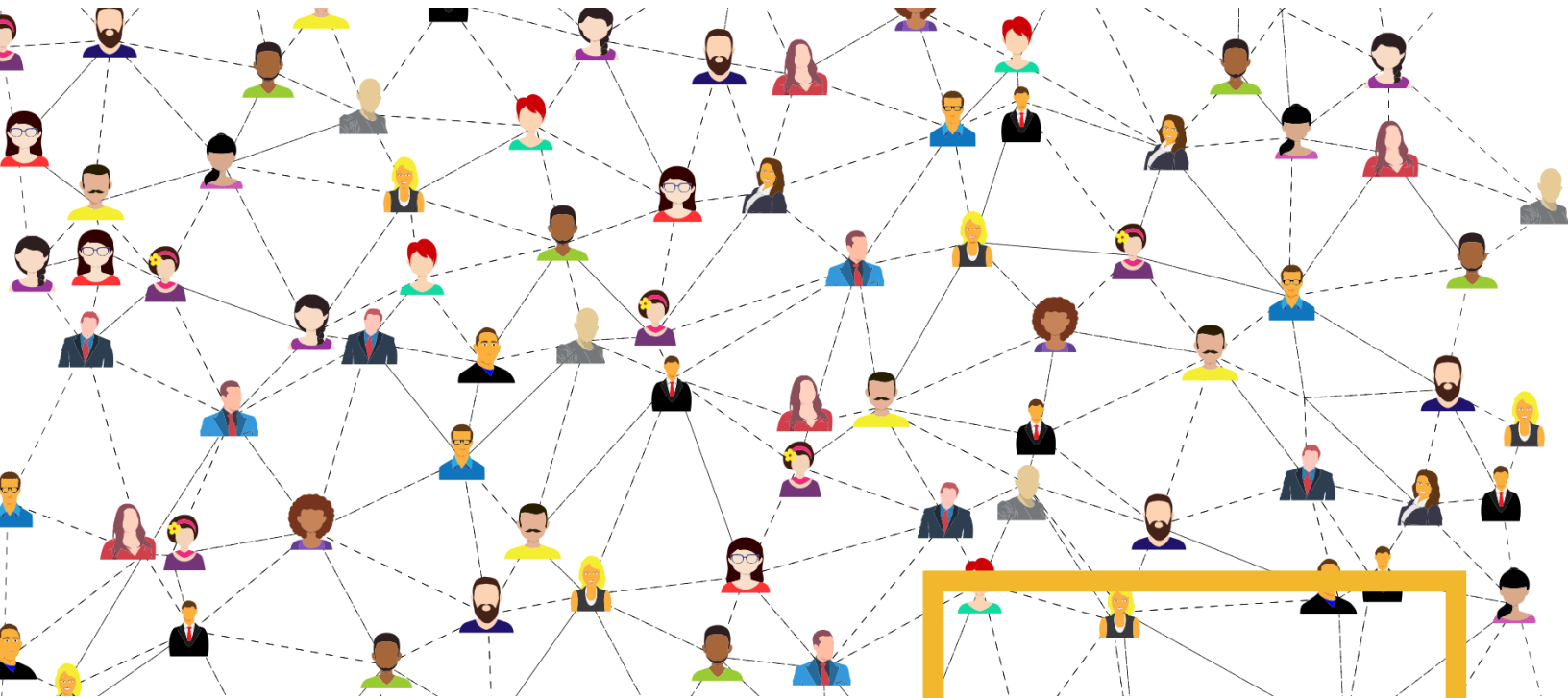


THE ISSUES

FROM THE DESK OF MU EXTENSION
HOME & FAMILY FIELD FACULTY



PARENTING A SECOND TIME AROUND (PASTA)

Raising your grandchildren or children other than your own? This class is for you. PASTA is a parenting program designed for relative caregivers who are not the biological parents of the children in their care. PASTA provides grandparents and other kinship caregivers with information, skills, and resources designed to enhance their ability to provide effective care for the young relatives they are parenting. PASTA includes topics such as child development, discipline and guidance, caring for oneself as a caregiver, rebuilding a family, living with teens, legal issues, and advocacy.

