Community

P4 Ever found yourself hating a colleague for the most trivial of reasons? But with help you can move on.

P16 From real struggle comes the greatest strength, says motivational speaker and life coach Martha Anyait.

Community

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GULF TIMES
COMMUNITY

True love or lies

Are pets really good for us – or just hairy health hazards? P2-3

Cuisine
Learning all about the natural maple syrup.

Page 6

Showbiz
Pfeiffer key to Maleficent sequel for director.

Page 15
The animal-lover’s dilemma

Many animal-lovers think a cat or dog can help you live a longer, happier, healthier life. But does the science back them up?

There is plenty of proof about how a bout of pet-stroking can lower your heart rate (and the pet’s), easing your body into a less stressed condition. This seems to apply across the spectrum, from dogs and cats to snakes and goats.

By Jules Howard

M y childhood dog was called Biff. Biff was a handful. He was a loud, cocky Shetland sheepdog who oozed bravado and bravery. Yet, underneath it all, he struggled with the dog version of impostor syndrome.

Biff was a bag of masked insecurity. He was like the kid in school who says he has seen all the scary movies, but refuses to go to any sleepovers where scary movies are played; the kid who has “a girlfriend at another school.” It was that fragile side I especially loved about Biff during my teenage years. We shared an insecurity that neither of us had the cognitive skills to put into words. This was a friendship – one that lasted as he grew older, grumpier and more infirm.

He was an exceptionally licky dog, and loved nothing more than slurping his tongue over our jeans, shoes, socks and coats. Officially, this behaviour was something we attempted to quash – but, every few nights, I would tiptoe into the kitchen and allow him to lick my naked hands and wrists to his heart’s content. For me, the sensation was tickly and calming, and never once disgusting, even though those around me told me it was not a good idea, mainly because it was highly likely that, on any given day, Biff had stuck his nose into some poor fox’s rotting cadaver. I didn’t care. I washed my hands like a surgeon afterwards, obviously. But it was what Biff wanted.
I haven’t had a dog since Biff (I’m nearly 40), and my family and I are deciding whether it’s time to get our own dog. This feels like a very big decision. Part of the reason we want a dog is that we want to walk more. We want to be healthier. We want to be happier. But questions flutter anxiously in the pit of my stomach. Will having a pet really make us happier? Will we be healthier? Does having a pet always make us better people?

As many academics have pointed out, other factors contribute to our general health – income, for instance, which is inherently linked to pet ownership because pets cost money. Bluntly, the truth behind some of these studies may simply be that those with more money can, on the whole, afford the luxuries of good health and pet ownership. One large-scale study in California involving 5,200 families failed to find a relationship between owning a pet and overall health after correcting for income and the affluency of the local neighbourhood. Other studies have had similar results. And some even suggest pets are bad for us.

One study of 21,000 people in Finland, for instance, suggested that pet owners are more, not less, likely to have higher blood pressure and cholesterol levels. If you really want to go there, there are some pretty alarming downsides to pet ownership. In England, for instance, between 6,000 and 7,000 people are admitted to hospital for dog bites each year. Tripping over pets is another potential danger – each year, this sends an estimated 87,000 people to hospitals in the US, particularly elderly people. And what of the parasites that pets bring into the house – the fleas, ticks and mites? And the potentially fatal diseases they can transmit to humans, from pathogens such as salmonella (from reptiles) and capnocytophaga that can be passed to humans in cat and dog saliva? For many people, the answer to whether pets are good for us is clearly no – although, to be fair, you are far more likely to be exposed to disease or violence by another human than by a dog, cat or pygmy hedgehog.

There are emotional downsides, too. One of the often forgotten aspects of pet ownership is having to care for animals into their old age, sometimes dealing with diseases that last months or years. Assuming you are a responsible pet owner, who takes this as seriously as you would caring for a human family member, this is a heavy emotional burden. A 2017 study involving 238 human participants found that pet owners with chronically ill pets had higher levels of stress and anxiety, coupled with a lower quality of life. And after death? My guess is that a family grieving for their recently dead cat is not going to appear in an advert for Pets at Home any time soon. But there is probably no more damning indictment of the idea that pets always make us happier than the fact that so many of us get an animal, only to give them up weeks, months or years later. This is especially true for “designer” and “handbag” dogs: in the past seven years, the number of chihuahuas in RSPCA rescue centres has risen by 700%; dachshunds are up 600% and pomeranians up 440%. You need only scour dogsocialmedia for a few moments to see how often certain dog breeds are viewed as lifestyle accessories rather than living, breathing animals with greater needs than colour-coordinated doggy pop-socks and collar.

If we were able to put all these pros and cons into a melting pot and come up with a definitive answer to the question of whether or not pets are good for us, what would the answer be? The answer is always too complicated. Because humans and our circumstances are so universally mixed up and complex. The simple truth is that having a pet has good and bad sides, and it may not be for everyone. Which means we have a duty to think carefully before acquiring one. We need to imagine the good times we might have with a pet and to consider the bad times, too: the insecurity, the grumpiness in old age, the infirmity.

