

NEWS YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEED

2018, Issue 7

Carla Cotropia



What's in This Newsletter?

Carla's Thoughts of the month

Thought of the Month - A thought about President George H.W. Bush

Quotes of the Month - President George H.W. Bush

Selected Articles

Blog - *Things Not to Say Or Do If You Don't Want To Sound Old*

Blog - *I Love Vintage Christmas Decorations*

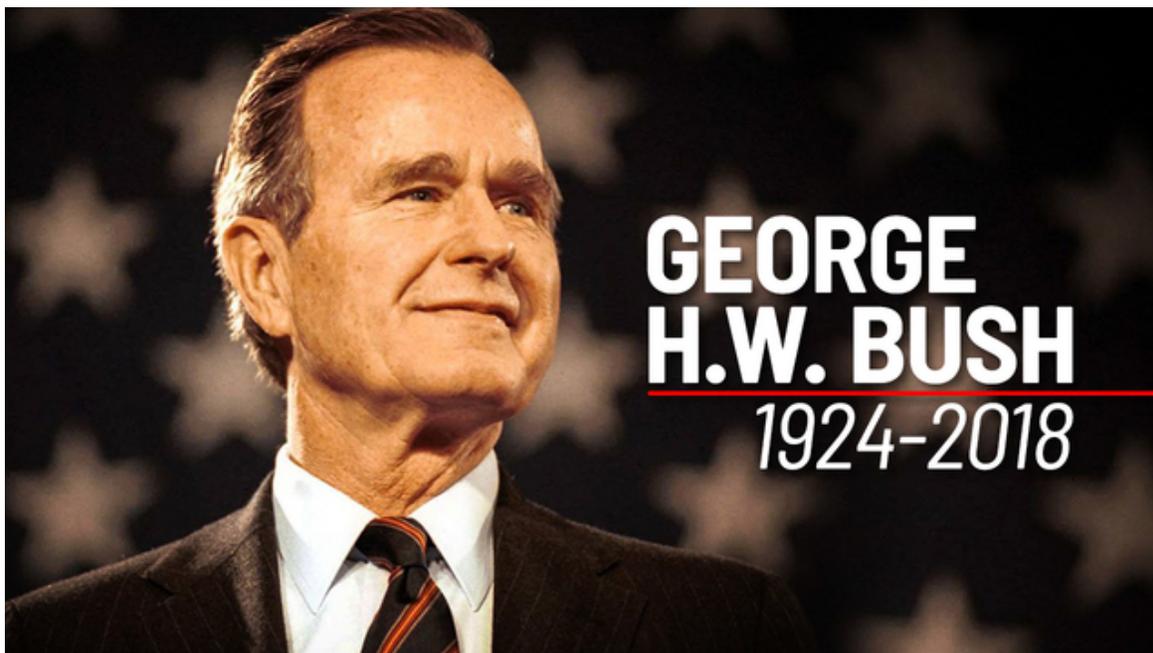
Blog - *Can Journaling Make You A Better Person* & article from NY Times on *What's All This About Journaling?*

Blog From 2012 - *Are Office Christmas Parties Out of Style?*



Thought of the Month

Let Former President George H.W. Bush be an example of civility and kindness to all.



Quotes of the Month

George H.W. Bush, at age 65, announced "I do not like broccoli. And I haven't liked it since I was a little kid and my mother made me eat it. And I'm President of the United States and I'm not going to eat any more broccoli."



"Don't confuse being soft with seeing the other guy's point of view." George H.W. Bush

My sister, Kimla, recently pointed out when I say, "The world has really changed" or "Can you believe it is December, time is just flying by", I am aging myself since these are things people say when they get "old". This has caused me to contemplate things not to say to help my aging process. Kimla has little kids so she is more "tuned in" to these aging statements. Here are her tips for avoiding comments if you don't want to sound "old".

