

HER COLLECTION

COLLECT.CONNECT.CREATE

HER BLOSSOMING

SPRING 2022 • ISSUE 4 • VOLUME 2



HERSTORY

MARCIA AGIUS
AN EMBASSADOR OF KINDNESS



editor's note

When I was young, I didn't understand that people could have multiple career interests. Like many of us, I was raised to believe that you should have one job, which pretty much defines you. I learnt that you were expected to stay in said job until you retired. Only then would you have the time to pursue other interests. Needless to say, as I found myself at the threshold of a career change again and again, I was left feeling confused. I knew I wasn't a failure, but judgement and self-doubt come with change.

As I am now grown, for all intents and purposes, I am grateful to embrace the fact that as humans, we have multiple interests, talents and skills. This makes us the multi-dimensional beings that we are. At HER Collected it is important for us to approach a woman as a whole being. She is not defined by one aspect of her life or interests but by HER entire self, and we can all blossom and grow as we embrace this concept.

This season, things look different. To meet the needs of HER, we have pivoted our focus but not our mission. As we continue to grow our community and amplify our voice, we do so in the full knowledge that change meets us at every corner. We know as each of you redefine, transform and blossom into who you want to be, it will come with growing pains, but know that we are with you every step of the way.

That, my friends, is this season's theme: HER BLOSSOMING!

Janine

EDITOR IN CHIEF

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KINDNESS IS BLOOMING!



I'm Marcia Agius, the founder of Inspire Always and the proud mother of three incredible children. I've been married to my best friend for 27 years. We currently live just north of Toronto, Canada, but have had the opportunity to live in the Portland, Oregon US and Santiago, Chile. I grew up as an only child of Guyanese parents with a large extended family.

My interests include working out, reading books and travelling. Through my travels, I've been given the opportunity to learn about different cultures and customs and developed a passion for scuba diving.

In 2020, I turned 50 and made the decision to get in shape, which led me to joining an incredible online fitness community called Team Strong Girls. It's there I learned that when women support each other, amazing things happen. Everything I was reading in the news was sad, bad or depressing, so I started an Instagram page called **Inspire Always** to uplift and shine positivity into the world. Since then, it has become a community of incredible women who support and inspire each other. Each day I feature a new woman on my page.

This community has allowed me the pleasure of meeting incredible women. Their stories and journeys are different and diverse, yet they all tell a similar tale of resilience, strength and vulnerability. It is a fabulous group of women cheering for one another.

The page is all about Community, Connection, Celebration, Compassion, and Charity. Since starting it over a year ago, the community has grown. We have raised money to grant a wish for a three-year-old and 14-year old through a Million Dollar Smiles charity. We also filled 10 Love Boxes for the Super Sophia Project.

This year, we are in the process of launching our new website to create a community of givers. I want to continue spreading this kindness and positivity in the world. The goal is to create a place where people can give, whether it be through time, talent or treasures.

We have connected with so many women doing incredible things. Most recently, we have collaborated with Ask Us Beauty magazine. It is a unique magazine that empowers and inspires women, redefining the meaning of beauty. I genuinely look forward to all the incredible things our community will do in 2022.

If you or anyone you know would like to be featured, please reach out to us on Instagram at Inspire Always (@inspirealways) and our website: inspirealways.ca

Celebrate my 52 birthday with me by joining my 52 week kindness challenge

Starting Feb 17 (Random acts of kindness day!)

I issue a simple and easy kindness challenge join in, follow and tag @inspirealways

They will be post in the community section of the website.

See you there,
Marcia
XOXO

COMMUNITY CONNECTION CELEBRATION COMPASSION CHARITY



The Self-Actualized Divine Self

self - ac • to • al • ize: fully realize one's potential.

American psychologist Abraham Maslow best explained self-actualization. He defines it as a process through which one becomes “everything one is capable of becoming.” Maslow’s most significant work was the Hierarchy of Need, which explains that human needs are only fulfilled in a sequential progression, beginning with their basic survival needs, advancing to psychological needs and then the highest level, which is the need for self-actualization.

Simply put, one must satisfy the most basic human needs first, those that ensure our physical survival: the need for food, water and shelter. Once those needs are met, we move up the hierarchy to the need for safety and security. Once that is secured, we can move up to the need for relationships, the sense of belonging and love. After that level is achieved, we advance to the second-highest level of esteem: respect for ourselves and others. Only when all of these levels have been satisfied can we attain self-actualization. That’s when we can step into our power and full potential.

“Human Motivation describes this level as “the desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be.”

