

BREXIT AFTERMATH

In 2016, The United Kingdom held a referendum and voted to leave the European Union. It officially left the union on 31 January 2020, but many things stayed the same until the end of the year. On 24 December 2020, after long negotiations, both sides agreed on the terms of a new trade deal. Therefore, it is only now that many people are starting to realize the actual consequences of leaving the EU. Britain now must deal with a slowed-down economy, the end of free movement within the EU, and rising Scottish separatism.

One of the biggest challenges the United Kingdom now faces is the damage to its economic growth. Despite the free trade agreement between the U.K. and EU, immediate impacts can already be seen. For example, many businesses have moved their headquarters to the EU, and EU-born workers have left the U.K. causing employers a harder time finding applicants. Additionally, the British pound fell and has not regained its pre-Brexit high. By 2057, Britain must also pay a "divorce bill" of 25 billion pounds to fulfill remaining financial commitments. Furthermore, it is estimated that Brexit will lower the U.K.'s growth by up to 6.7% over 15 years, and many economists agree that Brexit is likely to reduce the U.K.'s real per-capita income level.

Secondly, the free movement between the United Kingdom and European Union has ended. Not only do travelers between the EU and the U.K. now need passports at the border, but European nationals already living in the U.K. must make sure they have documents specifically allowing them to remain. Complications can also arise for EU students studying at Britain's universities. The EU is checking paperwork at the border from day one as well. Ironically enough, the father of Boris Johnson, the pro-Brexit U.K. prime minister, applied for French citizenship in the wake of Brexit.



Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-50813510>

Lastly, Brexit gave a rise to Scottish separatism. Scotland voted overwhelmingly against Brexit in the referendum. The Scottish government and general public believed that staying in the EU was the best option for Scotland, and many people feel like they were dragged out against their will. The plan is to leave the

United Kingdom and rejoin the European Union. If the referendum for Scottish independence would be held today, it would have a high chance of succeeding. Polls suggest that 54% of the public is in favor of independence. However, prime minister Boris Johnson argues that a referendum is a once-in-a-generation opportunity and the Scots already had their referendum in 2014 where 55% of Scots voted to remain.



Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/25/world/europe/brexit-uk-eu-agreement.html>

All in all, right now the United Kingdom has to deal with the aftermath of their decision - from a damaged economy and relations with Europe to a significant clash between the British and Scottish governments over whether another independence referendum should be held. So even with Brexit being finished, this is probably not the last time we hear about it.

ŠÁRKA NEUMANNOVÁ

EDITORS' NOTE

Dear readers,
As the pandemic continues, we all understand (and know from experience) that things can get overwhelming - headlines, new restrictions to follow...you name it. And this is exactly what led us to write about other, equally as important issues of the world in this edition. The discussed topics are, without a doubt, influenced by the pandemic, but not talked about enough during the COVID-19 information overload.

Let this edition serve as an in-depth overview of global issues that reach beyond the pandemic. Šárka explores the current situation in the United Kingdom after Brexit, Adéla focuses on all you need to know about the Myanmar coup, Sofi answers her initial question by explaining the situation in Russia and Matěj talks about what many consider to be "the largest humanitarian crisis", uncovering the harsh conditions of the Yemen civil war.

In short - we got it all covered! We hope you enjoy reading this edition and shift your attention to something else during these challenging times, through which we will, sooner or later, surely get through.

JULIE SEDLÁKOVÁ AND
ADÉLA ARCHALOUSOVÁ

MYANMAR COUP OVERVIEW

Myanmar, a country known widely for its previous name, Burma, is one of the poorest and most dangerous countries in southeast Asia. After Myanmar declared its independence from British rule after World War Two, Myanmar's citizens have endured a great deal of suffering. From 1962 until 2011, a military dictatorship ruled the country, which has caused the country to have a bad reputation. It was a dark period in the history of Myanmar, afterward, the country tried hard to recover with several new reforms leading to a more democratic régime.



Source: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/02/myanmar-coup-biden-response-democracy-promotion/>

However, on February 1, 2021, the Myanmar coup took place, and the military, called Tatmadaw, seized control over the country once again. The civilian government, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, a famous fighter for democracy awarded with a Nobel Peace Prize in 1992, has been arrested. Tatmadaw has given a reason for the coup to be due to the elections, which took place in November of last year, and the military has accused them of being fraudulent. Yet the commission found the elections legitimate, with a major victory of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD).

After February 1, a one-year-long emergency state has been installed in the country, followed by cutting off the internet and further social media bans. Some social media platforms, such as Facebook, have answered these restrictions by banning military officials from their sites as a form of protest, for

their published content has been labeled as highly dangerous.

The imprisonment of government officials has caused the public to begin to protest for their release, which however led to a violent response from Tatmadaw. On February 8, restrictions on gathering were imposed, but their effect was minimal as the violence escalates and several protesters got already killed or wounded.

Lately, the Myanmar ambassador for the UN, who spoke in the name of Aung San Suu Kyi's government, has made an effort to help end the coup. In his speech on February 27, he urged the UN to use all possible forces to halt the coup. Afterward, Tatmadaw fired him, which enraged the public even more and led to the most violent protests yet. Today on February 28, 18 people have been killed and over 30 others wounded in a police crackdown.



Source: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Myanmar-Coup/Myanmar-coup-latest-Malaysia-urges-more-proactive-ASEAN-response>

The military policies instill fear among Myanmar citizens, who are already struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some countries, such as the USA or UK have already imposed sanctions on the military government to help the country yet have received no response from Tatmadaw. These are dangerous times for Myanmar, and to stop the coup lot(s) more will have to happen, so that the citizens may gain freedom and safety in the future.

ADÉLA ARCHALOUSOVÁ

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN RUSSIA?

The political situation that is currently unfolding in Russia seems to be the subject of many news headlines. However, for some people, there is not enough known about the background in order to fully understand the ongoing story. In this article, this topic will be explained and provide context to clear all doubts and misinformation.

Alexei Navalny, a politician, lawyer, and anti-corruption activist, is the main opposition leader to the current rule of Russia, that of President Vladimir Putin. He is leader of the Russia of the Future political party, heavily focusing on putting a stop to corruption and the current regime, therefore progressing to a

“new” era of Russia. His social media outlets, such as Twitter and YouTube, have been widely successful in pointing out the flaws in Putin’s rule and urging people to protest against these injustices. In August 2020, Navalny was poisoned, and had to be evacuated to a hospital in Berlin. Many, including Navalny, suspect and blame the Russian government for the attack, and the EU and UK even placed sanctions on Russian officials. Recently, (he) has returned back to Russia and was immediately arrested due to a parole violation of a prior sentence for embezzlement in 2014, a charge most likely fabricated by the Russian government.



Source: <https://cdn.cnn.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/210131065814-04-navalny-protests-russia-0131-exlarge-169.jpg>



Source: <https://api.time.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/AP21034516615792.jpg?w=800&quality=85>

Shortly afterwards, mass protests erupted, and on 2nd February Navalny was given a three-and-a-half-year sentence, reduced to two and a half in a penal colony, which is a type of correctional facility that involves forced labor and physical isolation. Protests started up again, and thousands of people were arrested, along with Navalny’s brother and press secretary. The government responded very strongly and harshly, deploying a massive police force and shooting down drones that aimed to photograph the protests. Many responses around the world

have been in favor of the protestors, president Biden has said that Navalny should be “released immediately and without condition”, and the EU foreign policy chief is set to meet top Russian diplomats in Moscow to discuss Navalny’s situation. Hopefully, the right decisions will be made and Russia will move towards a brighter future.

SOFIA JELČIČ

NEW EFFORTS TO END THE LARGEST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

The United States announced it would withdraw from the Yemeni civil war as a benefactor of military presence and would double down on the humanitarian aid instead. With United Kingdom and France looking increasingly likely to follow, it is clear that there will be more nutrition and less ammunition in Yemen. What is still unclear is whether that will help end the humanitarian crisis as President Biden resolutely demanded.

