

Matt's Home News

News To Help You Save Time And Money

April 2016

The Power Of A Simple Metaphor

A teacher gives three toys to her young students. Each is a plastic figure of a person, and each figure has holes in its head. One has a hole in each ear. Another has a hole in one ear and in its mouth. And the third has a hole in just one ear.

The teacher hands the children a small dropper of water and tells them to put water into one ear hole of each figure, and then describe what happens.

They describe what happens with each figure literally. The water runs all the way through the first figure, with a hole in each ear. The water runs out of the mouth of the figure with a hole in its ear and mouth. And the water stays inside the figure with only a hole in its ear.



Then the teacher says, "Imagine that instead of water, you poured a little secret into each figure's ear." And she has them try it out. They imagine pouring a secret in each ear, then report the results.

She asks the children what happened to the secret for each figure. Instead of being literal,

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the children report that the first figure didn't listen, because the secret went in one ear and out the other. The second was not a friend because the secret went in its ear and out its mouth right away and wasn't a secret anymore. But the last was a friend because it held onto the secret.

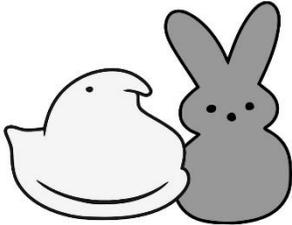
This led to a class discussion about gossip and friends and trust that would stay with these second graders all of their lives.

It just goes to show that a powerful metaphor can be much more tenacious than mere facts.

~ Matt Haviland

Peep, Peep! All About This Spring Treat

To many children, Easter means colored eggs, chocolate, a visit from the Easter Bunny—and Peeps, those sugary marshmallow confections that look like



cute tiny chicks...or these days, bunnies and other characters. If you served up Peeps this past Easter, you might have wondered where these little treats came from. Here are a few little-known facts:

- **Origins.** Peeps were created in 1953 by Sam Born, a Brooklyn based candy maker in the US.
- **Production.** The first Peeps were squeezed by hand from a pastry tube, and each one took hours to make. Today they take about six minutes each.
- **Volume.** Some 5.5 million Peeps are created every day, which amounts to two billion Peeps a year. That's enough to circle the Earth—three times.
- **Freshness.** Some people enjoy Peeps when they're soft. Others prefer to leave them out for a few days until they firm up (or "mature," as the manufacturer characterizes it).
- **Alternatives.** Peeps are more than just a snack food. Apparently the Internet is full of recipes, including Peep fondue, Peep pizza, and Peep sushi. On the other hand, many professional and amateur artists use Peeps in their artwork, constructing elaborate scenes for *The Washington Post's* annual Peeps Diorama Contest. And on the less-cute side, there are, apparently, many young people who look forward to the tradition every year of blowing up a package of Peeps in the microwave, just to watch it happen.

April's Foolish Quiz Question

Q: *What can be seen in the middle of March and April that cannot be seen at the beginning or end of either month?*

March Question

Q: *The month of March was named for which mythological god?*

A: *Mars.*

Keep Up The Speed When You Walk

A brisk walk is good for your health, especially as you grow older. A study reported on the LiveScience website found that older adults who maintain a speed of 3 miles per hour when they walk have a 50 percent lower risk of heart disease than people with a pace of two miles per hour or slower. And folks who walk an average of seven blocks a day have a 47 percent lower chance of developing heart disease than those whose walks add up to just five blocks a day or less. So put your shoes on and get walking!

What Are You Tolerating?

Multitasking today is a lot more complex than it used to be. Our grandparents might have multitasked by getting a meal on the table while doing laundry and watching the kids. But today we do the same thing while *also* texting, planning a work meeting, and checking email.

With so many competing distractions, our stress rises. We can become cranky and unfocused.

Now throw in a bunch of less obvious distractions — the kind that add to our stress without us even knowing it. I call these *tolerations*. Tolerations are little, but persistent distractions that we simply try to ignore, usually around the house, but also at work and in our cars.

Tolerations are things like a smudge on the wall, a messy counter top, a loose cabinet, or an ugly piece of art. You see these things out of the corner of your eye, in plain sight, but ignored — tolerated.

We usually don't notice tolerations until we remove them. Then we breathe a sigh of relief and wonder why we didn't do that sooner. One reason that staging works in homes for sale is that the tolerations are missing. Buyers walk into a clean slate. They have a subconsciously refreshing sense of no distractions.

