness.

We are not human
beings having a
spiritual experience.
We are spiritual
beings having a
human experience.

— *Teilhard de Chardin*

Spirituality and prayer possess proven benefits. A Duke University study in 2002 found that people with strong spiritual beliefs tend to live longer, are more energetic, and less likely to feel depressed or anxious.

People who pray or meditate experience the relaxation response—a drop in blood pressure, heart rate, and levels of stress hormones. In the brain, alpha and theta waves increase, suggesting deeper relaxation levels. Every day more research studies conducted by major teaching universities are validating the effect of prayer and meditation on healing.

Many of us have our own experiences to share. Several years ago, when my mother was eighty-nine years old, she was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer and given three to six months to live. We explored many treatment options, but she made the decision to continue her life without any medical treatments. She had been blessed with a vibrant, healthy life to that point and hoped to make it to her ninetieth birthday. Mother continued her active daily schedule that started every day with morning mass. Her name was put on every

prayer. Regardless of denomination—Baptist, Jewish, Unitarian, Buddhist—all prayed and meditated for her healing. Today, at ninety-five, she still sprinkles our life with her energy and love, as well as two to three Italian meals a week!

More and more, we are a society that values spiritual knowledge. Two years ago I was flying from Frankfurt, Germany, to Rome, Italy. I sat next to a nice young man, and we began talking. He said that he was a caretaker for Sir John Templeton's estate and that Sir John Templeton had set aside thirty million dollars a year to fund scientific projects exploring the nature of God.

One look at the bestseller list in recent years shows a society clamoring for insight into our inner

lives, our souls, and even life after death.

Mother Teresa said, "We need to find God, and He cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature—trees, flowers, grass—grows in silence; see the stars, the moon, the sun, how they move in silence. We need silence to be able to touch our souls."

The "In God We Trust" inscription on a penny reminds us to trust in a higher power.

The real voyage of
discovery consists not
in seeking new
landscapes but in
having new eyes.

— Marcel Proust

Activities for Developing Spiritual Insight

1. Let a circle represent your life. O

There are four aspects of life to consider: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Divide the circle to show how much time you spend daily in each area. Do you feel comfortable with the division? What would you change? This week, make an effort to spend more time on your spiritual life and notice how it feels.

2. Take a spiritual inventory.

What do you believe regarding reincarnation, life after death, tithing, angels, God, many gods, the Ten Commandments, Jesus as Savior, Buddha, Krishna, Mohammed, karma, faith, prayer, meditation, or the rosary?

3. Define your spirituality.

What role does religion or spirituality play in your life? How do you define your spiritual life? What is your core spiritual belief? How important is it to you? Write a spiritual mission statement. Include any thoughts that are important to you.

4. Describe your spiritual day.

Notice how your religious and/or spiritual beliefs manifest themselves in your daily life: in how you treat people, for instance, or in

...and, charitable giving, etc. Do you feel any conflicts between your beliefs and your actions or your beliefs and your desires?

Example:

I'd like to try the ham sandwich at my favorite deli, but eating ham goes against my religion.

5. **Learn about the spiritual lives of others.** ☞

The next time you're with friends, ask them about their spiritual beliefs. Share who you are spiritually with a friend or family member and describe how your beliefs affect your daily life.

6. **Peruse collections of spiritual books.** 📖

Browse through the spirituality section of your local bookstore and library. Read a copy of *Spirituality & Health* magazine.

A Penny Reminds Us.

- To share our thoughts and listen with our ears and heart
- To look at both sides
- To develop an "I can," positive view of life
- To define and evaluate our relationship with money
- To develop and expand our spiritual insight

Please write down what a penny symbolizes to you. Keep a notebook or use the *Everyday Symbols for Joyful Living* workbook.

Example:

Little things, like the penny, mean a lot. I need to pay more attention to little things like a smile, a "hello," a "thank you"—the basic courtesies of life.