Let us briefly explain why there is a conflict in the first place. The Yemeni Civil War is an armed conflict between the Houthis movement and the government of Yemen. The Houthi movement is a mostly Zaydi (a Shia school of Islam) political group which has been actively opposing the government for over two decades because of alleged corruption and Sunnization (preferring Sunni values and

communities to others). The standing government is supported by the rest of the country, who oppose either any sectarian government or only Shia rule specifically. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates invaded Yemen in support of the standing government. Both sides have committed numerous war crimes according to the Human Rights Watch. The reason President Biden is talking about this is that the war crimes of Saudi Arabia and the UAE were committed with American intelligence and weapons.

It is also important to consider why SA, UAE, US, and other big players (France, UK, Italy, Spain, Israel, and Kuwait) spend billions of dollars supporting the government of one of the poorest countries in the world. It is not the country itself that interests the world, it is the position it has relative to sea routes, specifically, the Strait of Aden.



https://www.economist.com/img/b/1280/720/90/sites/default/files/20171202_FBP002_0.jpg

Over two trillion dollars’ worth of goods flow through the strait each year, which makes it imperative to maintain the safety of the waters.

The Biden administration has taken seve-

ral steps to alleviate the crisis. They will end most weapons sales and support to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The weapons sales stop is especially impactful in terms of missiles, which are used in most of the breaches of the laws of war. The support stop is relevant because many vehicles (namely planes) need American mechanics and

repair parts to function. Another substantial change is revoking the designation of Houthis as a terrorist group. The designation made it illegal for the Houthis to import anything or even receive humanitarian aid. Over one and a half billion dollars have already been sworn to go to Yemen in aid, which is over half of what UN estimates is necessary to temporarily relieve the crisis. The last wish of Biden’s is to reignite peace talks and end the war. The United Kingdom and France expressed intention to follow the United States.

The crisis is set to greatly improve in the coming months, but it would be even better if the peace talks were successful. But how do successful peace talks even look like? It was demonstrated sufficiently



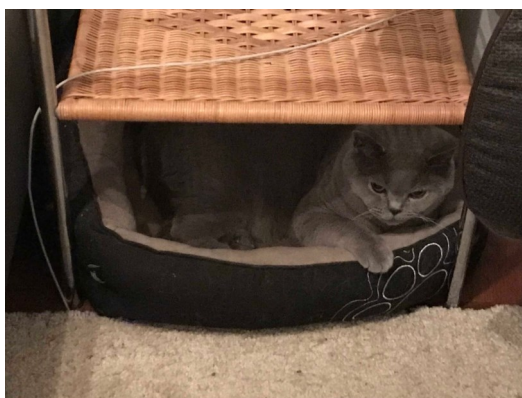
Source: https://1.middle-east-online.com/styles/home_special_coverage_1920xauto/s3/2021-02/joe%20biden.jpg?EmIhgS1JuURjplISANvHczS0kFYBKD8&itok=0f56ptNa

that the visions of governance of different groups in Yemen are incompatible, so the likely solution is a federation system already proposed back in 2012, perhaps with a few amendments. Such a system would satisfy everyone, and for a lot of people, that’s the problem. People are unsure whether to give near full autonomy to deeply oppressive and discriminatory societies, that are found in some parts of Yemen. However, ‘what will be’ is a secondary question, when more than four-fifths of a country are at the brink of starvation and risk of bombardment every day.

MATĚJ MAREK

WHICH FRIEND IS THE TRUEST OF THEM ALL?

Who doesn't like friends? Whilst some in this wide world might feel this way, it is safe to say that their numbers are very, very low. Yet when it comes to the question of non-human friends, many are far more hesitant. Be it because of an acquired set of beliefs, or a natural dislike of animals, the amount of people who see pets as too big an investment of time and resources is far from insignificant. Certainly, exceptions always exist, yet I come to ask myself whether much suffering and sadness around the globe could be avoided by a greater bondage with animals.



Source: Nicolas Wichert

At face value, the advantages of having a pet seem obvious. All are likely to be either cute or dangerous, with the former being a general source of joy, whilst the latter have a tendency to generate adrenaline at the most unexpected of times, especially for those unacquainted

with them. Regardless of the type, both, and especially those less interested in casual murder, are likely to warm the hearts of even the most solemn of people. Furthermore, they can be a pleasant distraction during our darkest periods, shining a light through the clouds covering our minds.

This is all well and rosy, many would say, but... The list of 'buts' in this case ranges from the financial strain the possession of a pet brings, the time one needs to invest into caring for them, and having to mourn their inevitable loss (unless your pet is set to outlive you, in which case, you better include them in your last will). Yet are these concerns actually valid and should we take them seriously? Simply put, yes. As with any relationships in life, bringing an animal into yours is inevitably going to be linked with effort on your part. In my case, it involves having to suffer the guilty look of my cat when I refuse to give him his third dinner, and later sacrificing my hand to be bitten and clawed at in place of a mouse or bird.

These flaws might seem to nullify the advantages listed previously, and for some, they may. However, the secret few know is that there is actually a hidden benefit of owning a pet that few mention, and that is their simple presence. Believe it or not, just having an innocent soul in the same room as you, snoring and lo-



Source: Nicolas Wichert

oking adorable, will brighten your day. It will make you automatically feel less lonely and empty, because you know you are not alone, not in a metaphorical and often romanticised way, but a literal one. Cats are a prime example of this. Mine has a rather strong will, and when it wants to be left alone, you better follow that wish. But just knowing someone is with me and is content in my presence is a special source of joy, one which isn't present for just a fleeting moment, but one that is lasting. Whilst they might not look the part, these grey-haired vampires and all the other pets one can think of are the greatest weapons against loneliness and inner emptiness known to man, as their love is not only unconditional, but everlasting.

NICOLAS WICHERT

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers, Whilst despair and bleakness are man's ever-present foes, much can be done to oppose them. Many of us find a personalised approach for succeeding in this struggle, yet it is sometimes worthwhile to receive outside inspiration in this matter. This is exactly what the writers of the social commentary section took upon themselves in this edition, sharing what has helped keep up their mood in these trying times.

Everyone found a truly unique way to tackle this theme, finding a personal approach to spread their message. Nick argues the intrinsic value of owning a pet, whilst Jasmína explores how even when quarantined, a new source of books can swing our mood towards betterment. Josephine describes how one can find joy in the simple act of baking, and Calista shares the positive impact learning about successful women has had on her. Lastly, Victor throws a wrench in the traditional style of articles, recounting the emotional bond he had with an orchid and what it taught him.

I am certain each of you will be inspired by at least one of these texts, as I was whilst reading each and every one of them. I invite you to grab your favourite beverage, get comfortable and partake in a pleasant, yet insightful, reading experience.

NICOLAS WICHERT

THE BEAUTY OF INABILITY

To go, or not to go to the library? That has never been even a question for a girl who regularly falls asleep with a book on her face. But the covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the literature supply in many addicted households. A few might have shed a tear, as they had above the pages of Anna Karenina, but those who have shown the same degree of ingenuity as Robinson Crusoe know the truth of the Czech proverb: "There is something good in the bad." The beauty of the inability to borrow and consume a book which does not belong to anyone lies in the return to

our roots and, on the contrary, in diving into the digital world.

However, before we dive into the topic, let me share with you an outcome of a brief conversation I had with my fourteen-year old cousin. It became clear that there is a huge value assigned to reading, especially during the pandemic. We spend so much time plugged to our computers or televisions that we seek alternative means of entertainment that would stimulate the creative part of our personality and allow us to switch off. The solution = books.

Back to the beauty of inability, historians use the method of ad fontes to develop the understanding of an issue based on original sources. Similarly, my grandmother and I have returned back to the customs of our ancestors to solve our precarious situation of being book deprived. We have started borrowing books from one another. All bookworms must admit there exists a very special section in their home library which is dedicated to publications they usually got for Christmas and have never opened. These play a significant role in our exchange since it was revealed that my grandmother loves detective stories I have never touched and I need a daily portion of teenage romance from the 1970s to survive the intellectual pressure at school. Later, when scrolling through my Instagram feed, it was lovely to see that we are not the only ones to come up with this idea and these book exchange initiatives seem to be enormously successful. "Sharing is caring", so to make yourself feel better when you can't head to the library, be a librarian yourself and enjoy the reward.