Self-actualization encompasses realizing one’s potential, which brings self-fulfilment, personal growth and optimal experiences. Maslow’s **A Theory of Human Motivation** describes this level as “the desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be.”

We learn that human needs are to be met in a priority sequence; this is the main point of Maslow’s theory. When all levels are followed in sequence, they lead to self-fulfilment. Therefore, self-actualization cannot be achieved if any of the levels that precede it are not fulfilled.

And that is so SMACK on POINT.

The challenge lies in how we have been conditioned from childhood to meet the needs of love, safety and belonging. Let me paint a picture with a quick example of the inner dialogue that limiting beliefs creates.

If I start this business/take this job/go back to school, I’ll never make it in this field, and there’s no way I will ever be able to support myself, no way I’ll make enough money to survive. I’ll lose my house. I won’t be able to support my kids! No one will help me in this new venture. What was I thinking? I should just keep my job. It doesn’t make me happy, but it pays the bills.

This is directly tied to our need for safety; most people I know stay in their jobs for this very reason. It's secure and safe. Although the money may be mediocre, it pays the bills and there's no worry of not being able to support the family. The fact that these jobs rob them of joy, happiness and fulfilment in life gets swept away under the rug because "that doesn't matter"... hmmm, doesn't it?

Digging deep, uncovering layers of conditioning and mental blocks, will reveal the most fundamental of fears that are founded in a sincere fear of loss of love, safety, or belonging, or a combination of all three.

How does one overcome these blocks?

A shift in mindset; it is critical and it begins with awareness. If we don't know the limiting beliefs are there, how can we do the work to overcome them? Once we are aware, we then turn to where everything starts and ends: Love... in particular... self-love.

Oh, if I had a penny for every time I've said the following: self-love is not selfish.

Here is what I propose: there is a divinity in loving oneself. This is because we are all divinely connected to one Source, Universe, God, Buddha... whomever you refer to as the source of all creation. Therefore, that love will flow from you into and through the love for others. This perspective opens an entirely different understanding of loving oneself that crushes all that 'selfish' nonsense.

What if the conversation with yourself sounded a little like this:

I must love myself first to allow the divine energy of love to flow through me and around me to those who love me and to those I love. We are all divinely connected, so the love I have for myself is the gateway that enables the love I feel for others to flow as it is intended to flow. Love is the highest vibrational form of energy, so in order for it to be fully present in my life, I must allow it to flow through me first. If I refuse to love me, I am shutting the door to that gateway and blocking love from flowing around me to those I love and the rest of the universe. A block in me alters the vibration of the universe.

Deep breath in. Wow, what a flip of the script.

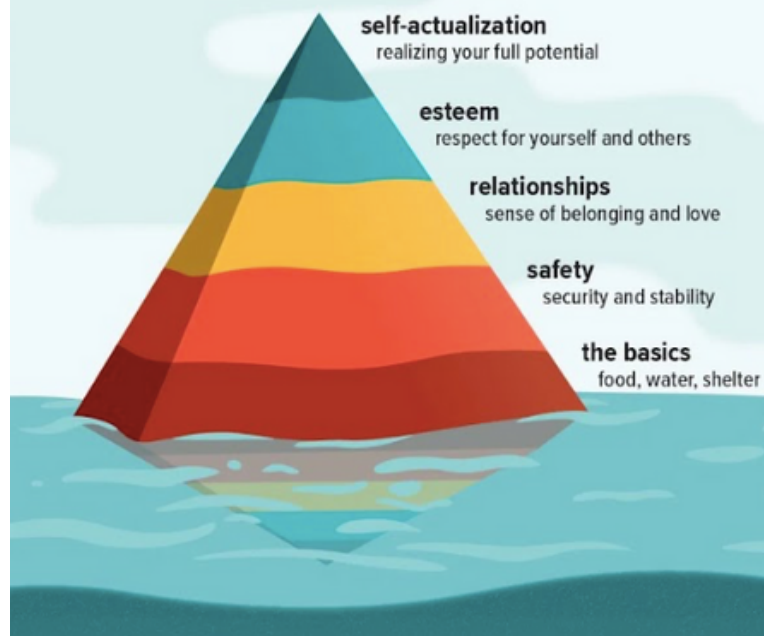
Loving oneself is a divine duty.

Everything and everyone around you elevates when your energy elevates, it is simply how energy works. So when you love and heal yourself, you are essentially contributing to the love and healing of everyone because we share the same energy field. Talk about blowing the pants off the guilt of loving yourself first!