I think I have talked my way out of having a dog. If so, that’s OK. Loving animals doesn’t mean you have to have one. Ask not what a pet can do for you, but what you can do for a pet. – The Guardian
Letting go of a workplace grudge

Ever found yourself hating a colleague for the most trivial of reasons? Of course you have. But with help you can move on, writes Paula Cocozza

How many grudges do you have at work? The workplace grudge can spring with equal force from small and large hurts. These may range – allow me to try to imagine – from the seemingly accidental negligence of the person who changed the toaster setting in the canteen so that your breakfast bagel burned, to the larger disappointment of being overlooked for a job. In my former workplaces, I visualised grudges as small red flags fluttering above the heads of certain colleagues. This can’t be healthy. So why are grudges so powerful, and what is the best way to manage them?

“As soon as you point the finger at someone who has wronged you, there are always three fingers pointing back at you,” says Steven Sylvester, a psychologist and the author of Detox Your Ego. According to Sylvester, all grudges predate themselves because they spring from a grudge-ready mindset.

A grudge is really “a person manifesting their frustration by pointing it at someone else. It’s a defensive tactic to explain away something we fear,” he says. “If you have serial grudges, that (shows) a strong desire not to take full responsibility for what is happening in your life.”

As a former professional cricketer who had to compete for selection, Sylvester has first-hand experience of grudges. He was also unfairly overlooked for a job once – although this was a validated grudge because one member of the interview panel thought Sylvester had been wronged, and phoned him later to apologise. The key, he says, is “to hold the mirror” to your grudge. “What does it really say about the person you hold a grudge against?” Sylvester describes lighter grudges as something “to be picked up and put down like a lighter grudges as something “to be had from a well-nourished psychological activity. The author Joanna Cannon wrote on Twitter that she feeds grudges “as if they were small exotic plants”. And William Blake’s poem A Poison Tree is perhaps the seminal work of grudge literature. Surely it’s OK to reserve a small, manageable dose of dislike for someone? Emma Donaldson-Feilder, an occupational psychologist, doesn’t think so. “Actually, I think that’s unhealthy for most people. I would define a grudge as holding onto to something beyond the point that it’s useful … It’s a stone in your shoe,” she says.

If you have used the original hurt to motivate you, but the hurt still remains, “it may be helpful to let go” says Donaldson-Feilder. This feels vaguely disappointing. It doesn’t seem so very wrong to keep the motivation and the grudge. “Mmm,” she murmurs sympathetically. “But having negative feelings towards someone is always going to be a bit destabilising. It comes down to compassion, and being kind to ourselves and valuing ourselves.” – The Guardian
Is screen time harmful for your kids?

Adjusting your behaviour to each new wrinkle in the science is a mug’s game, writes Oliver Burkeman

It’s too much screen time bad for your kids? Don’t look to this column for an answer. The truth is, nobody knows. The unceasing pendulum of lifestyle advice is currently swinging through a “debunking” phase, with numerous articles insisting it’s all been a big panic over nothing. But that’s partly because a report published earlier this year, by the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, said there wasn’t enough evidence to give firm guidelines to parents. As the paediatricians explained, though, the key problem is that sufficient high-quality research has yet to be conducted – a conclusion that somehow got turned into this headline, on the parenting website Motherly: “How harmful is screen time for kids? Not as bad as we might think.” The article was sponsored by the US mobile company Verizon – though science has yet to inform us if this was a matter of causation or merely correlation.

Of course, there are valid research findings in this area: there’s evidence that excessive childhood TV time is correlated with obesity and poorer mental health, while social media use probably isn’t often a direct cause of teenage depression. And some studies are better designed than others. But neither opponents nor proponents of screen time have much incentive to mention a more unsettling fact – that it’s almost certainly impossible to know whether too much screen time would clearly damage your kids. The reasons aren’t surprising: human lives are extraordinarily complex things, and no study that aims to say anything meaningful about the population at large can do justice to the innumerable variables at work in your particular family.

So maybe screen time is bad for your kids, but not as bad as the parenting they’d receive if you didn’t plonk them in front of a screen so you could get a quick nap? Or maybe it’s good, but less good than the alternatives. Some research suggests screen time has powerful educational benefits; but obviously that depends not only on what your kids are watching, but on what they’d be doing with their time if they weren’t glued to the iPad. Maybe social media triggers depression in children only very rarely – but what if yours is that rare case? And on it goes.

Researchers can control for some of these factors: for example, they try to ensure that when they detect a link between screen time and obesity, they’re not really just detecting effects of poverty. But you can’t control for each human life.