Furthermore, in the shade of literal sharing, online sharing has become equally important. Yet in the world of literature lovers, there is no bigger insult than an ebook. How can anyone replace the sweet smell of paper pages with a PDF document? How tasteless! But desperate times call for desperate measures, so even a hater of modern technology like me suffered

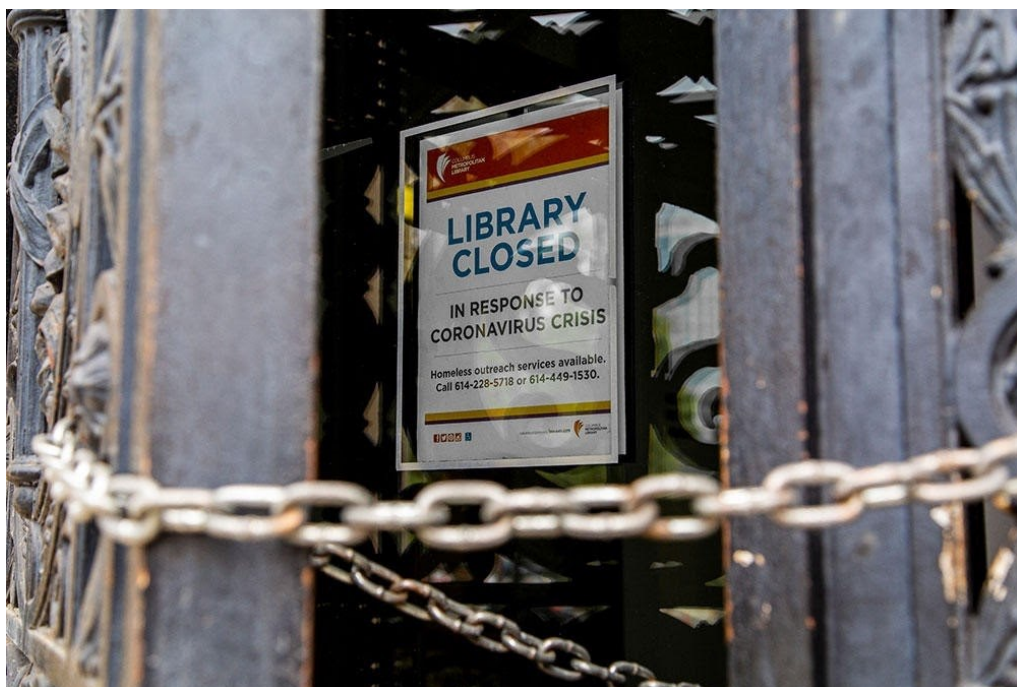


Source: <https://www.frugallancaster.com/event/family-book-exchange/>

with book so great that I learned how to borrow ebooks online. And in the end, I fell in love with buying paper books on the Internet. The excitement when selecting what masterpiece you put in your virtual shopping cart, the tension when waiting for your paperbacks, the ecstasy of unwrapping the package and sinking your head into the pages - who would be able to resist! Try to learn to step out of your comfort zone and maybe you will be surprised by how good it feels.

Humans have proven to be extremely flexible due to the pandemic, book nerds included. They have learned a lesson about innovativeness in real life and courage in the virtual world. It is not only crucial to support them to find escape from this stressful world, but also to nourish the art of empathy that books teach. The ability to think ourselves in place of others and to understand without having experience has never been so important as now.

JASMÍNA ŠVARCROVÁ



Source: <https://radio.wosu.org/post/coronavirus-ohio-some-libraries-reopening-across-state#stream/0>

THE JOY IN BAKING

Let me take you back in time, far away from this madness we are currently living in. Close your eyes, imagine you are around nine years old again, it is a warm summer day and you are visiting your grandparents. Imagine you are sitting in the kitchen, watching your grandma preparing something at the kitchen counter. Can you almost smell the delicious treats she makes? I certainly almost can. Especially the smell of her baked goods comes to mind, those were really delicious. She made all kinds of it, especially the traditional Czech buchty, for which English does not have an appropriate translation. So many kinds of buchty with such few tools: an old oven that sometimes heats up too much and sometimes too little, a bowl, and a whisk. Yet despite this, everything she prepared was delicious. Nowadays I see people barely move their fingers when baking because kitchen robots do everything for them, and yet their baking is nowhere the level of tastiness my grandma's buchty had.

Because of the virus, people are staying home and many have taken up baking as a hobby. Some, such as me, have already liked it before, and some have only recently discovered this joy that apart from valuable life skills also brings you tasty food. Yet among us avid amateur bakers, I notice there are two kinds of people. The first kind are like my grandma, working the dough with their hands and sometimes accidentally spill-

ing flour all over the kitchen, because that just happens sometimes. The second kind are more technology oriented, using electronic scales and kitchen robots and smart ovens to do everything instead of them, do it very precisely and especially without any mess. I wish I had never become the second kind. Our grandmas and great grandmas managed to form our childhood memories and our standards when it comes to baked goods with very little technology. If we cannot do the same, or if we at least do not attempt to do so, then we have misunderstood the whole point of baking.

Baking is like alchemy, discovering how things react together and what works and what doesn't. Preparing the dough yourself, seeing it come together and adding the personal touches to your final creation is a million times more satisfying than letting the robots do everything. Also, who really created the bread, when a robot measured the amounts, a robot mixed it and a robot baked it? There is no skill in using excessive kitchen technology and if you are giving up on having skills, then why are you bak-



Source: https://img.kasa.cz/k-foto/ilustrace/800/7/6/2/product_3869267.jpg, edited

ing again? Baking is a hobby, a challenge and an opportunity to express yourself. If we hand all the work over to technology, all three aspects basically disappear and what remains is an empty product with no added value. Now I am not saying abolish all technology and go back to cooking on fire. There is a huge difference between getting help from technology and letting technology take over. I guess this applies to all aspects of life, but then again, who am I to say that? I just like baking after all. Baking with occasional mess all over the kitchen, because that's part of the fun, and without those godawful mini bakeries that spit out bricks instead of bread.

JOSEFÍNA DUŠKOVÁ

WHY LÉON HAD A FLOWER

Her and I, we built a beautiful relationship. I took care of her, and she was just a beautiful thing. Looking at her brightened my day, as though the air was fresh and rich when she was in the room. She was beautiful like a rose, only she was an orchid.

The first true responsibility I felt was when I bought a flower. Its tender life was entrusted to my hands for 80kč, and one has to be serious with such things. *Orchidaceae* can live up to a hundred years. Their name also derives from the greek word for testicles, supposedly because of its root structure. Anyway, mine was a girl and for three months we had the greatest of honeymoons. We lived in a weird combination of romantic partnership and father-daughter relationship. My orchid was to be watered just once a week and soon my baby outgrew its first

tiny pot.

But something was not right. One by one the purple leaves withered and fell. Maybe too soon in the new pot? Maybe too much watering? My grandma did not know either! And then I saw the first one - parasites. Microscopic white fuzzy creatures had hidden in shady spots behind the leaves. It was only once there were too many to fit that I saw them. *Coccoidea* feed by stabbing their tiny fangs into the orchid's sleek stem and suck out life-giving juice while releasing poisonous saliva. Maybe I could have done more, and maybe it was too late, but this month I threw my orchid on the compost. I have a couple of confessions.

First - the parasites were punished. In a frenzy of parental rage I individually picked each I could reach and squashed them with a knife... thou shalt not kill.

Second - to this day I feel responsible for the death of my orchid. Ninety-nine years and ten months left to live. She honoured her father, her lover, and he failed to protect her. A dead flower can weigh heavy on the soul. It means that I failed as a father and a partner. A withering flower is



Source: <https://www.magazinzahrad.cz/orchideje-mohou-rust-i-u-vas-na-zahrade/>

a symbol of lost love; a dying orchid/ testicle may be a symbol of emasculation.

Third - it all felt like more of a divine transgression too. For 80kč I bought a life (how closer can one be to the Creator?) and watched it die in my hands. And even the reaction - to air vengeance for failing my duty on innocent lives - seems brutish.

But if you have the courage, go buy a flower. It teaches about death and life, the cycle of life, about parenthood and responsibilities - romantic, parental and spiritual. You could put it by the window where it looks nice in the afternoon sun. But you could also jump ahead in time and see what kind of a parent and partner you could be. This is all by no means a stretch. Even tough guys love flowers, go watch Léon: The Professional.