Once self-love is realized, a clearing of the mind and a flourishing of the soul takes place.



MASLOW'S HIERARCHY



If I had a penny for every time I've said the following: self-love is not selfish.

I've personally experienced it and have had the honour of witnessing it in many of my clients. It's a beautiful thing to feel worthy, capable and intensely happy.

In your power, your relationships will elevate because your energy is flowing through you and into those around you, especially those closest to you whose energy is closely entangled with yours.

In your power, everything is possible.

When you have cleared the blocks that have been in your way (for most of your lifetime), confusion, fear and limiting beliefs dissipate and a clearing happens. In this clearing, you can finally see yourself in a new light. You can see yourself in your truth. You can see your potential. You can see all that you are capable of becoming. You can then step into the best version of yourself that has been waiting for you all along.

© Laura Marchione-Giurdanella,
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HEART & HOME *Relationships*

This year will mark three years since I opened my private practice as a clinical social worker; it was terrifying at first. I would overthink every decision I made and on many occasions I wanted to give up because of a fear of the unknown. At the time, I didn't know of any other social workers on the same journey as me. But I still pushed forward because I finally started to build the dream I envisioned as a child.

As an entrepreneur, there will always be challenges. I had to accept them along the journey and learn from opportunities I missed due to my fear. It all comes with the work of mastering your art.

Building your dream requires work. I was a full-time employee in the education system for over 18 years as a behavioural teaching assistant, a mother of two, a wife and a part-time student. I'm honoured to have worked with some fantastic people, but I had exceeded my position ten years ago. I wanted my dream so much more than before. The fear of the unknown kept my mind in a state of flight, fright or freeze.

Often, I would self-sabotage out of fear. To leap into the unknown takes courage, the kind that keeps you up at night focusing on small details to make sure your paperwork is in order. As an entrepreneur, you wear many hats to keep your business running in order. Yes, it can get overwhelming, but when you're doing something you love and own, you will stand and face the challenges that come your way.

Often, I would self-sabotage out of fear. To leap into the unknown takes courage, the kind that keeps you up at night focusing on small details to make sure your paperwork is in order. As an entrepreneur, you wear many hats to keep your business running in order. Yes, it can get overwhelming, but when you're doing something you love and own, you will stand and face the challenges that come your way.

We've all had time to reflect on our personal growth, with our jobs, marriages, friendships and business opportunities for the last two years. Some of us are still sitting in situations that we dread and your spirit is hungry for a change. Why do we wait to be approved by others before we can trust ourselves?

No matter what stage you are at in your life, at some point, you have to leap into the unknown by trusting yourself. At first, this can be a lonely journey for some of us, but once you get your feet wet, you might want to consider building a support system.



HEART & HOME *Relationships*



Here are some elements I've created to achieve change and personal and professional progress:

1. Seeing the importance of change

It brings meaning to your personal needs and desires. Write the vision and make it clear.
Do this often.



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2. The willingness to walk the path

Commitment to any journey of change is courageous in the process of rebirthing a new you.

3. Appreciating the context, external factors and life unknowns/uncertainties

The lessons we learn and our mistakes are part of the process.

4. Gathering quality, help, knowledge and support

Create a list of resources of people that will support you on your journey.

5. Genuinely putting in the work

It's essential to organize your time wisely and continue to be creative. As you grow, hire the help.

6. The readiness and ability to listen, learn, accept, adjust and adopt

Always invest in yourself professionally or personally as a leader; you will also help others evolve.

7. Self-care is a must

The body needs proper nourishment, rest, exercise and outdoor activities. Our minds can be hard to shut off, but it is essential to practice mindfulness meditation and when life brings challenges, ask for help by seeking therapy.

The spirit is filled by the foundations you are built on. Scriptures, affirmations and journaling your thoughts are ways to feed your spirit to be calm, patient, cooperative and tenacious.

I know now that the unknown of life is where we thrive. When we trust the currents of life, we become confident and blossom differently in every season by cherishing the lessons along the way.



Tea Time

For the Spring we want you to relish your self-care and stay balanced this season.

La La Lavender

Herbal blends are designed to make you feel your best. Made with real herbs, fruits and spices, they are a natural remedy all in a refreshing, warm cup of tea.



Ingredients:

White tea, lavender, spearmint leaves, lemongrass, chamomile, natural flavour. Contains naturally-occurring caffeine herbal blends that are designed to make you feel your best. Made with real herbs, fruits and spices, they are a natural remedy all in a refreshing warm cup of tea.



