

Editor's notes:

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The nicest thing that I can say about January is that it's finally over. And February is one month closer to warm weather. Although February can still have brutally cold weather, we do have that most *lovely* day, February 14. Did you know that there are etiquette rules to celebrate that day? Lizzie Post, of the Emily Post Institute says the subject bears a little loving care. Her advice: Don't flaunt your plans -- either before or after they've happened -- when chatting with co-workers (or friends, for that matter).

Valentine's Day can make people who are not part of a couple feel bad, Post says, Don't even talk about your plans unless you're asked to. Try to use the day to celebrate compassion, she advises, to give a little attention to those who might not be feeling as fortunate as you do. While people are probably genuinely delighted about your happiness, being modest in what you share is the most thoughtful approach.

When US Airways pilot Chesley Sullenberger was landing Flight 1549 on the Hudson River last month, it's very unlikely that any of his passengers were recalling the book, *The Unthinkable*. Fortunately for them, they didn't have to; they all survived. The subtitle of the book, *Who Survives When Disaster Strikes -- and Why?*, gives better indication of why this is a must read, and not just for those of us who fly.

Author Amanda Ripley examines how people react in life-threatening situations and discusses how our primal impulses and behaviours determine how we react to them. While luck can play a role in helping us survive horrible events, Ripley writes that "[w]e can learn to do better or worse." According to her, individuals can be trained to survive by overcoming the herd mentality, tunnel vision, and fear itself.

Preparation is the key. The more prepared you are the more likely you are to survive catastrophic events. For example, pay attention to the flight attendants' instructions, read your hotel's information card regarding fire escape routes -- and read this book! It may save your life!

Initially Speaking

If your name is Ann, are you more likely to end up working for Apple or Dell? A study by Belgian researchers indicates Apple as the more likely choice.

There are a number of critical factors assessed by job seekers before choosing companies they prefer to work for -- including location, salary, benefits and perks, career opportu-

nities. But one other factor also comes into play. The "name-letter effect": a phenomenon that shows we have a preference for things that begin with the same letter as our first name.

Researchers at Ghent University in Belgium studied a list of Belgian workers and analyzed data from it. Significantly, there were 12 percent more employee name - company matches than probability predicted -- meaning that the choices of about one in nine people whose first initial matched that of the company's had been influenced by the name-letter effect.

If your boss is insensitive, this might explain why

Narcissistic people are the most likely to emerge as leaders, according to an Ohio State University study. The researchers found that people who score high for narcissism -- those who are self-centered, exaggerate their talents, and lack empathy for others -- often take control of groups that don't have leaders.

In the study, the narcissists saw themselves as leaders, which was to be expected. But other group members also perceived the narcissists as potential leaders.

Amy Brunnell, the lead author of the study, says, "It's not surprising that narcissists become leaders. They like power, they are egotistical, and they are usually charming and extroverted. But the problem is, they don't necessarily make better leaders." Results showed that narcissists were no better than others when it came to choosing items that would help them survive if they were shipwrecked on an uninhabited island.

A Valentine Poem

How do I love thee? -- by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.



Drinking away kidney stones

Just one glass of orange juice per day might stave off a recurrence of kidney stones, researchers at UT Southwestern Medical Center have found. Dietary and lifestyle changes are often necessary to manage recurrent kidney stones. Potassium citrate is frequently prescribed to lower the rate of new stone formation. However, for patients who can't tolerate the gastro-intestinal side effects of potassium citrate, orange juice makes a beneficial substitute, say the researchers. Orange juice was found to prevent the stones better than other citrus fruit sources, such as lemonade.

The curry cure

The next time you have a craving for curry, you might be doing your health a favour to give in to it. A recent study by researchers at the Medical College of Georgia has found that

turmeric, the Indian spice commonly used in curry, can reduce the size of a hemorrhagic stroke. Other studies have found that turmeric's active ingredient, curcumin, can lower your risk for Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis, bone loss, and cancer.

Note: Because even natural remedies can interfere with medications and your body's normal metabolism, use extra caution if you have other medical conditions or are pregnant or breast-feeding. Also, some products should not be given to children.

"The first caution I give people is to get a good diagnosis," says Hardy. "If your cold is not acting like a normal cold or if it has lasted more than a short period of time, go see your doctor to be sure you don't have a more serious condition, such as pneumonia."

Moms and grandmas really do know best

If you have a cold, basic common sense therapies that mothers and grandmothers have recommended for generations can sometimes do the trick, says Dr. Mary L. Hardy, a folk medicine expert who is medical director for the Simms/Mann-UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology. Here are some of the tried-and-true folk remedies for people in general good health to try:

1. Water. Soak in a tub of cool, though not cold water to keep a fever in check. Add a dash of salt to warm water to gargle away a sore throat. Boil water or use a thoroughly cleaned humidifier to create steam and clear congestion. Rehydrating is important, says Hardy. "The first defense system in the body consists of the mucous membranes lining the upper respiratory tract. And those work better when they're moist."
2. Chicken soup. It has healing qualities because of the heat, the liquid, and the antibiotic activity of garlic, a common ingredient in chicken soup that can ease symptoms and support the immune system.
3. Wild cherry bark tea or tincture. It's no accident that many cough drops have a wild cherry flavour. In days gone by, most cough syrups were extracted from the bark of wild cherry trees.
4. Garlic, ginger, and goldenseal. They have antiseptic, antiviral, and antibiotic actions. Because cooking reduces its potency, garlic is most effective when eaten raw. Ginger and goldenseal are available in capsules and teas.
5. Eucalyptus. Use eucalyptus or camphor rubs to loosen the congestion of a chest cold and to open sinuses.
6. Honey and lemon. An occasional spoonful can relieve a scratchy, tickling, or raw throat. (Honey should never be given to babies, however, because of the risk of infant botulism.)
7. Fruit juices. Drinking orange juice is a good source of vitamin C. Add water to the juice to reduce its sugar content. (Too much sugar can hinder your immune response.)
8. Thyme. This herb has antibacterial properties that can aid in treating upper respiratory infections.
9. Fenugreek and fennel. Stuffed up? The mucous-thinning action of these spices can help unblock your upper respiratory tract.
10. Cayenne, horseradish, and ginger. Add these to your diet to clear clogged sinuses.

28 Ways to Show Your Love in February

- 1 Smile at everyone you meet.
- 2 Admit when you're wrong.
- 3 Give a compliment
- 4 Write to your grandparents.
- 5 Feed your plants.
- 6 Become a secret pal.
- 7 Offer someone your place in line.
- 8 Thank your mother.
- 9 Send a care package to a shut-in.
- 10 Write a nice letter to someone who wouldn't expect it.
- 11 Volunteer at a local nursing home.
- 12 Leave a love note on someone's windshield.
- 13 Walk a homeless dog at the animal shelter.
- 14 Tell your friends you love them.
- 15 Practice little kindnesses -- anonymously.
- 16 Give your cat a massage.
- 17 Lose an argument, graciously.
- 18 Bake home-made bread.
- 19 Pass on a compliment.
- 20 Inspire someone.
- 21 Swallow a gripe.
- 22 Return a favour.
- 23 Kiss and make up with someone.
- 24 Give a generous tip.
- 25 Plant a flower.
- 26 Mail someone a cartoon you like.
- 27 Try to understand another's point of view.
- 28 Give someone else credit.