Try this: Just sit in one room of your house and look around. Make a list of everything you see that is out of place, torn, cluttered, ugly, etc. Then eliminate one distraction at a time with no time pressure to add to your stress. Take a week, a month, even a year. Notice how you feel each time you remove something from your peripheral attention.

Aspirin Prevents Skin Cancer?

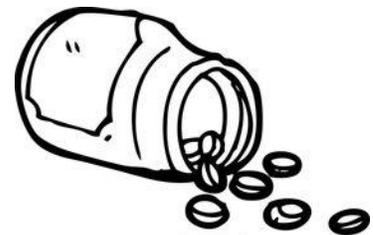
Aspirin is known to cure our aches and pains and improve heart health. It may also be useful in preventing certain kinds of skin cancer, according to an article on the *Discover* magazine website.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like aspirin and ibuprofen, are already known to help prevent cancers in the colon, lungs, prostate, and breasts. A meta-analysis of studies, some previously unavailable to researchers, turned up evidence that non-aspirin NSAIDs can reduce the risk of developing squamous cell carcinoma by 15 percent, and that when aspirin is added to the mix, the risk drops to 18 percent. NSAIDs are known to inhibit COX-2, an enzyme produced by skin cells in response to ultraviolet light.

Talk to your dermatologist about aspirin, and otherwise limit your exposure to UV light to stay safe from skin cancer all year round.

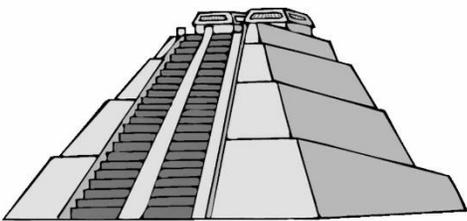
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Archeological Discoveries Still Being Made

The mysteries of King Tutankhamun's tomb have yet to be fully revealed, according to Egyptologists. Egypt's minister of antiquities is seeking permission to conduct a radar inspection of the Valley of the Kings tomb in hopes of finding the remains of Queen Nefertiti, or possibly King Tut's mother Kia, buried behind the walls of the chamber. No matter who it turns out to be, chances are that Tutankhamun's final resting place has more secrets still to be unearthed.



In other news of ancient times, archeologists have discovered two sealed chambers underneath the Templo Mayor, an Aztec temple in the middle of present-day Mexico City. Explorers found a hidden tunnel in 2013, and recently uncovered a passage to what they believe is a Cuauhxicalco—a space used in rituals to burn the remains of rulers. They speculate that the sealed chambers may hold the bodies of several Aztec kings, including Montezuma I, who ruled the Aztecs from 1440 to 1469.

WELCOME NEW CLIENTS

Here are some of the new clients who became members of our “Real Estate Family” this past month. I'd like to welcome you!

We love recognizing our wonderful new friends and existing clients who are kind enough to introduce their friends, family and neighbors to us.

Need For Confession

A young priest went to his older mentor for help. “Father, no one wants to let me hear their confession. What should I do?”

“Let me sit in the confession booth with you and listen to how you conduct yourself,” the elder priest suggested.

After hearing a few confessions, the two priests met in the senior priest's office. “Now, I want you to try a few things,” the elder priest said. “Practice crossing your arms over your chest and rubbing your chin with one hand.”

The young priest did as he asked.

Then he was told, “Try saying some things like, ‘I see ... Yes ... Go on ... I understand ... How do you feel about that?’”

The priest rehearsed the lines until the other one nodded.

“Now,” said the senior priest, “don't you think that will work better than slapping your knee and saying, ‘No way! What happened next?’”

Clever Household Cleaning Hacks

- **Steam-clean your microwave.** Cut a lemon in half and put it in a microwave-safe dish filled with water. Zap it until the water boils. Let it steam for another minute before opening. The gunk can now be wiped away with less effort.
- **Speed up dryer time.** Throw one clean dry towel in with your wet clothes before starting the dryer. 10-15 minutes later, take it out. The dry towel will absorb some of the excess moisture.
- **Clean scorched pans.** Fill the bottom of the pan with water and a cup of white vinegar. Simmer. Remove the pan and add 2 tablespoons baking soda. Empty the pan and scrub lightly to remove burn marks.
- **Dust lamp shades** with an adhesive lint remover roll.
- **Dusting magic.** Use “used” dryer sheets to pick up dust on your computer keyboard and screen, wipe the TV screen, buff out water spots on the bath mirror, clean murky car windshields, and pick up dirt from your baseboards.