Stay Calm

Ingredients:

Recommended use: Valerian and St. John's wort is traditionally used in Herbal Medicine to help relieve nervousness (calmative/sedative).

Medicinal ingredients: Each tea triangle (2.0 g) contains: St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*, herb) 660 mg, Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*, root) 300 mg, Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*, leaf) 175 mg.

Non-Medicinal ingredients: Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*, leaf), Apple, Lemongrass (*Cymbopogon citratus*, leaf), Ginkgo biloba (*Ginkgo biloba*, leaf).



For more follow HER BeauTea @her.beautea.project
Sipology www.sipology.com/en-ca?u=beautea

THE READING ROOM



The Body Is Not An Apology
by Sonya Renee Taylor

New York Times bestseller! “To build a world that works for everyone, we must first make the radical decision to love every facet of ourselves. . . . The body is not an apology” is the mantra we should all embrace.”

—Kimberlé Crenshaw, legal scholar and founder and Executive Director, African American Policy Forum

This season's must-read is **The Body Is Not Apology**. It is based on the premise that systems of inequality and oppression thrive off our inability to make peace with a difference. This intern impairs the relationship we have with our bodies and the bodies of others.

The author world-renowned activist and poet Sonya Renee Taylor's solution is radical self-love. She invites the reader to reconnect with the radical origins of our minds and bodies and celebrate our collective, enduring strength. In doing so we can accept and love ourselves and those around us.

An excellent read as you continue to embark on your journey to self-love and acceptance.

GOOD EATS Sansotei Ramen



A few years ago I went on a ramen rampage. I googled all the best spots and headed out documenting my journey on Facebook in search of THE best ramen house in Toronto.

My #1 choice is Sansotei Ramen, which now has locations throughout Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal. Sansotei serves up delicious Tonkotsu ramen inspired by traditional ramen from the Kyushu and Hokkaido regions of Japan.

My go to is the basic Tonkotsu (Chashu, Black Fungus, Egg, Green Onion) with thick noodles, yum! The soup has a milky consistency and is full of umami, it's perfect any day of the week.

They make their pork bone broth fresh daily, and you can choose from a variety of different ramen flavours and source some their ingredients directly from Japan.

The next time you want to have an authentic experience give them a try you won't regret it.



IT'S MONEY HONEY

seasonal tips on how to manage \$\$\$

Frugal Is The New Black!

By Loveleen Rai

With the prices of things steadily rising it is no wonder that many are choosing to be frugal and stretch their money as much as possible?

Some people view frugal living as extreme; I don't. I think it is in the middle of the road between spending and saving everything you make. Frugal means enjoying your present life but preparing for your future. So what's extreme about that?

I would never advocate for you to get a hundred coupon books, put 90% of your income into savings and stop buying deodorant to save money. **That's not frugality;** that's insanity.

We are all a bit frugal; it just depends on how it shows up. **For me, my frugality shines like a bright star in the shape of my car.** Oh, my beloved 2004 silver Honda Civic. My flying carpet, so to speak, flew me from club to dorm to frat parties to my parent's home. It is my golden chariot; it's paid off and sits nestled quietly in my condo alleyway.

I still pride myself that I have never had an upgrade. Yet, sixteen years later, my Civic, with rust stains and pigeon poop that adorn the windows, has become my city slicker golf cart. I can get from point A to B in my Civic and feel great that it still only takes 40 bucks to fill the tank. I own something without a monthly bill attached to it; entirely paid off and free of being indebted to a dealership.

Now I may walk out of my silver Civic as if I was opening a can of sardines, by crank shifting the door handle and the windows because it doesn't have automatic windows (my father's doing when we bought the car because automatic windows would have driven the price up; that must of been his way of being frugal), so arm workout windows it is.

If my husband had to choose how his frugality shined in his life, I would have to say it's definitely NOT shining through his Car.

It technically is the family car. But let's be honest, it's his CAR if you know Mr. S. My husband rides around the city in a Grey 550 BMW. A complete shrine to extravagance in my opinion. Note that my kids prefer to ride in his car. Mr. S has worn the same wool jacket for the last 12 winters. At the same time, I have bought variations of different coats to fit my moods and occasions. It looks like Mr. S's occasions always seem to fit this one outerwear.

We all view frugality in a different light; they will never be the same prism as one another. But take a moment to see what you are willing to pull back on and what are non-negotiable.

Here are five actual habits of frugal people anyone can adopt. If you're a big spender, start it slow—maybe one or two on the list—as you develop better spending (and saving) habits.

SHE IS A CASHBACK QUEEN!