None of which makes this kind of research utterly valueless as life advice: it’s useful as general guidance for what’s likely to lead to good outcomes, all else being equal. But it does mean that anxiously attempting to implement such findings in your life, adjusting your behaviour to each new wrinkle in the science, is a mug’s game. In fact, in the case of parenting, it’s worse than that, because the anxiety you’ll broadcast in your efforts to follow the latest rules might prove just as detrimental to your children as if you’d failed to follow them. Perhaps we need more research into what happens when parents try too hard to obey parenting research. Maybe sometimes, to paraphrase Philip Larkin, they screw you up, as a direct result of attempting not to. – The Guardian

Watch your weight before 40, else face cancer risk

Researchers have found that being overweight before the age of 40 could increase the risk of various cancers in adults.

“Obesity is an established risk factor for several cancers. In this study, we have focused on the degree, timing and duration of overweight and obesity in relation to cancer risk,” said study author Tone Bjørge, Professor at University of Bergen in Norway.

For the findings, published in the International Journal of Epidemiology, the research team wanted to find out how adult overweight (BMI over 25) and obesity (BMI over 30) increase the risk of different types of cancer.

The researchers used data for 2,20,000 individuals from the MeCan study, with participants from Norway, Sweden and Austria.

Data from health examinations, including information on height and weight, were linked to data from national cancer registries. According to the researchers, 27,883 individuals were diagnosed with cancer during follow-up, of which 9,761 (35 percent) were obese-related.

The study showed that if you were overweight before age 40, the risk of developing cancer increases by: 70 percent for endometrial cancer, 58 percent for male renal-cell cancer, 29 percent for male colon cancer and 15 percent for all obesity-related cancers (both sexes).

Obese participants (BMI over 30) at the first and second health examination had the highest risk of developing obesity-related cancer, compared to participants with normal BMI.

“The risk increased by 64 percent for male participants and 48 percent for females,” Bjørge added. – IANS

Sleep apnea linked to blindness in diabetic patients

Severe sleep apnea is a risk factor for developing diabetic macular edema, a complication of diabetes that can cause vision loss or blindness, a study said.

For the study, the research team looked at the data from all patients diagnosed over an 8-year period at Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in Taiwan.

“Based on the results, we hope that more medical professionals will approach sleep apnea as a risk factor for diabetic macular edema,” said study researcher Juifan Chiang from Taiwan.

This condition is called ‘Diabetic Retinopathy’ and is a leading cause of blindness in the US.

Diabetic macular edema is more difficult to treat in patients with severe sleep apnea, the researchers said.

When diabetics have poor control over the blood sugar levels, tiny blood vessels at the back of the eye can become damaged.

Sometimes, tiny bulges protrude from the blood vessels, leaking fluid and blood into the retina. This fluid can cause swelling or edema in an area of the retina that allows us to see clearly.

According to the researchers, sleep apnea may contribute to the development and worsening of Diabetic Retinopathy by increasing insulin resistance, elevating inflammation and raising blood pressure, all of which can damage the blood vessels at the back of the eye.

They found the rate of severe sleep apnea was significantly higher in patients with diabetic macular edema compared with those without diabetic macular edema (40.6 percent vs. 45.5 percent).

They also found that the worse their sleep apnea was, the worse their macular edema.

Severe sleep apnea was also more prevalent in patients who needed more treatment to control their macular edema.

The study was presented at the 123rd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology in the US. – IANS
Learning all about the natural maple syrup

I am sure almost everyone reading this has heard about maple syrup. While buying many of us even mistake the cheaper sugar syrup served during the breakfast to be maple syrup. My idea this week is to make you more aware about maple syrup and how to incorporate it into your diet in moderation. The fact is that both maple syrup and syrup are sugar but one is natural and the other one contains artificial ingredients such as corn syrup and caramel colour. Real maple syrup is made from concentrating sap of the sugar maple tree. Even though real maple syrup is healthier than fake maple syrup, you should still limit your portion size to avoid access sugar and calorie intake.

Canada is the world leader when it comes to maple syrup and supplies 80% of the world’s supply comes from Quebec province in eastern Canada. There are two main stages in the maple syrup production.

1. A hole is drilled in a maple tree so that its sap pours into a container.
2. The sap is boiled until most of the water evaporates, leaving a thick, sugary syrup, which is then filtered to remove impurities.

The final product is then used to sweeten many dishes. There are several grades of maple syrup characterised by colour but some other countries follow their own classification standards.

In the US, maple syrup is classified as either Grade A or B, where Grade A is further characterised into three sub groups – Light Amber, Medium Amber and Dark amber and Grade B is the darkest available syrup. The darker syrups are made from sap extracted later in the harvest season and have a strong maple flavour and are usually used for baking, whereas the lighter ones are drizzled directly atop foods like pancakes.

It is always advisable to read the food labels whenever you buy any ingredient as it tells you a lot of helpful information which you may use to turn your everyday simple diet into a healthy one.