1. Groaning or making any utterance when moving, especially getting up off the couch or chair.
2. Discussing which body parts hurt or ache in normal conversations.
3. Complaining about the price of gas, food, or movie tickets.
4. No longer able to multi-task and talking about it.
5. Having to repeat over and over words or phrases so you don't walk into a room and forget what you are in there for.
6. No longer buying trash magazines at the checkout counter because you no longer have any idea who the "celebrities" are in the magazine.
7. Not recognizing any Grammy winners.
8. Complaining about rap music and how you can't believe anyone likes to listen to it.
9. Thinking its derogatory when your kids say, "That's sick!" because you don't know that "sick" means "cool". (who knew?)
10. The number on your TV volume control just keeps getting higher and higher.
11. You forget to put your car in park and it rolls into a building.
12. Complaining about the Millennials
13. Saying "What is the world coming to!"
14. Talking about how the fat from your butt had now moved to your stomach.
15. Wanting to eat at 6:00 pm rather than 8:00 pm.

I will be back with more tips as I stumbled or unfortunately say them.

I Love Vintage Christmas Decorations - Carla Cotropia

The truth is I am an obsessed vintage/antique collector. Don't get me wrong, I have an upstairs room dedicated to nothing but decorations, including modern ones. How did I get this decorating crazy? Who knows? I try to limit my decorating to only a few holidays, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day I deleted years ago. Christmas remains even if I am on strict probation that I can't buy anything else remotely like a Christmas decoration.

Because of Harvey, I lost the Christmas decorations for my office where I mediate. This

opened the door for me to decorate the office so vintage here I come.

My favorite spot for vintage Christmas decorations is August Antiques located at 803 Heights Blvd in Houston. They also have an excellent selection of religious antiques but that is another addiction of mine that I will not discuss in this blog.

August Antiques has many blow mold Christmas decorations. Blow molds decorations became popular in the 1940's and 1950's. A mold was created then the hard-plastic liquid was poured into the cavity and air pressure forced the plastic into all of the crevices. Once the plastic hardened, the air pressure was turned off and the plastic removed from the mold. Sometimes the plastic was colored and sometimes it was painted thereafter. A light bulb was placed inside that causes them to glow. A popular manufacturer was Union Products that is no longer in business.

Here are some pictures of the blow mold decorations at August Antiques. They also have a great selection of vintage ornaments and santas.



Here is a picture of my blow mold reindeer in my kitchen window. It is on a timer so it comes on faithfully every evening. Here are pictures of my vintage elves.



Happy Holidays!!

Can Journaling Make You A Better Person? - Carla Cotropia

I read a recent article "What's All This About Journaling?" (see below) that said journaling can boost mindfulness, memory, better sleep, a stronger immune system, more self-confidence, and even a higher IQ. Shoot, I will take some of that. According to the article, keeping a journal helps organize events in your mind, and makes sense of a trauma. This in turn helps memory improve, freeing our brains and we sleep better which in turn improves the immune system and on and on it goes.

Maybe so, but I can hardly stand to read my journals from years ago. My journals/diaries from my 30s have a consistent theme of angst, worry and anxiety. These paranoia journal/diary entries include such important issues as (1) my hair being "not right", (2) dating people (pre-Tom) who were losers including one who declared he was a Buddhist monk (3) feeling like a dork because I went out on a blind date with a fake Buddhist monk, (4) trying to be a tough litigator in a man's world (which was true in the 80s) and on and on and on.

I have a friend that says you should never talk or write about things you don't want to "bring into your life". So, if this is true I should journal only about positive things even if some days these things may be hard to find. My thoughts go like this: I am grateful for this good cup of coffee. No wait, maybe I should buy that expensive coffee maker since coffee is so important -no maybe I should save my money because I'm not getting any younger and now I am back being a worry wart.

I have a double dose of guilt being Italian and raised Catholic. The infamous Italian/Catholic guilt is a close cousin of Jewish guilt. My Italian grandmother was a master of dosing out guilt. Going on a trip-for heaven's sake why, the plane could crash. What is wrong with visiting here? Why wouldn't you visit rather than take a dangerous trip?

All these thoughts are not putting me in the right mood. Maybe instead of journaling I need to just get a good cup of coffee, a nice shot of tequila and the perfectly made chocolate. Awhhh, I feel smarter and better already.

Can Journaling Make You A Better Person?

- Haley Phelan, New York Times

It was my ex-husband who got me journaling again. Our marriage was falling apart, and, on the advice of his friend, he had started to do "morning pages," a daily journaling practice from the seminal self-help book "The Artist's Way."