VIKTOR ŘÍHA

INSPIRATION

We all need a little inspiration now and then. A book that helped me gain confidence, courage and increased my English knowledge was 'Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls'. An outstanding and encouraging book written by well-renowned authors Elena Favilli and Francesca Cavallo. This book illustrates the beginnings of 100 heroic and intelligent women of all ages around the world. There are a lot of inspiring stories about women who were told to give up and not pursue their dreams, helping me gain confidence just like them. You may find their situations similar to yours when they faced hardships and failures, ups and downs, rights and wrongs.

The book also provides an insight into the hardships they face, such as discrimination, unequal pay or unfair treatment from others. For example, a female engineer will be paid around ten thousand dollars less than her male co-worker with the same job. Or the unequal treatment in society, where women are stereotyped, inappropriately touched or even harassed; however, they managed to pull through in the end and lived on to do great things.



Source: <https://bzfd.it/2OqA183>

Such an example is the story of a suffragette named Kate Sheppard. Thanks to her, New Zealand became the first country in the world that allowed women to vote. She gathered a petition which was longer than 74 ice cream trucks and presented it in front of the parliament. Another example is the beginning of Coco Chanel. She and many others grew up wearing nun's clothes and learning how to sew. But Coco decided to change that, so she made a shop, styling chic black and white dresses from nun's skirts. Despite the fact their chances of success were slim, they still attempted to succeed. Even though they were criticised for their ideas and told to give up, they never did, and without them, society would not have evolved further.

To this day, women are told they will fail just because they are women, including myself. In a way, it calmed me down, knowing they went through the same experiences and yet still achieved their dreams. Thanks to them, I learned that hard work is the key to success as well as confidence and motivation. With this, I was inspired to do better in school and focus on achieving my dreams. I also found interest in hobbies I have never been interested in before, such as writing or learning new languages. It helped me gain self-awareness and realise my self-worth. From women working for Nasa to stories about female pirates ruling the seas, it put things into a perspective that anyone can do anything no matter who tells them if they can or cannot.

CALISTA MAŘÍKOVÁ



Source: https://www.forumcinemas.lv/eng/event/302323/title/leon_the_professional/?dt=05.05.2012

MOTIVATION

Have you ever woken up and felt like not going to school today? I think that most of us have at some point in our life, but nowadays, when you can attend school from your bedroom someone might think this would end. Oh, how wrong you were!

I think it is even worse because there is no routine before your first class when you need to get changed and drive (I now speak on behalf of day students) to school. Most of the times the “wake-up misery” disappears during this time, but now that all this is gone, and you usually wake up 5 - 15 minutes before the first lesson. Hence, the misery affects you in class. You feel demotivated and when the teacher tells the class to do something you just give up and go on Instagram. Just for a second. Or two. Or the entire lesson.

After successfully cruising through the day with no work done, you have spent 6 hours on social media or games, as all your alarms which monitor your screen time, which you installed because you said “enough,” are screaming at the top of their lungs. Obviously, you had lost one day of your life just due to a bad morning. Nobody wants to do that, so I tried my best to find a list of things to do during school to motivate you not to waste your precious time. Here’s what I came up with: U.L.M.A. (Ultimate List of Motivational Activities)

Over-activity - Raise your hand, answer as many questions and help your

classmates. I strongly believe that teachers will appreciate this because finally, someone in the class is active and suddenly it is not that one-sided conversation between the teacher and your initials. It feels more like usual lesson if you do this. Some of your struggling classmates will appreciate it, too. If you help them with the work in class, it is just icing on the cake. It is surprisingly fun and the feeling of accomplishment is just great. I recommend prioritising this method during classes you know can be tiring and the activity of your peers is low.

Efficient work - This means that you pick lessons where you do not have work for the whole lesson, or just use some spare time between each activity, and work on homework from other courses. This does NOT mean that you should not listen when the teacher is talking and teaching. This method is only for spare time, you use the EXTRA time, not the time you should focus on the current lesson. The main benefit of this activity is the spare time you have after school. You can relax, go for a walk, watch Netflix, (Disclaimer: this article is not to blame if you become Netflix-addicted) work out, or just do what you love without having to think about deadlines and assignments.

Making daily goals - I must confess, I did think this is just a thing that they tell you during a seminary but is useless,

however, after trying it out, I was pleasantly surprised. (Side note: coming into doing things you do not trust or you despise with low expectations is also a really easy way to be potentially positively surprised.) If you have small goals for every day and take them step by step, you will achieve success in school and anywhere you apply this technique. All of them are just pieces in the bigger picture that you realise with time. Making goals pays off.

Off days - Doing all the points above is not easy and you have to have the commitment and will to do them regularly to succeed. Even I think doing this all week is almost impossible and you deserve a bit of rest as a reward for the hard work.

That is why I added this point, an instant fan favourite. It is easy. Just pick a day in the week when you let your classmates steal the show. Answer all the questions the teacher asks, but then just listen carefully to others. At the end of the day, school is a team sport :-).

So, there you have it! I hope this list will motivate you as well as it motivates me. Maximise your whole day and do not waste any minute. It is not simple, but I believe in you, the whole OG Chronicle believes in you. And remember, U.L.M.A. is not just a list of tips, U.L.M.A. is a way of life.

ADAM CHÁRA



Source: <https://www.ticbeat.com/educacion/adquiere-las-5-habilidades-mas-demandadas-por-las-empresas-con-estos-cursos/>

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO BEING FUNNY

Hello, my dear dull readers. Why are you dull, you ask? Well, of course, because you have not read this amazing article on how to be funny yet. In all seriousness, I am sorry, for I have broken the first commandment of journalism: “Thou shalt not insult thine reader.” Do you see what I did there? That is what we, the professionals on the topic of funniness, call a joke. There are indeed many, perhaps far too many, ways to be funny. Today, I would like to guide you through some of the best and funniest ones and help you go from ‘Bobby’ to ‘Fun Bobby’.

The first and probably most cited (and overused) way to be funny is sarcasm. Unfortunately, it is a horrible way to be funny. I cannot imagine a worse type of humour than building all your jokes and bon mots on sarcasm. Not only has it gained a horrible following of people who make Facebook posts containing: “I am not like other girls. I like sarcasm,” it is also so derogatory and awful in general, that basing your humour solely on sarcasm will most surely get you labeled as a jerk. That being said, sarcasm in small doses can be funny. You just can’t overdo it. As with all types of humour, an essential component of sarcasm is to read the room. Jokes are not funny when they offend everyone in the room (or they may be, but nobody will laugh) and there is a time and a place for every joke. A surefire way of not offending anyone and weaving a bit of sarcasm into your daily lan-

guage is absurd sarcasm, my favourite type. Absurd sarcasm is based on wordplay and the general premise is that you make a statement, which is so absurd it can only be taken ironically. Let me give you an example: “Don’t you watch the telly?” “No, it got stolen, so now I just stare at the wall.” While this type may not provide as many crying laughing moments as you would like, it can bring a good chuckle to your everyday conversations. To provide a better example (and a very good laugh), the comedic duo Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie often use sarcasm and absurdity in their shows. Give them a watch!

If you want to avoid being a jerk altogether and you don’t mind being a bit of an idiot, you can try goofiness as a source of humour. This includes a plethora of jokes, impressions, gags, and most importantly physical comedy. The ground premise is being willing to make fun of yourself. You are the main actor in silly comedy and you have to commit yourself to it. A very important thing to think about is delivery. A joke can be the funniest and goofiest thing the audience has heard, but if the delivery is not right, they will not laugh. A key part of the delivery is speed. You have to read the moment and know when to pause and which impersonation to do quickly and when to slow down again. Generally, you want to give the audience a space to laugh at your hilarious deliv-

ery, speed up when delivering so that they do not have time to realise, that your joke was not funny and just plain stupid, and slow down to let a moment grow. Slowing down can provide an aura of absurdity stemming solely from the passing of time.

A very offensive, politically incorrect, and absolutely hilarious style of humour is satire and dark humour. If you like to get involved politically or just like to be edgy, this is just for you. It is based on criticising current political problems and events using jokes and metaphors (often also sarcasm or irony). This is very popular in plays and generally scripted production. To effectively use dark humour, just pick a controversial topic and poke it with a stick, something will come out eventually. Both of these topics are very thin ice as they can easily offend someone or get you canceled on Twitter (we all know how easy that is). Use them carefully and read the room.