When buying the maple syrup, read the label to know if it is real maple syrup as compared to maple flavoured syrup, which is loaded with refined sugar or high fructose corn syrup. Maple syrup is not really that healthy because it contains sugar but is healthier in a way that contains minerals and antioxidants. Pure maple syrup contains calcium, potassium, iron, zinc and manganese which are beneficial for overall wellbeing. But always keep in mind to maintain a balance when it comes to sugar consumption as 1/3 cup of maple syrup contains around 60 grams of sugar. Please note that excessive amount of sugar consumption leads to type 2 diabetes and heart diseases. Moderation is the key when it comes to sugar consumption and you are better off staying away from it. Please also note that maple syrup is not a good source of nutrients as compared to whole foods like vegetables, fruits and unprocessed animal foods.

Maple syrup trivia for you

It takes about 40 litres of sap to make one litre of maple syrup. A maple tree takes about 40 years and 3% sugar, boiling the sap continuously evaporates the water and you get the maple syrup. It takes about 40 litres of sap to make one litre of maple syrup. Most sap harvesting is done by tapping the maple trees native to Canada and you get the maple syrup. The below recipe is one of my favourite recipes, which involves less preparation and is a perfect family meal idea.

Chef’s Special

TARUN KAPOOR

**Maple Soy Ginger Braised Salmon**

Ingredients

- Salmon fillet 1200 gm
- Maple syrup 4 tbsp.
- Soy sauce 4 tbsp.
- Shallots, minced 2 tbsp.
- Rice vinegar 2 tbsp.
- Ginger, minced 1 tbsp.
- Black pepper to taste
- Sesame seeds to garnish
- Lemon wedge to garnish

Method:

1. Whisk scallion, soy sauce, vinegar, maple syrup, shallots and ginger in a medium bowl until combined.
2. Cut the salmon in the desired size and marinate it in the prepared marinade and refrigerate for 2-3 hours, reserve the remaining sauce.
3. Toast the sesame seeds by tossing them continuously in a heated skillet over medium heat for 2-3 minutes and spread them on a tray to cool them off, keep aside.
4. Preheat your oven and line a baking pan with foil and grease with oil or coat with cooking spray.
5. Place the salmon, skin side down and cook in the oven for 8-10 minutes.
6. After 5 minutes in the cooking process, remove the pan and drizzle the remaining sauce on the salmon and continue to cook till salmon is cooked.
7. Check the internal temperature of salmon is above 65 degrees Celsius.
8. Remove from the oven, drizzle with toasted sesame seeds and serve along with your choice of vegetable and starch, garnish with lemon wedge.

Note: Keep the salmon marinated for longer time for better taste. The sugar in the maple syrup combined with all the seasonings make a delectable marinade. Salmon in itself is a wonderful food item and this recipe takes salmon to another level by enhancing it and taking it to the next level. There is no salt in the recipe because soy sauce contains salt, you can add more salt to the recipe if you desire so. You can use a gluten free soy sauce to make it apt for gluten intolerant people.

Chef: Tarun Kapoor, Culinary Mastermind, USA. He may be contacted at tarunkapoors@gmail.com
Aspire Academy marks ‘Global Citizenship Day’

Aspire Academy recently marked ‘Global Citizenship Day’, bringing staff from more than 65 nationalities and their unique cultures under its roof. Aspire Academy organises this event to celebrate and introduce student-athletes to cultural and ethnic diversity. “This is part of our extracurricular activities to increase our students’ awareness of different cultures and we think that this approach makes it more interesting for them to learn something about other countries,” said Ali Salem Altha, Deputy Director General of Aspire Academy. “The diversity of our staff representing more than 70 nationalities is something that differentiates us from other schools, and we cherish it as one of our strengths,” said Badr Al-Hay, Director of Education and Student Affairs.

Carla Palmer, English teacher at Aspire Academy, said, “Qatar is such a small country, but there are so many people coming from different places of the world. It’s very nice for the students to get this exposure and as global citizens, they need to learn what other cultures have in common with their own culture and how can they bridge differences.”

Abdulaziz Dalloul, LPD Educator, added, “In order to get them to a deeper understanding of different cultures, we also involved them in the event organisation.” The students selected countries they were interested in and helped the staff member in charge of the country’s stand to present it to fellow students. “This collaboration between students and staff is a good example to show how we put the values of Aspire Academy, such as synergy, into practice.”

Daniel Abebe Asnake, Mathematics teacher at Aspire Academy who is from Ethiopia, said, “The students are really eager to find out more things about the cultural backgrounds of the people around them. What I want the students to know about Ethiopia after this event is that it is the second most populated country in Africa after Nigeria. It’s a very diverse country with its own calendar and over 80 different languages. Furthermore, it’s the birthplace of coffee and the home of some of the world’s best runners – as they could see at the recent IAAF World Athletics Championship in Doha, where Ethiopian athletes won eight medals including 2 golds.”