ParentLink Kinship Navigator Website:
<https://education.missouri.edu/navigators/>

WHAT'S NEW?

- Language of inclusion
- Just a dash of life
- Science-backed ways to increase hope

LANGUAGE OF INCLUSION

BY TINA EDHOLM (SHE/HER/HERS)
Field Specialist in Human
Development & Family Science

When people talk about “rural Missouri”, it evokes images of small towns, flags flying, tractors and cowboy boots. Pop culture has historically represented rurality with depictions of hickish, backroad escapades by undereducated, impoverish, blue collar workers (Burton et al, 2013). This inconsistent messaging fails to recognize the diversity characteristics of rural life (Moffa and McHenry-Sorber, 2018).

The cultural lens with which we view a rural community is based on how individuals are described, referenced or approached; and this messaging can consciously or unconsciously contain stereotypes or bias.



A stereotype is a judgmental, oversimplified image or statement applied to a whole group of people, without regard for the individual. While we may never be completely free of all biased communication, there are ways we can communicate with and show respect towards each other within our diverse communities. When someone says something containing a stereotype, the first step in communication recovery is to

assume the person comes from a place of good intent.

This seemingly simplistic method of positive psychology fosters relationships maintenance and enable respectful patterns of interactions. Asking questions, challenging generalizations, and searching for the universal truths can go a long way to maintaining positive, meaningful relationships. These techniques open the door for giving feedback and learning from each other.

BURTON, L. M., LICHTER, D. T., BAKER, R. S., & EASON, J. M. (2013). INEQUALITY, FAMILY PROCESSES, AND HEALTH IN THE “NEW” RURAL AMERICA. *AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST*, 57(8), 1128–1151.
[HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.1177/0002764213487348](https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213487348)

MOFFA, E., & MCHENRY-SORBER, E. (2018). LEARNING TO BE RURAL: LESSONS ABOUT BEING RURAL IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS. *THE RURAL EDUCATOR*, 39(1).
[HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.35608/RURALE.D.V39I1.213](https://doi.org/10.35608/RURALE.D.V39I1.213)

OP-ED: JUST A DASH OF LIFE

BY JOHN FULLER, *HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & FAMILY SCIENCE SPECIALIST*

Many have heard the saying "*the importance of life is that little dash in between the day we are born to the day we die*". I find it ironic that the dash seems to be so short, as a metaphor to life. This made me think of what that really means. Is it what I remember doing in life? Am I not fully engaged where my life is not so full that it leaves me feeling like it was short? For many we are left wondering where the time went. That is a very stressful way of looking at life. This led to me wondering what I can do to miss less and enjoy more.

Could the dash be simpler? Could the travel from home to work and back home again be that dash of experiences we are missing out on? Life passes us by from the view through our front windshield as we are lost in thought about our future day or something that has happen in the past. If we truly "see" the world from our windshield, we can come to realize the beauty that we pass on a daily basis. It helps keep us focused on the here and now. I take this time with purpose to look around and see maybe what I have been missing. If I start to think of other tasks, I simply remind myself during this time that I am going to stop to enjoy the roses.



I think most would be shocked by how many thoughts we have daily and how many of those are repeated or negative. Many of us will reminisce of the days of old, those times when life was simpler. Were they really simpler, or did we simply enjoy more of the moments? As a child, we could find about anything to play with and keep us entertained. When did we lose that ability to play? We love to laugh, and for me, I personally do not play enough. Another dash of opportunity to feel the joy we seek.

I hope that you take time to find a dash moment. You may find the more you do it; the easier it becomes. Let your life be defined by many dashes and not by just one.