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There are people who prefer to say “yes” and there are people who prefer to say “no.” Those who say “yes” are rewarded by the adventures they have. Those who say “no” are rewarded by the safety they attain. It’s a matter of preference. —Keith Johnstone

The Curious History of Cash

Cash is widely recognized as meaning financial currency that can be accessed immediately or near-immediately.

The origin of the word *cash* is less clear. Some claim that the word cash comes from the modern French word *caisse*, which means (*money*) *box*, from the Provençal word *caissa*, from the Italian *cassa*, from the Latin *capsa* all meaning *box*. In the 18th century, the word passed to refer to the money instead of the actual box containing it. Another claim is that it was derived from Tamil word *kāsu* meaning *a coin*, by East India

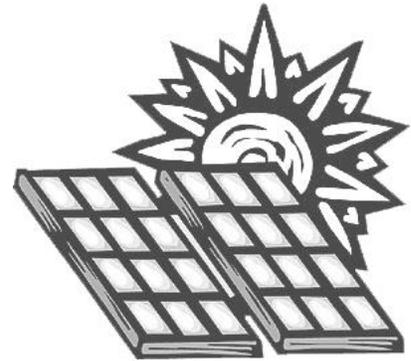


Company.

Truly Useful Solar-Powered Gadgets

Solar power seems to be everywhere these days. Here are a few of the more innovative and inspiring solar products that you can really use.

- **Solar backpacks and tote bags.** Small solar-power generators, equipped with a lithium battery, are incorporated into the backpacks to power cell phones, MP3 players and other small electronic devices anywhere, anytime.
- **Solar cell phones & chargers.** Solar incorporated into some smartphone's touchscreens makes them accessible even after the battery has died. For ordinary phones, dozens of cases are available with solar-charging cells built in.
- **Solar ovens & barbeques.** This invention can bake, boil and steam food by harnessing the power of the sun through solar panels without the “unclean” energy of fossil-fueled electricity (wood, coal).
- **Solar laptops.** Two hours in the sun can supply these laptops with 10 hours of battery life. External mini solar panels can provide life to ordinary laptops, too.
- **Solar sun shades.** Umbrellas, beach covers, blinds, and porch covers all have solar cells built-in. Why not? By design, these are intended to face the hot sun.
- **Solar roof tiles.** Made to look like old-world blue tile roofs, these are solar with style. Similar technology has been incorporated into solar bricks and siding.
- **Solar decorative lighting.** From Mason jar lids to tiny solar "leaves" on a solar-charging tree, solar has been incorporated into a huge array of micro-lighting and charging devices.
- **Solar window outlets.** Plug your power cord into the window. These devices suction right onto the glass to provide a low-level of power for everything from charging devices to powering small lamps, hot plates, and clocks.
- **Solar camping gear.** If you're a car camper, you might enjoy having your tent powered up during the day, so you can plug into it at night, a features that's useful for charging cell phones, lighting, and other small gadgets. Also try solar reading lights, solar water heaters, solar flashlights, and solar generators.



MATT'S HOME NEWS

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Are You Who You Are, or Who You're Measuring Yourself Against?

Dear Friend,

I believe that people often ignore their own opportunities for happiness because they're too focused on comparing themselves to other people.

In the movie *Amadeus*, a composer named Salieri is driven mad by measuring himself against Mozart, who had a rare genius that Salieri could never match. Salieri called himself the king of mediocrity by comparison to Mozart.

Yet, Salieri accomplished great things in his own right. He wrote acclaimed operas, was the favored court composer, taught many appreciative students, and lived in luxury. Sadly, he never truly enjoyed what he had.

There is another story like this...the story of the African farmer who saw other people around him getting rich by finding diamonds. He envied them, so he sold his farm and used the cash to wander the land, searching for wealth. In the end, he died broke and sad. When the new owner of the farm took over, he discovered the land was covered in diamonds. The farm became the Kimberly Diamond Mine, the richest the world has ever known. The original farmer had literally been standing on acres of diamonds, but he never thought to look down at his own feet.

These stories are metaphors that remind us to look for opportunities that suit us, rather than measuring our success against others.

Sincerely,



Matt Haviland
Your Real Estate Consultant For Life

P.S. I need to take this message to heart when giving myself feedback, too! Let me know what you think at Matt@SJHouses.com or 609-338-3773.

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