Though I had kept a diary throughout my teen years and early 20s, somewhere along the way I'd fallen out of the habit. At 29, though, I was deeply unhappy and looking for answers wherever - anywhere - I could find them.

It helped.

[Click this link to read the full article.](#)

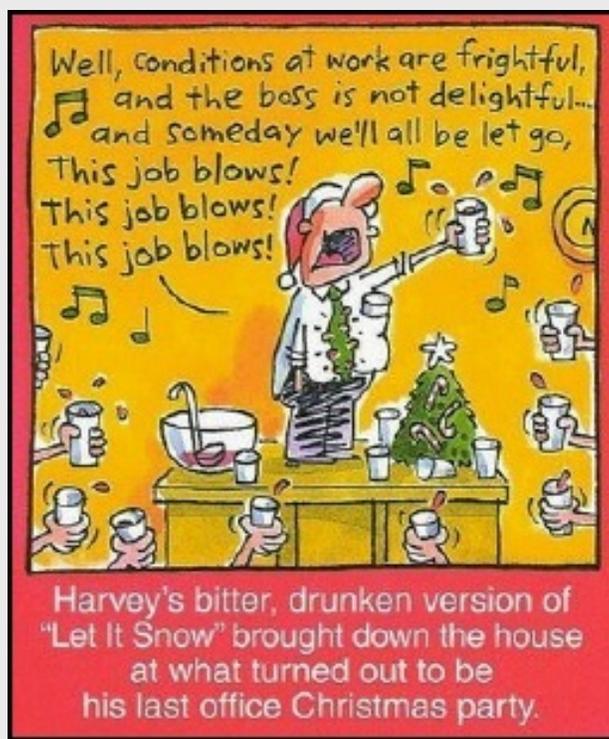
A Blog From 2012 - Are Office Christmas Parties Out Of Style?

- Carla Cotropia

Maybe I am a Scrooge but office Christmas parties are out of style. I am not talking about parties for the kids. Christmas parties given by companies for families or kid Christmas parties are much appreciated by employees. What I am talking about is the office Christmas parties held in the evening, usually a Friday or Saturday night. Does anyone really want to go to office Christmas parties?



What is wrong with office Christmas parties? You can't get crazy or wild and you can't over indulge. There are boat load of articles written about the no no's of attending an office party. You can't say anything that might offend the boss. Don't go crazy and do anything stupid or (fun).



Office Christmas parties weren't always boring. Back in the 1980s and even in the 1990s they used to be fun, maybe because I was younger and wilder but, it has more to do with the times. In the 1980s there was an often-repeated incident that allegedly occurred at one of the Houston big law firm's Christmas party. According to the story, a partner and a secretary slipped away and somehow got in the crawl space above the ceiling. In the middle of the festivities, and in the middle of passionate lovemaking, the floor of the crawl space gave way and the sex smitten couple fell through the ceiling and landed in the middle of the Christmas party banquet table!!



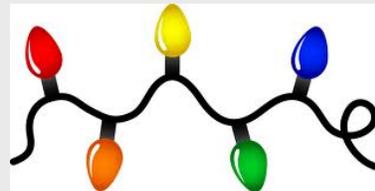
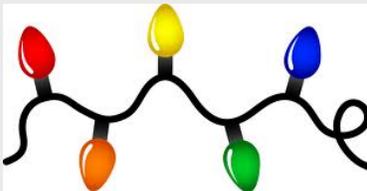
I am not saying that Christmas parties should be this wild, they shouldn't. 2012 is not 1980. My point is that it just isn't fun to go to a Christmas party where you are expected to be there and you know to be on your best behavior.

My idea for companies is to ditch the evening Christmas party. Instead take the cost of the party and use this to take everyone out to lunch. Then with whatever money is left, divide this amount by the number of employees and give them a cash bonus. Maybe even let them go home early so they can take their cash gift and buy something for their kids.



people are tired after work. Don't make them go home, settle kiddos, force their spouse to get dressed, dress themselves, and then drive to a boring office Christmas party.

I apologize if I seem anti Christmas. I do love Christmas lights and want them at my funeral. Just don't kill me now for poo pooing Christmas office parties.



Taking Steps To Settle Cases 2 Sneakers @ A Time