BUQ felicitates its chief patron

Bazm-e-Urdu Qatar (BUQ) recently organised an event to felicitate M S Bukhari, Chief Patron of BUQ, at Grand Qatar Palace Hotel. Speaking on the occasion, M S Bukhari congratulated all the volunteers and other supporters for making the Platinum Jubilee Mushaira of BUQ a huge success. He further announced the promotion of Raqim Azmi as Joint Secretary.

The management committee members of BUQ, including Shaukat Ali Naz, Committee Chairman; Mansoor Azmi, Vice Chairman; Aijaz Hiader, President; Ather Azmi, Vice President; Qaiser Masood, PR Secretary, and Mohd Habibun Nabi, Senior Adviser, also spoke on the occasion. Ahmed Ashfaq, General Secretary of BUQ, was the master of ceremony.

NIS marks World Students’ Day

The students of Noble International School (NIS) recently honoured A P J Abdul Kalam, aerospace scientist and former president of India, on the occasion of World Students’ Day. The celebrations marked the 88th birthday of Kalam. The celebration featured various dance performances, exhibits, quiz competition and speeches. Speaking on the occasion, Shibu Abdul Rasheed, Principal of NIS, said, “It is important to have role models like A P J Abdul Kalam, to stay focus-driven throughout life.” Jayamon Joy and Robin K Jose, Vice Principals at NIS, also spoke on the occasion.
10 Core Principles of Entrepreneurship

**Know Thyself**

Understand your strengths, weaknesses, and your blind spots.

Find your passion, search for ideas that set your imagination soaring.

Continue learning new skills which will be relevant to your prospective venture.

**Have Deep Empathy**

Empathize with the people you interact with to build a profitable and sustainable business.

Understand the world as it is, and not according to how you would like it to be.

Listen to people; understand your customers by putting yourself in their shoes.
The Exercising Entrepreneur

**Extreme Exercise**

- **Larry Ellison**: Founder of Oracle often sells but is also in the gym regularly.
  - **600** calls per day
  - **4200** calls per week

- **Mark Holowesko**: Founder and CEO of Holowesko Partners LTD often cycles up to 80 miles a day and swims during lunch.
  - **3892** calls per day
  - **19460** calls per week

- **Nick Woodman**: Founder and CEO of GoPro, as you would expect, does extreme sports as often as possible.
  - **350** calls per day
  - **1750** calls per week

- **Richard Branson**: Founder of Virgin Media Group runs, swims, lifts weights, does yoga and even finds time to kitesurf.
  - **600** calls per day
  - **4200** calls per week

**Rockstar Runners**

- **Anil Ambani**: Chairman of ADA runs every single morning and is known as ‘Marathon Man’.
  - **1215** calls per day
  - **8500** calls per week

- **Frits van Paasschen**: Former CEO of Starwood Hotels and former CEOs even runs 10 miles every day.
  - **1350** calls per day
  - **9450** calls per week

- **Diana Verde Nieto**: Founder and CEO of Positive Luxury runs to the Gym outside her office every morning.
  - **800** calls per day
  - **4000** calls per week

- **Michelle Peluso**: Ex President and CEO of Travelocity runs 3 times a week and often works out at home.
  - **650** calls per day
  - **1950** calls per week
Digital welfare state

UN’s rapporteur on extreme poverty says in devastating account big tech companies are being allowed to go unregulated in ‘human right free-zones’ and not held accountable, writes Ed Pilkington

Nations around the world are “stumbling zombie-like into a digital welfare dystopia” in which artificial intelligence and other technologies are used to target, surveil and punish the poorest people, the United Nations’ monitor on poverty has warned.

Philip Alston, UN rapporteur on extreme poverty, has produced a devastating account of how new digital technologies are revolutionising the interaction between governments and the most vulnerable in society. In what he calls the rise of the “digital welfare state”, billions of dollars of public money is now being invested in automated systems that are radically changing the nature of social protection.

Alston’s report on the human rights implications of the shift will be presented to the UN general assembly on Friday. It says that AI has the potential to improve dramatically the lives of disadvantaged communities, but warns that such hope is being lost amid the constant drive for cost-cutting and “efficiency”.

Big tech companies are being allowed to go unregulated in “human rights free-zones”, welfare budgets are being decimated and new penalties are being imposed for non-compliance on people who may be digitally illiterate or lack access to the internet. In the UK, he notes, 12 million people, or one in five of the population, do not have essential digital skills needed for modern day-to-day life.

Alston writes that “crucial decisions to go digital have been taken by government ministers without consultation, or even by departmental officials without any significant policy discussions taking place”. As a result of the absence of accountability, “digital technologies are employed in the welfare state to surveil, target, harass and punish beneficiaries, especially the poorest and most vulnerable among them”.

A New York-based lawyer, Alston has become a piercing critic of inequality and disdain for basic human rights. In June 2018, he caused major ructions with the Trump administration by reporting that it was cruelly forcing millions of people into deprivation with its tax cuts for the rich. He went on to anger the British government with his damning report on austerity in the UK.