The last but not least is absurd humour. This is my favourite type of comedy and I love to use it very frequently (maybe too much). Now you may think this is similar to goofiness, and you are partially right. There is, however, a distinction. While in silly humour, you are the main source of fun and you ridicule yourself and make a big doofus out of yourself, the picture you paint with your words and actions is the main object in absurd humour. You try to crack your audience up using a situation

you make up. I, for example, love to go rambling on about different origins of words or objects. I start with some general association and then go into a full-blown made-up story about the object. The thing is, the longer you go on, the more absurd the situation becomes and it gets funnier. A major factor in absurd humour is wordplay and miscommunication. I would highly suggest watching some Mitch Hedberg, whose off-beat delivery is a huge part of the comedic process, and once again A Little Bit of Fry and Laurie.

So now you know. Now you know how to be the funny one. Now you know how to entertain your friends. Now you know how to entertain crowds of millions of people on primetime television. Okay, maybe not that, but you hopefully have a basic understanding of how humour works. And I have to tell you something. I left a huge (and we are talking the Czech Republic’s state debt huge) chunk of humour out. There are just so many ways to be funny. It really is astounding you even had to read this article in order to learn how to be funny. Seriously, get out there and just do your thing, whichever suits you best. And remember, read the room! See you later alligator!

EUGENE EGGWHITE

WHEN LGBT MEETS CHRISTIANITY

What does the Bible say about same-sex relationships? That is a question that many people have been discussing for the last two centuries, but neither debate on this topic has concluded. Sexual diversity is a popular topic not only in the LGBTQ+ community but also with the coming generations. Furthermore, the community is fighting more and more for same-sex marriages and LGBT rights. However, Christians in the government are often against these proposed laws and usually are the reason why these new demands won't go through. But did the concept of homosexuality even exist at the time of the creation of the Bible? Does the Bible condemn same-sex

relationships; and if so, can we trust the modern translation of the Scriptures?

Since all teaching and practice must align itself with the Bible, as it is God's Word (2 Timothy 3:16), I am going to focus mainly on the Scriptures and the meaning of them. Throughout history, homosexuality has been condemned by the overwhelming majority of society. It was like this until the 17th of May 1990 when the World Health Organization decided to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. Nevertheless, Christianity is still arguing against same-sex relationships. Their main arguments are that the Bible states homosexuality as a sin, that marriage should only be between a

man and a woman, and that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God's wrath against same-sex relations.

First of all, it is highly unlikely that the authors of the Bible had any notion of sexual orientation. Neither the concept nor the word 'homosexual' existed until 1892. The concept of sexual diversity didn't exist either; and still, Christians try to argue against modern issues of LGBT with these outdated teachings.

The Bible itself is just a copy of the original Scripture. It has been translated many times throughout history from the original Hebrew and Greek. Some phrases have been lost in translation. For example, the Bible includes St. Paul's letters. In some of them, he convicts homosexuality as 'unrighteous'. He also says that men who practice homosexuality will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). As I have said, the word 'homosexual' did not exist and many believe that the Greek word 'malakoi' used in the above text means 'male prostitute' and is not about homosexuality in general.

Lastly, I do not think that we can trust and build our beliefs on a book as old as the Bible is. Even though some Christians say that their holy book is timeless, the Old Testament is obsolete. It claims that it's forbidden to wear clothes made out of two different kinds of material, to eat shrimp, lobster, and other assorted sea-

food, or to have rounded haircuts. These laws would not be accepted by modern society; and as we can see, they are not. It's hypocritical of them to choose what they should or should not follow. We evolve and so should our mind-set and beliefs.

Finally, let's move to the topic of same-sex marriages. The Book of Genesis says that God made male and female to complete each other and to procreate. Does it mean that infertile women or men should not get married? Does it mean that a union that cannot result in children should be forbidden from a process that is an expression of genuine love? No! Marriage is not about children. It has a deeper meaning: it is about a lifelong commitment to your partner. They allow them to give themselves and to receive the other as a gift. This evidence of loyalty and a loving union should not be limited by something so trivial as what are the sexes of the couple.

In conclusion, reading the Bible is an interpretation. You are interpreting "God's words". And if you either stand by the arguments against or for homosexuality, you should always bear in mind, for me, the most important biblical words. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8). So, God loves gay and Christians too.

ANTHONY BAWAI



Source: https://media.lui.cz/thumbs/uploads/gallery/16470-co-znamenaji-pruhy-na-duhove-vlajce-a-proc-je-dulezite-aby-vlala-namagistratu/4_1060x1/iStock-titulni.jpg

LISTEN TO UNDERSTAND

Dear readers, I know and realise that the year 2020 was not a bed of roses. We all had to endure a lot not only in our academic/professional lives, but adjust our personal habits as well. I do not aim to diminish any of your struggles, but still, I believe that the past year has taught us the most about the importance of listening, understanding, helping, and after all, being here for each other. Therefore, I decided to conduct an interview with some of our students and staff members to show and inspire you with their outlook on the past year. Let yourself get thought-provoked by their ideas.

What do you miss the most about your "normal" life before the pandemic? What makes this particular aspect so valuable for you?

Staff member: Seeing people in classrooms and pubs. I miss interacting with people who tell me how they feel, and say it when I can see their faces, and so that we have time to talk personally....

Student: About my usual routine I ironically miss traveling to school (by train), as it is a wonderful time that I can spend however I want and do whatever I want. It is incredibly relaxing.

Staff member: What I miss the most is meeting my friends; the usual habit of going out to chat in a coffee shop, traveling together, visiting each other, and simply seeing each other limitlessly. And why? Well because we humans need oth-

er people around us to live fully. And not only one, but a bunch of them... it is what makes us who we are, it forms us and no online substitution can compensate for that.

Is there something you have learned in the past year? And will it change your outlook on some topics in the upcoming years?

Staff member: I learned that government support is even more necessary than I thought for a normal life, and so there is no room for these anti-government, free-marketeering frauds: people need centrally organized representation, and they need to be aware of how their lives depend on others at all times... it is not communism, mind-control, or distortion to incentives.

Student: Firstly, a not so positive aspect, I learned that I am very lazy. Secondly, my views on politics are much clearer as during quarantine I developed a hobby: watching politics and not just Czech political situation, but the USA's as well. I believe my perspective on all political topics will get much critical and doubtful in the upcoming years, too.

Staff member: I am not sure about whether I learned or rather reassured myself in the fact that family and health are the most precious things we possess and I would never wish to neglect them. Additionally, not giving in to panic is important. Therefore, I will stay cool-

headed. Also, I learned how to work with MS teams and similar applications in which we use cameras, which are seemingly going to stay in our lives forever. The positive aspect is that via these systems, most of the work is more efficient and faster. Previously, I denied it, similarly to phone calls (probably a psychological block since childhood), but there is nothing to fear.

What has given you hope and joy when all the other circumstances seemed tragic? What were you the most grateful for in the year 2020?

Staff member: I am impressed by the behavior of the students, and my colleagues. I find that most people are genuinely kind and willing to work to help others, and willing to endure trouble to do the right thing. They are empathetic, sharing joys and sorrows....

Student: This answer is very simple, yet meaningful- my family and friends.

Staff member: I do not think that I perceived something about 2020 as tragic (except for the death of my beloved dog, but I was preparing for that since the end of 2019). Tragic situations are those when you believe there is no way out, your life and world cannot continue, and that nothing has a point of existing. But that is not our case. Life goes on, even though in an unusual manner, yet I believe it will get better. There was a lot positive about 2020- as my loved ones got through coro-

navirus, having newborns in my friends' circle, successful Oktava students, some traveling and adventures; even getting to reach the sky.... I started learning Italian, and Open Gate is enduring all the changes. We are still going; everything remains in balance. Nevertheless, what certainly helped me a lot was my optimism and the people who I keep around- the good-hearted ones. So briefly (I already proved to be incapable of brevity) I am the most thankful for good people. The year 2020 showed that people truly are good. They help each other and they get together in times of need.

As one smart man once said: "The adventure of life is to learn. The purpose of life is to grow. The nature of life is to change." So do not cease advancing, learning, and improving when things do not go exactly as you wish for. There is always something to be proud of and to bring you joy, so do not dwell on the struggles. Take the other perception, changes (and especially these days) bring unnaturalness and adventure and eventually- excitement. So try to find the silver lining on every cloud. Promise yourself not to lose hope.