Want to know how to save money on clothes, shoes, electronics, makeup, or even meal kits? Sign up for a free Rakuten account, Optimum Points, to get cashback while shopping online or in-person at participating stores.

She Uses Rewards Cards!

Stop credit card debt and start reaping the rewards. If you're going to spend, you might as well earn. One way is by using a credit card with built-in rewards to earn cash, points, travel perks, gas, dining, entertainment discounts and more. But the secret is to pay off those credit card bills every month to avoid paying interest.



Loveleen Rai
Money Mindset Coach
Have questions reach hercollected@gmail.com



She Automates Her Savings!

Setting up a regular, automatic transfer from your checking account to one of the best interest rate savings accounts you can find makes a difference.

She Budgets For Everything!

Do you know where your money is going? If you're not sure how to budget, here are a few of HER favourite Online Budgeting apps.

Top 5 Budgeting Apps

1. Mint
2. YNAB (You Need A Budget)
3. KOHO
4. PocketSmith
5. Wallet

Using these apps, you will be able to:

- monitor your bank account
- answer questions about your finances
- suggest ways to save money
- remind you about savings goals
- alert you on low balances
- Manage your spending habits.

She Has a Side Hustle!

What is your passion? What do you love to do? Being a freelancer offers women several benefits: e your own boss, freedom, flexibility, extra cash, multiple streams of income, working from home.

Coaching Corner

BY JANINE BOWEN

6 Ways to Deal with a Negative Co-worker/Boss

Thanks to the next generation of workers, the toxic work environments that many of us tolerated for too long are no longer lasting. Being “the boss” is synonymous with being a bully. The office jerk is not allowed to roam freely, wreaking terror. With a focus on leadership and mental health, it’s your company’s responsibility to ensure your work environment is SAFE! That means saying bye to all the Karen and Kevin behaviour, freeing your workplace from being a cesspool of bad vibrations.

Saying goodbye to the emotional vampires who strike at anyone with a pulse and blast their colleagues with a steady flow of criticism and complaints means you are committed to exorcising these demons of pessimism in the place you spend most of your time: work. Know that it takes bravery.

Here are some strategies to make your work environment a positive stream of good vibrations.

Recognize the culprit. This is very important because you do not want to mutate into a member of the Inquisition out on a rabid witch hunt. Knowing who is emitting the negative energy in the office will help you deal with the concerned person better. Be on guard if other employees’ performances have been affected and their morale is already below sea level.

Establish the cause of the negative attitude. You do not have to be an internationally renowned psychic to know the other person’s source of negativity. But you do need to approach the situation with a plan. A series of discrete questions or heart-to-heart communication will suffice. Make sure you take the emotions out of the conversation. Explain how their behaviour makes you feel and give specific examples. Empathise with the other person to find the root of their bad feelings.

This can go one of two ways—let them choose. After you figure out where the anger is coming from, help them take charge of their actions. Suppose they feel that they have the right to express themselves in a certain way that contradicts their vision. In that case, you can point out that their behaviour is inappropriate for the workplace and, if possible, explain the rationale behind it. These people only need a thorough explanation to reform most of the time. Calling them out may be the wake-up call they need. Maybe they’ll go into a reflective mode and realise that, indeed, their actions are out of bounds.

Be brave. Bad habits are harder to ditch. Some may prefer to stick with their shells and refuse to turn a new leaf. Theirs is the coward’s way out.

You know you are not a coward and you can implement reforms needed in your life. If your opponent cannot change their bad habits, that’s when your leader or HR needs to step in. Feel empowered to go the distance with your concerns; you have a legal right to work in a safe environment. If you have encouraged them to replace their bad attitude with a more acceptable one and they choose violence, you need to choose your inner peace.

Be an exemplary model. Nothing beats negativity other than exuding positive vibrations. Your office mates will realise that the optimists are winners through your actions and behaviour while the pessimists are losers.

We spend most of our life at work and it can have the most significant effect on our overall health.

If Heinz can rectify the age-old problem of the disparity between the number of hot dogs (10) and hot dog buns (8). You my friend can fight to be treated with respect and dignity at work!

Just some food for thought.



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HER COLLECTION

COLLECT.CONNECT.CREATE

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The logo is centered on a black background. It consists of a large white circle. Inside this circle is a smaller circle with a thin black border. Within the inner circle, the word "HER" is written in a large, black, serif font. The letters "H" and "R" are partially overlaid by two vertical, light gray rectangular bars. Below "HER", the word "Collected" is written in a smaller, black, serif font.

HER
Collected