Now he is likely to displease several governments who will find his report uncomfortable reading. He says that the normal state of affairs whereby governments are accountable to their citizens has been turned upside down by the introduction of automated decision-making and the removal of human discretion from welfare systems.

“In such a world, citizens become ever more visible to their governments, but not the other way around,” Alston’s report also tears a strip out of Big Tech companies who he says are acting as forces unto themselves. The advent of the digital revolution has allowed the private sector to appropriate huge swathes of welfare state almost without public comment.

He points to examples from around the globe of companies involved in welfare systems: Net 1’s subsidiary Cash Paymaster Services together with MasterCard were initially involved in South Africa’s social grant distribution system which raised privacy concerns because of its biometric data collection. In Australia, Indue and Visa helped introduce cashless debit card trials, and IBM was central to the multimillion-dollar Sams system in Canada, the US, Germany and New Zealand.

The report states that in many schemes, the role and responsibility of these corporations are opaque, rendering public accountability impossible. “A handful of powerful executives are replacing governments and legislators in determining the directions in which societies will move and the values and assumptions which will drive those developments,” Alston writes.

Looking to the future, the UN monitor calls for Silicon Valley to be made accountable through regulation. The self-regulation that has been permitted in the big tech sector, uniquely so among major sectors of the economy, must end and technology companies must “legally be required to respect applicable human rights standards”.

Instead of inflicting misery on millions, digital technology could be used as a force for good. It could “ensure a higher standard of living for the vulnerable and disadvantaged, devise new ways of caring for those left behind. That would be the real digital welfare state revolution.”

— The Guardian
Colour by choice

Maze
Help the camper find his way to the lodge.

Connect the dots
Join the dots in order to find out more!

Picture crossword
FALL
USE THE PICTURES BELOW AS CLUES

ACROSS
1. 2. ORANGE BROWN YELLOW RED
3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40.

DOWN
1. 2. ORANGE BROWN YELLOW RED
3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40.

Answer: Autumn
Pooch Café
By Paul Gilligan

I have a feeling that I forgot to feed Poncho last night.

Oh, well, you can give him some extra this morning.

You don't understand. You know the expression "hungry"? Poncho takes that to whole new levels.

I'm sure you're exaggerating.

Yeah, I definitely forgot.

Just give him some jerky treats.

Which one of you boys owns that bow-legged horse out there?
Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The grid is also divided into nine (3x3) boxes. You are given a selection of values and to complete the puzzle, you must fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9 and none is repeated.

**Solution**

```
  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
2   4   7   6   3   1   9   2
3   9   4   2   5   8   6   7
4   5   3   1   6   9   8   4
5   9   2   4   7   3   1   6
6   1   6   8   9   2   3   5
7   8   1   5   4   6   2   3
8   3   5   7   1   4   9   2
9   6   9   2   8   5   4   1
```
Gaining weight in mid-20s linked to early death: Study

Gaining weight from your mid-20s into middle age is associated with an increased risk of premature death, warn researchers.

According to the study published in the BMJ journal, weight loss at older ages (from middle to late adulthood) was also linked to higher risk.

“The results highlight the importance of maintaining normal weight across adulthood, especially preventing weight gain in early adulthood, for preventing premature deaths in later life,” said study researchers from China.

For the study, researchers based in China set out to investigate the association between weight changes across adulthood and mortality.

Their findings were based on data from the 1988–94 and 1999–2014 US National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), a nationally representative annual survey that includes interviews, physical examinations and blood samples, to gauge the health of the US citizens.

Their analysis included 36,051 people aged 40 years or over with measured body weight and height at the start of the survey (baseline) and recalled weight at young adulthood (25 years old) and middle adulthood (average age 47 years).

Deaths from any cause and specifically from heart diseases were recorded for an average of 12 years, during which time there were 10,500 deaths. After taking account of potentially influential factors, the researchers found that people who remained obese throughout adult life had the highest risk of mortality, while people who remained overweight throughout adulthood had a very modest or no association with mortality.

Weight gain from young to middle adulthood was associated with increased risk of mortality, compared with participants who remained at normal weight.

Weight loss over this period was not significantly related to mortality.

But as people got older, the association between weight gain and mortality weakened, whereas the association with weight loss from middle to late adulthood became stronger and significant. – IANS

ARIES
March 21 – April 19

You may feel a nervous restlessness today that’s urging you to get moving, Aries. A journey to one place may send you off to another, which may take you on an adventure to some completely different place. It may seem like you’re on a crazy scavenger hunt. The energy of the day could leave you feeling ragged, but don’t give up. Your persistence will pay off in the end.

TAURUS
April 20 – May 20

A good tip to remember is to be careful about what you say about other people, Taurus. If you’re speaking about someone who isn’t present, act like he or she is. What’s your motivation for saying the things you say? Is it necessary to speak in such a way? A negative comment about someone is going to resonate through the cosmos. People could lose trust in you.