MICHAELA RENDLOVÁ



THE GOOD AND THE BAD—FUTURE IMPLICATIONS OF CRISPR

Imagine finding an ancient tome in the attic of your grandma's old house. Though you don't recognize a single letter that lays inside, still, you can sense its peculiar power. Your intuition tells you every page of that book has a deeper meaning, perhaps affecting the daily reality of the fantastic realm that you happen to live in... Immediately, you start thinking about rearranging the chapters, tearing out the individual pages of this mysterious script and seeing how beneficial could the consecutive alterations be to you...

In fact, humankind has already been given such an opportunity. Thanks to the rapid scientific development in the field of molecular biology and genetics, we have now cracked the universal code of life — DNA.

As of April 2003, all the genes of our genome have been identified and mapped. We have found the ancient tome. For quite some time, the ways of editing it were limited to just reordering pages and paragraphs, however, that was about to change with the discovery of Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats. Using the very same tools that make up the immune system of many prokaryotes, scientists are now able to change any of the "letters" that form the genetic code. All of that while maintaining extraordinary precision and surprisingly low costs. So, the question is, how could such technologies

affect our lives? And why is CRISPR such a controversial topic anyway?

You see, the vast majority of people outside the scientific community still remain unaware of the enormous power that gene editing tools hold over our society. Although we already use them in agriculture and on laboratory animals, the real struggle comes with applying these principles to humans. On the one hand, CRISPR serves as a new hope for patients with genetic disorders, as new types of gene therapies are approved by administrations both in the US and EU and with many studies under way to test their safety and effectiveness. On the other hand, it is a tool with the potential of enhancing certain human characteristics, renewing a number of ethical considerations.

Luckily enough, those concerns are taken as serious matters by researchers as well as international organizations. Especially germline editing, in which changes made to the genome are hereditary, is a subject of careful debates and global moratoria.

Following the unprecedented "Baby gene experiment" done in 2018 by biophysicist He Jiankui which resulted in two genetically modified embryos (whose germlines were altered) and was met with widespread condemnation, countries all around the world were forced to face a new challenge. Defining

the red line of altering the code of life that shall not be crossed has proven to be a strenuous task that eventually led to the temporary ban of heritable (human) genome editing in every country of the world.

While the safety concerns and the possible side effects could be dealt with within a span of the next few decades as new scientific advances come around, other issues such as accessibility and cost will most likely remain relevant for much longer. As presented in *Unnatural Selection*, a Netflix documentary series, there are two general sides of this ethical dilemma. The first one, including many biohackers, is calling for the future of gene editing to be available to anyone, fearing CRISPR would otherwise be advantageous only to governments and the rich. The opposing side, represented by many scientists, stresses the importance of choosing the most prudent approach directed solely by educated scientists and not just anybody. Given that the consequences of our steps may be profound and far-reaching, the second option might seem wiser, though then again, seeing those huge amounts of money the world powers pump into the development of such technologies each year (and without properly disclosing



Source: <https://scoop.market.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CRISPR-Based-Gene-Therapy.jpg>

it) is simply frightening.

Even if we succeed in tackling these difficult questions, the ability to enhance someone's senses, for instance, prompts us with the very basic question: is it ethically correct? And who is to tear out and reorder the pages of the script?

In the end, treating a blind person to help them see again is the right thing to do, but would we really not care if someone could obtain the vision of an eagle thanks to one simple medical procedure? Once again in our history, a single revolutionary advance in science gives rise to many controversial topics that our society must be prepared to discuss...

VOJTĚCH PAVROVSKÝ

MAKING AN ALBUM DURING QUARANTINE

On November 29th, 2019, I released onto the internet the first song I ever made. It was creatively titled, "Untitled". It was bad. At the time, I wanted to try something new: I wanted to make an album. It was something that I had thought about doing as I got more interested in music. But I was not going to do it alone. I was doing it with my cousin. Needless to say, that project fell through, after we started procrastinating on it. However, I kept making music, and a couple of months later, the great Covid-19 Lockdown TM started. Now, for most people, being isolated from other people was a very hard thing to get used to.... but for me? Someone who already spent most of his time at home and on his laptop, this was pretty much the perfect thing to ask for. Every day, after doing my homework, I would go on my laptop and make beats. I was a machine. I constantly got new ideas after new ideas and it felt like I was finding this new dimension of stuff to explore. Despite how some of the beats sounded bad, it was incredibly fun to make all of them. I even made longer versions of the beats I liked. After all, some of them even sounded like actual songs! By the time summer hit, I had already made about 2 hours' worth of instrumentals. I even made a full beat every day at a camp I went to and released that as an album. But that is not the main album I am talking about. That one would come shortly.

Later, in August, I made a 9-minute instrumental named LOSING MYSELF. It was the first song I had made with the paid version of the program I was using, as previously I had been using the free trial version. I was incredibly proud of it,

but after I released it, it did not really feel like I could add anything more to it, so I just left it alone. Fast forward to September, as I started going to this school. I am not good at all with new environments, so this was very difficult for me. I was very quiet and shy to answer any questions. So, during the start of the year, I found solace in staying in my room and making music, and since I was the only one living in my room, it meant I could blast my music and dance to it as much as I wanted. During one of these music-making nights, I started making a song that sounded kind of like LOSING MYSELF. Similar synths, similar drums, similar vibe. I then remembered that the cover for it was an edited picture of a sunset. And just like a lightning bolt from the sky, the full idea came to me. What if I made an album about a sunset? There would be songs representing going through a city, looking around a forest, and one representing the actual sunset. A lot of my ideas come to me like this, but none

have been as thorough as this. I even had a title: SUNSET INSTRUMENTALS. A boring one, however, a good enough one. I went to sleep, being incredibly excited to work on this project. A couple of weeks later, the school sent us back home due to Covid-19, and I was ready to work on this as much as I could.

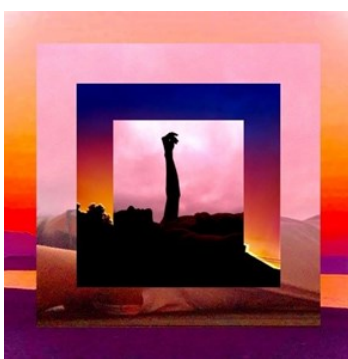
Working the songs out was the easier part, as I already knew what I was going for. I had the aesthetic of the album would be lush synths with added elements of hip-hop with the drums and percussion, which is obvious on NEON/CITY. As you can tell by the title, this is the song about taking a walk through a city full of neon lights, and fully taking in the scenery. While it has the same musical style that the rest of the album has, it also has "in your face" style drums and synths that perfectly express the feeling of being hit by the light of neon signs. While that was great, for the forest portion of the record, I wanted to have a completely different feeling. A LOST TREE BRANCH is an orchestral song, which captures the wonder of exploring nature. The textures of every instrument come through to create a beautiful harmony of melodies, which still manages to fit on this album. LOSING MYSELF represents seeing an actual sunset,

and the melancholy that comes from the dark of the evening. Being split into two parts, one energetic and explosive, and the other calm and slow, it being the final song is the perfect way to end an album like this. However, it is not my favourite song from this album. The song I am most proud of is the first one: EVERYONE LOSES.... Being 7 minutes long, it manages to combine every single element from this album in a single multi-part song that gets you perfectly invested into the world of this album. Layered synths, hip-hop drums, orchestral instruments, it has it all. It is not perfect, but it is the best song I have ever made, and the one I am the proudest of.

The most important thing about my journey of learning how to make music was that I never told myself to take it too seriously. It was just a little hobby I had, despite doing it almost every day for a year. With almost every single other hobby I have had in my life, I always expected too much from them. I would treat them as if I would be doing them for the rest of my life, and that is just a terrible way to treat a hobby. Obviously, after this, I am going to treat music a lot more seriously than before, but even now, it is still a hobby.

To conclude, I am very lucky to be in a position, where being alone in my room the whole day is the perfect environment for me, and the place where I can truly express myself.