- John

SCIENCE BACKED WAYS TO INCREASE HOPE

BY Dave Hileman
Human Development & Family Science Specialist

Remaining hopeful in a time of widespread unemployment and a global pandemic may be difficult, but Dr. Benjamin Hardy, an organizational psychologist, reminds us in his web article “8 Science Based Ways to Increase Your Hope (2021), that “in hard times, hope may be more powerful than we realize.” He shares eight things we can do to increase hope in our lives.

Look back on past wins. Write about your past experiences in which something you hoped for was eventually realized. This can increase your happiness and hope for the future.

Pray or meditate. Research has shown that prayer can increase hope and optimism, and decrease feelings of depression. Dr. Hardy reminds us that you don't have to be religious to pray.

“Ultimately, prayer is a quiet search for perspective, energy, or reasons.” Praying or meditating has been shown to improve relationships and even improve health problems.

Think creatively. People without much hope keep trying the same ineffective approaches even when the outcome is not what they wanted. Research has found a link between hope and creative thinking.

Create a list of strategies you have not tried, even if some of the strategies seem absurd. Sometimes, thinking of the worst ideas can lead you to the best one.

Filter you inputs. The news stories and social media posts you view can shape your view of the world. Give yourself a break by logging out, or just being mindful of what you are doing online. Seek out the good. Research shows that humor can really help with hope, especially if you are going through a hard time.

Cheer for yourself. Studies show that habits are formed through deep emotion.

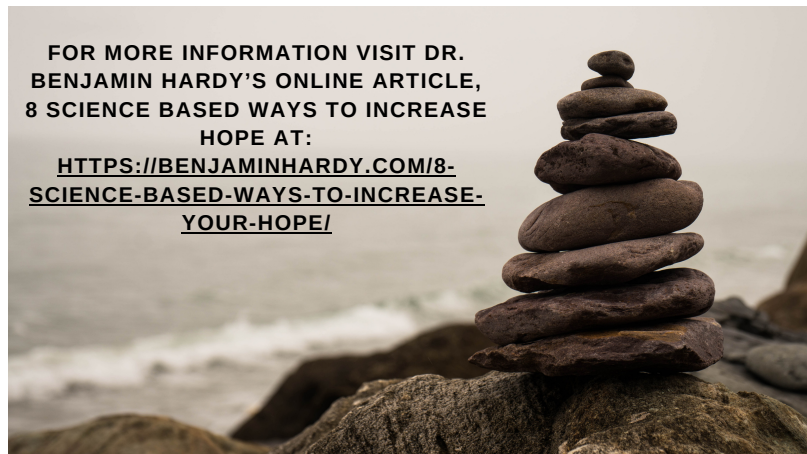
To build habits quickly, you should actively celebrate even your smallest wins. That means pumping your fist and cheering out-loud for yourself! By celebrating small progress toward a goal, you train yourself emotionally to want more of that behavior.

Frame failure as feedback. People who lose hope often have a mindset that traits and abilities cannot be changed. When you have hope, you experience setbacks differently. You believe you can learn from your setbacks to help you succeed in the future. When you experience failure, give yourself some time to recover and then look at how you can improve for future success.

Instill hope in others. When we give hope to others, we receive pleasure that is as strong as when we receive hope.

Dr. Hardy encourages us to “Focus on the people you love. Connect with them. Serve them. The most sustainable hope is the kind you can spread.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT DR. BENJAMIN HARDY'S ONLINE ARTICLE, 8 SCIENCE BASED WAYS TO INCREASE HOPE AT:
[HTTPS://BENJAMINHARDY.COM/8-SCIENCE-BASED-WAYS-TO-INCREASE-YOUR-HOPE/](https://benjaminhardy.com/8-science-based-ways-to-increase-your-hope/)



MU EXTENSION: FAMILY AND HOME

For more research-based programs and tips on housing, parenting, relationships, divorce, senior living, and personal finance visit <https://extension2.missouri.edu/find-your-interest/youth-and-family/family-and-home-education>

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