CANCER
June 21 – July 22

Don’t automatically think that beauty has to be defined by old-fashioned standards. Cancer. It’s time to change the definition. There is no need to squeeze yourself into a socially constructed mould that doesn’t resonate with who you truly are. Your job isn’t to try and make sure everyone loves you. There’s only one person you need to satisfy and that is you.

LEO
July 23 – August 22

Issues may get a little heavier than you’d like today, Leo. Your job is to infuse some levity and humour into the situation. Your adaptability will be put to the test as other people remain steadfast in their opinions. Be conscious of how you use your words. Other people, especially superiors or elders, may be offended by careless, offhand remarks.

LIBRA
September 23 – October 22

Your new approach to things might get some flack from superiors today, Libra, but don’t let that stop you. Realise that your independent and somewhat rebellious nature helps to keep the world in balance. Don’t give up the fight when authorities insist that their way of doing things is best when in fact it’s simply old. Use your will and determination to combat the forces from above.

SCORPIO
October 23 – November 21

You might be called upon to choose between two ways of handling a situation, Scorpio. The old way suddenly conflicts with the new. Which way are you going to proceed? Don’t be thrown off course by fast talk and neon lights just because they grab attention. On the other hand, don’t assume that the way that has worked forever is still the best. Use your intuition to choose the best route for you.

CAPRICORN
December 22 – January 19

As you follow the path toward acquiring the latest, greatest, fastest, and best, you may have left behind some fundamental values, Aquarius. Don’t lose sight of the principles that make up your foundation. You could be shaken today when your ego goes on trial for pig-headed behaviour. Stay in check and be conscious of the way you project yourself to others.

GEMINI
May 21 – June 20

You may need some time alone today to bring yourself back to centre, Gemini. Independence is the key idea to keep in your back pocket. Make sure you’re not becoming a victim to a commitment you made long ago. As the landscape changes, you must also change. Stubborn actions will be detrimental on a day like this. Be honest and grateful for the things you have.

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When Arjun got Bollywood ka keeda

Actor Arjun Kapoor says he got ‘Bollywood ka keeda’ while watching the 1989 film Ram Lakhan, which starred his uncle Anil Kapoor and actor Jackie Shroff.

“I have seen Ram Lakhan countless times. I remember how I was really young and was watching Ram Lakhan on TV while eating dal makhni and when I looked on the screen, Lakhan was eating the same from his plate in the movie. That’s when I got ‘Bollywood ka keeda’ and realised that I wanted to become an actor,” said Arjun, who made his Bollywood acting debut with Ishqedarie in 2012.

He opened about his Bollywood dreams while shooting for an episode of ZEE TV’s comedy Bollywood game show Movie Masti With Maniesh Paul. The ‘chacha-bhatija’ duo, Anil and Arjun, will also be seen shaking a leg and grooving to Anil’s iconic songs during the show. – IANS

Here’s how Yami prepared for Bala

Actress Yami Gautam, who will be seen playing a TikTok star in the upcoming film Bala, feels the video sharing application has helped her a lot in improvising her character.

While preparing for the role, Yami created a personal account on the TikTok app. She said: “It is important that people come and watch my character in the film. TikTok videos helped me with the groundwork. Of course, the first round of learning came from being on the app. It was an important process for me.”

Directed by Amar Kaushik, Bala also features Ayushmann Khurrana and Bhumi Pednekar.

Pfeiffer key to Maleficent sequel for director Rønning

By Rick Bentley

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aking a movie is a daunting task for a director. Everything from where to put a comma in the script to the colour of a mythical creature’s hair falls under the decisions they must make in the gamble that all the pieces come together to make the work successful.

Director Joachim Rønning (Marco Polo) faced all the regular challenges when making Maleficent: Mistress of Evil, plus an additional hurdle. Maleficent was a massive hit because of the larger-than-life performance by Angelina Jolie as the title character.

The sequel has an older Aurora (Elle Fanning) splitting her time between reigning over all the creatures who live in the forest and falling in love with Prince Phillip (Harris Dickinson). Maleficent isn’t crazy about the wedding but is willing to let the union happen so Aurora will be happy. That means meeting the in-laws, and that’s where Rønning faced his biggest test. Who do you cast that can just be as dominating on the screen as Jolie? If the role of the manipulative Queen Ingrith isn’t played with the strength, intelligence and deep wickedness Jolie had shown in the first film, the clash of families would not have the necessary power to drive the production.

Rønning knew there was only one performer who could handle such a task: Michelle Pfeiffer. Pfeiffer has been in some of his favourite films, including The Fabulous Baker Boys, Age of Innocence, Dangerous Liaisons and Witches of Eastwick. He also loved her work playing Catwoman in Bateman Returns, which Jolie says is her all-time favourite film villain.