IVAN PAVLOVEC



Source: Ivan Pavlov

5 TIPS FOR SURVIVING THE LOCKDOWN

Keep to a routine. It is difficult to maintain habits that you were used to in ordinary life. Being the whole day, week, month in one place is very challenging, and one can possibly lose the motivation to keep up with their routine, but it is very important to not give up. By having a routine, people keep themselves productive and in a better mood as they do not have the time to think about the Corona situation. Therefore, do the things that you were used to before the lockdown. For example, wake up every day at 8:00 o'clock, focus on a normal school schedule, exercise and go to bed early and try to face the same bedtime every night.

Variety will keep you going. One will get easily bored after some time if you focus only on the same thing every time. Do not stick to just one activity and instead choose between a variety of activities to keep you in action and in a better mood. It is relaxing to do various different things throughout the day, such as talking with friends, running, find an exercising program, play games or simply go outside to explore the nature.

Fresh air and nature are the new must haves. It is the perfect time to go outside and explore your hometown and the nature surrounding it. I personally did not have time to explore my hometown since

I was at the dormitories, so now I love to just walk around the city or go to the forest and look for secret places. It will also boost your mood up as fresh air and nature overall are very good for your mental health and physical health.

Focus on yourself. All my tips above are only focusing on mental health and are tips that prevent anxiety and stress. It is important to be in touch with your friends as you would be in school, because from my experience it is the best you can do for better mood. It is enjoyable to talk with someone else then the people you are in lockdown with. J Moreover, focusing on yourself includes night teas, Netflix, hot bath and everything that you enjoy the most.

Be motivated as nothing lasts forever. It is extremely important to bear in mind that this will end soon as there is always light at the end of every tunnel. Even though it does not seem like it's going to end, trust me that it will. My tip for being positive and motivated is to plan out the summer so you can manage as many things as you want and did not have a chance to do in lockdown. Sooner or later we will all be enjoying long sunny days, swimming pools, travels and many laughs with friends.

KATEŘINA VAŇKOVÁ

FILM REVIEW - RUN HIDE FIGHT

For obvious reasons, years 2020 and 2021 are not times in favor of producing traditional style movies. Yet recently, the Daily Wire, one of the biggest conservative websites and media companies in the US, released their first movie, thriller RUN HIDE FIGHT.

According to the main figure of this website, Ben Shapiro, they are entering the film industry because of a need for variety. Due to the fact, that the industry is dominated by the left, there is a need for creating movies, that are not made with a certain undertone of the political agenda of any party. And to be honest, many movies are indeed made to deliberately carry the message even though it is most often forced and does not fit the film each time, examples might be Captain Marvel, Cuties, Unpregnant, or even Enola Holmes. These films, and many more, are not so bad by their artwork, but they are trying to push mainly the left-wing agenda underneath. This would not be a problem if most movies were not like these. Many movies correlate with left ideals, however, the films that are produced nowadays and that express conservative values, could be counted on the fingers of both hands (before being removed from mainstream platforms for being too radical and offensive).

It is particularly interesting to see the difference between the critics score and the audience score on the famous film reviewing website Rotten Tomatoes, where the films that are more "political" and present progressive values receive insanely high scores from official evalua-

tors, whereas the audience, which does not include primarily leftists, gives very low scores. Hence, the Daily Wire decided, that there must be a space for movies, that all people can enjoy, no matter what their political opinions or values are. RUN HIDE FIGHT tells a story of a 17-year-old girl Zoe, who experiences a school shooting, tries to save her friends and even deal with the shooters. This whole movie stands mainly on the performance of Zoe, starring Isabel May, who is an exceptionally played character to whom the audience can easily relate.

Moreover, the producers succeeded in bringing to light interesting and sometimes controversial topics, that surround the phenomenon of school shootings in the future as they are not so rare, especially in America. This is the role of social media, guns manipulation, and shootings prevention systems (it is shown several times that when there is an announcement of danger from the shooters, that the teachers were unprepared for this scenario and were just scrolling over the manual, which wasted precious time needed for evacuation). Therefore, my overall impression of this movie is, that even if there are occasionally cliché moments, the film is enjoyable to watch as the film stands on real emotions and dialogues, that are often absent in movies with a far bigger budget. Not mentioning, that when producers use real effects and props, it is clearly visible that it feels more realistic than when there is a ton of green screen around the actors.

INTERVIEW

Petr Havlík, a 16-year-old Open Gate student, who is also, however, a talented young powerlifter. How does he keep fit during lockdown or does he consider himself a dog or cat lover? And that isn't all you will find out in today's interview.

I will start with my traditional question. Dogs or cats?

Dogs.

Studies have found out that dog lovers are more extroverted and dominant, but less sensitive. Based on these behaviors, would you consider yourself an average dog lover?

I would say that I am an average dog lover, but I feel better, safer and a little bit dominant with my German shepherd.

What was your motivation to start with powerlifting?

I was skinny, so I started going to gym. Then I found powerlifting and realized I love it.

How did the Covid-19 outbreak affect your powerlifter career?

It stopped my whole progress and gaining weight (muscles). If there was no Covid I could have been much better right now.

What does your home workout look like?

My home workout is training upper body and hands. That means mostly bench press.

How do you think your return to competitions after coronavirus will be?

My return will be slow, but I hope I will be back at the same level as I was before Covid or even better.

What do you think about methods used by OG teachers to motivate students to move?

If I was ever motivated it wasn't because of a teacher, but because of me.

DANIEL STRNAD



Source: Daniel Strnad

As the film managed to bring interesting characters, dialogues, and ideas, together with a decent story that is very stirring, it deserves no less than 9/10. So, go and watch it, it is worth your time!

NATAN KRATOCHVÍLA

DUMB AND NUMB

Is it yesterday already? My vision is unsteady
I'm sick? I don't see a change, strange, I feel heavy
I need to wash, no wait I did that tomorrow
There's no smell from me to follow
I ate but I've swallowed something hollow
I can't do much but I still have time to borrow
Something broke the clock, I'm in bed stuck
Blocked by a lock, because I've had tough luck
I couldn't do a single request
Now I can't stand the press on my chest
Two weeks gone, I'm done
There's no sign of sun, the end has begun?
The loss of smell, short for breath
I've lost track of time; a new beginning is nigh.
I've got more place in my lungs, and more space to work with
I liked my room, but there are flowers that bloom
It will not be a boom, like we all assumed.

Laws restricted themselves,
It's on ourselves and how we face the ill doom.

SERGEJ ŽUKOV

BRAVOG ADVISER

Can I be an asexual when I am not a "fan" of relationships? I hate public kissing and cuddling, and I do not see the need for relationships in my whole life tbh. How can I figure it out?

I would start with a definition and discuss this taboo topic to refute the notion that this designation has a pejorative connotation. Nonetheless, who is asexual? Generally, someone who experiences little to no sexual attraction. However, in your case, I think it is more about the lack of romantic attraction, yet not everybody considers sexual or romantic attraction as the key pillar of their relationship. You can have other priorities, aside from sexual attraction, you can also experience other attractions such as aesthetic (being attracted to someone based on how they look), platonic (wanting to be friends with someone), or emotional (wanting an emotional connection with someone) to fulfill your needs. If you are happy and feel that it does not impact you negatively, then accept this part of you and be proud of it. Become a pilot of your own life!

Why is it so terribly difficult with online school?

I feel you. This situation with online teaching is not only a complete horror for students, but it has also become exhausting for teachers. But we can certainly ease this rigid, repetitive, monotonous period. Recommendations such as not sitting at a computer all day long are not entirely possible at this school, but here are a few tips on how to be more productive and finish your work effectively. I would recommend you to strictly distinguish the space, where you will do school and then where you will rest or do things that you would normally do after coming home. Also, I know that during morning lectures, we sometimes like rolling in the bed, but it's good to prepare for "school" like in the old days, to dress nicely, to comb and all these different things. It will then energize you, and you are more productive and efficient!

MILOSLAVA MACKOVÁ

TEENAGE GUIDE

Growing up is both the most wonderful thing and the scariest nightmare in one. Pressure from parents, stress from school, first relationships, social media and friends are only some of the challenges that we, teenagers in the 21st century, have to face. The journey to adulthood is generally bumpy and confusing. Most of the time we are asking ourselves questions like “Who am I?” or “Should I do my homework or watch another episode from this fun series?” and as we are all different individuals there is no right answer to either of these questions, which makes it even harder.