“She is one of the few actors who can go up against Maleficent and Angelina Jolie,” Rønning says. “Those days were the best on the set when we had Angelina Jolie and Michelle Pfeiffer and Elle Fanning battling it out... You really feel so privileged.

“Not only are they playing iconic characters, but they are so iconic as actors. They are in my book some of the world’s best actors and some of the most famous.”

A lesser problem is the film being a sequel. The track record of follow-up movies has not been spectacular. The Norwegian native went into his latest project with some knowledge of the tricky nature of sequels, having directed Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales.

What he learned was a film can be full of visual splendor and massive special effects, but the bottom line is the characters have to be interesting and the story has to have an emotional core that resonates with viewers.

“That’s what appealed to me about the first film. I think what surprised audiences all over the world was that they were actually moved and gripped by it. That was the story I wanted to continue telling, but you also have to take it to the next level,” Rønning says. “I was interested in an origin story for Maleficent and her discovering that she’s not the only one. “That made the universe bigger.”

The universe of Maleficent: Mistress of Evil is massive and includes a forest filled with strange creatures, a kingdom with a huge castle and caves and clouds where the fey are in hiding. Such worlds can easily be created using computers but when possible, Rønning had sets built. This was to give the actors a boost in finding the feeling of existing in the magical worlds, rather than trying to imagine the world while staring at a green screen.

It took more than a year to combine the practical footage with the special effects, including a 20-minute battle sequence that alone took nine months to edit. But, Rønning stresses all the work was necessary to make sure the sequel is big enough to entertain those who loved the original.

At the same time, Rønning wants Maleficent: Mistress of Evil to have story elements that also make it bigger than the original. That includes plot points regarding tolerance and sexism.

“Part of my little dream here was to have a message of kindness. I think our villain in the form of Queen Ingrith is very much controlling the narrative and using that as part of her power to divide people,” Rønning says. “There are definitely parallels to today’s society.

“What I love is at the end of the day you have your family and you come together and show an openness and interest in what’s not necessarily like yourself. But, you accept it. At the end of the day, that is the message of the movie.” – TNS
Most people struggle to learn their weakness or strengths. However, when they know their true selves they can not only improve themselves but also help others in making upward progress. Motivating others is an ability that is very fulfilling. The motivational person helps people understand the hardships of life and how a common person can cope with and get along well with difficulties.

Martha Anyait is a young woman from Uganda. She has been living in Qatar for five years. Since she moved to this country, she has been an inspiring personality for her community members. Martha is a motivational speaker, life coach, community advocate, and empowerment expert. She has regularly been conducting workshops and boot camps to coach and motivate people.

Community recently caught up with the young woman who realised her ability to buck up others from very early in her life. “It all started with my family back in Uganda. I always noticed how people react to different situations at different occasions in their lives. I often used to be concerned about the reactions of different people especially the members of my family. I used to advise and encourage them. My words always worked as a soothing factor. I however had no idea that I could become a motivational speaker.”

Martha, who is the youngest among four siblings, saw a similar situation in Qatar where people from her country come to work and live. “When I came to Qatar, I knew that I have the talent. Soon, I saw the opportunity where I can utilise my skills. I noticed that the majority of people here follow a routine life. They feel stressed when they are away from home and loved ones. People often feel self-pity for themselves. “I knew I got the talent. I started volunteering, I got engaged with Ugandan Community Qatar, a group that brings the community together. The group gave me a platform where I started sharing my pieces of advice to the people who are interested in listening to me. People started giving me very positive feedback.”

Martha, who holds a degree in hospitality management, set up a social media account to access and connect with the people from her community. “I started organising workshops and boot camps for the Ugandan community. I have also been speaking about women empowerment. I have been involving other expatriate communities in Qatar as well. “As the community advocate, I volunteer for different activities such as charity works. I do arrange and attend more and more event for women empowerment.”

Martha has her own way of defining motivation. “Motivation is a key ingredient in our lives. It is presence of a purpose and desire in the life. It keeps pushing us towards achieving our higher goals.”

In response to a question that why often people get demotivated in their lives, she said: “People get demotivated when they face personal setbacks or see others suffering. Sometimes bad experiences or bad episodes in their past draw them towards self-pity. “I tell people that everybody faces setbacks and suffering is a true test of life so if you want to be a better person, you have to undergo some sort off suffering. From your struggle comes your greatest strength. It is always better to be grateful to these bad experiences in your life”

“Qatar has exposed me to a lot of opportunities. I met a lot of different people and I grew in confidence. I got the time to work on my inner potentials. I really discovered that who I am. “Qatar has given me freedom to speak up and reach out to others. I have started helping other people here. Further, I always felt very welcomed. “The motivational speaker has set high future goals for herself. “I want to stand out as a motivational speaker. I want to work with some international organisations and desire to motivate the most under-privileged segments of society. As an empowerment expert, I aspire to work more and more towards women empowerment.”