Adolescence is all about changing and becoming more mature. Still, as every change in our life, it is freaking scary! Our entire personality develops, and we are making choices that will affect the rest of our lives. We are daily solving loads of problems. Our dilemmas shift from “Which crayon should I use?” to “Am I enough?” which truly is not easy to cope with. That is why I would like to share with you some tips that helped me in the past.

So, how to survive adolescence and successfully cope with all of its challenges?

Find new hobbies and friends. When we are young, we mostly do activities and sports that our parents want us to do. Choosing and trying out a new hobby can help you with enjoying free time. That doesn't mean you need to get rid of all your past hobbies- if you have a hobby from childhood that you enjoy, continue with it but if not, don't be afraid to give them up and find “fresh ones”. Also, because birds of feather flock together you can find new friends while attending those sessions of your interest. Hobbies and friends can help you enjoy free time meaningfully and deal with stress and other issues much more easily.



Source: <https://www.natestreeper.com/single-post/2020/08/29/my-hobbies-include>

Get inspired. I believe it is super important especially when growing up to seek for more information beyond the bubble that your parents present you. It will help you to better think about life and manage your priorities. It is great to read books- that can sound as the most boring activity to some, but trust me, when you are in control over the books you read, it becomes more enjoyable. Currently there are millions of books out there and everyone can find something pleasurable to read. If you haven't changed your mind and still aren't willing to open a book for the rest of your life, you can still listen to audiobooks or podcasts. They can both present fascinating ideas that can make your way to school efficient or cleaning more pleas-

ant. Lastly, I recommend watching videos, shows or movies that have inspiring ideas or new information within them. Great examples are Ted talks or American shows like Last week tonight that can be both fun and instructive and make your time more productive without you even noticing.



Source: <https://startupsventurecapital.com/did-you-know-your-beliefs-can-make-you-poor-32e868866d4>

Have goals. It is important to find motivation to just live your life and don't be stressed about every small task. It can be really helpful to challenge yourself and set yourself personal goals. But don't misunderstand me here – these goals should not be about grades or how many parties a week you are able to attend. These goals should be about something that you enjoy and that gives you relief from day-to-day life such as previously mentioned books and hobbies. An example could be to read 20 minutes a day or to learn how to play the piano. Lastly, it is really helpful to create SMART goals that are more effective.



Source: <https://www.searchenginejournal.com/seo-goals/285965/#close>

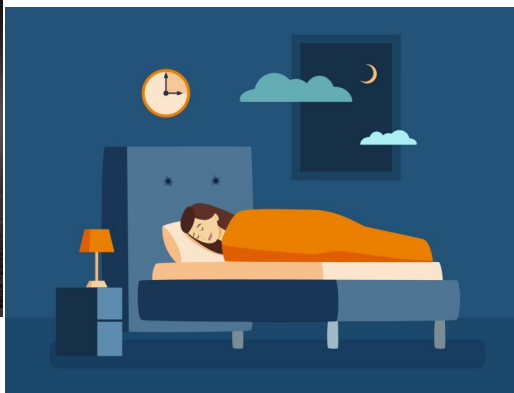
Acknowledge the changes in life and learn to like them. Stepping out of your comfort zone is hella hard but accepting the change can help you to make the transition easier. Accept that growth takes pain in whatever form. Just trust the process and learn to love the pain it takes in order to make you better.



Source: <https://peopleconscience.com/2016/12/07/benefits-of-employee-engagement/>

Get enough sleep and try to have a stable sleep schedule. Research shows that teenagers should aim for at least 8 hours of sleep every night. Still, this can sound unreachable for most teenagers as most of teenagers sleep between 6,5-7,5 hours. But getting sufficient amount and quality of sleep is a real life changer. Try to have stable waking time every day of week and in the evening listen to your body. Thus, when your eyes are barely opened,

stop that episode of *Friends* you are watching, and go to bed. Getting more sleep can help you concentrate better, be less moody or increase your overall productivity. This can be really helpful to you as a student, because you can actually have your school work done faster and have more time in the day to concentrate on your hobbies.



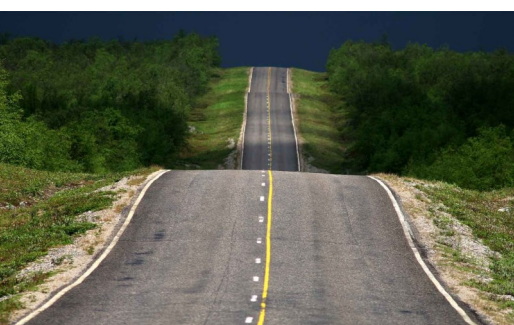
Source: <https://images.mix.com/production/b2/31/b23180714346364386b6b3f198a8acbc.jpg>

Be happy and enjoy everything that you are doing. Finally, I would like to mention that whatever happens just chill out. As one debate judge once told me- sh*t happens. Life won't always be walkaway and that is the whole point. You will fall too many times but always just try to get back on your legs with your head raised and a smile of a winner that does not care. When you are enjoying easy tasks, everything becomes just smoother and much more pleasant.



Source: <https://www.psd.gov.sg/images/default-source/challenge-library/Article-Image/challenge-2015-may-level-up-061-jpg>

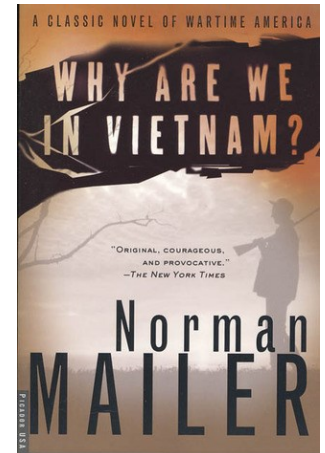
I hope you will apply these things into your daily life. Try at least a few of them and you will see a huge improvement in your living. And, after all, don't be afraid of growing up. Adolescence is also one of the best times of our lives so just enjoy yourself and don't overthink every step you take. Relish that “highway to hell” as much as possible because eventually one day it will end and you will be left only with adult responsibilities.



Source: <https://m.media-amazon.com/images/I/71VWcWPelUL.jpg>

BOOK REVIEW

Let me catch your attention like Mailer caught mine while reading “WHY ARE WE IN VIETNAM”. It's an extraordinary book about a hunting trip to Alaska. And the author definitely did not disappoint with catching my attention, how he had done it?



Source: <https://i.gr-assets.com/images/S/compressed.photo.goodreads.com/books/1316638711/131790.jpg>

The name of the book itself works pretty much as a way to engage the audience. Whether you are a non-reader like me*, or you don't judge a book by its cover and name, you would be really curious when Vietnam mentioned in the title would come. And Mailer would tighten you till the last chapter, and previously won't even touch that theme a little bit. During reading you'll try to be more attentive because you are trying to figure out, how it could be related to Vietnam.

The use of words can be really surprising for a reader in the 21st century. However in my opinion in 1967, when the book was published, it was not that big deal. Since the majority of characters including protagonist are Texans, there is surely no shortage of southern slang. Or D.J., the main character, would rather say 'big-ass Texan' slang. So many vulgarities could sometimes be annoying, however, it is something completely different than the required reading that we are used to.

In any case, the language of the book is not interesting only in terms of swear-words, but the variety of used words is remarkable. And it is not only about ordinary synonyms, but the boys come up with a name for literally everything. For example, there is a wolf fighting with an Eagle. They called the wolf 'Lupo II' and the eagle 'Mr. Lobster with wings', 'Thing with a claw', 'E Pluribus', 'old man Eagle' and finally 'Magnum Lightning Zero' (or 'MLZ' or any combination of those letters and words they represent). Thus there is not much of unintended repetition of words in the book. Unfortunately, it could lead to getting lost in the book.

And I would say that the biggest characteristics of the book for me are the comparisons. Mr Mailer would not write 'red as a strawberry', however, he would develop it into few sentences or even a page. And the fact that it is not the only straight-up narration of a story makes the book a thousand times more interesting.

Even though at the begging I thought that it would be the worst book I've ever read, it turned out that I'm pretty delighted by the unusualness of the book.

BÁRA VOTLUČKOVÁ

DANIEL STRNAD



WORDS HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD, SO WE'VE BEEN CHOOSING THEM CAREFULLY FOR FOURTEEN YEARS.

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