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"Balance is not something you find. It is something you create." — Jana Kingsford | Source: Raththaphol Wanjit



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THE POST

MOSSEL BAY • GREAT BRAK RIVER • GEORGE • WILDERNESS • SEDGEFIELD • KNYSNA

Wintermaande gaan dikwels gepaard met klemverskuiwings, eetpatrone wat verander, opsoek van sonplekkies in die huis, kaggelvure, vroeër inkruip saans, groter dissipline wanneer dit kom by oefening, meer gedagtetyd...

Dit is reeds tydens een Saterdagoggend se strandstap met twee vriendinne, rugsakkie vol lekker peuselhappies, koffie in die warm bottel, min woorde, voetafdrukke in die nat sand, dat welvaart by my opkom. Na 'n uitdagende klouter oor rotse, vind ons die perfekte rusplek, hoë groen hange agter ons, kaas- en -ham manna in die hand, die branders wat rol en speels teen die rotse breek. My gedagte van "'ek is welaf'", deel ek hardop met hulle wat kies om die woorde te hoor en omdat hul my ken en verstaan binne die konteks van hoe ek en my Moeder altyd in oomblikke soos hierdie dit teenoor mekaar bely het.

Welaf. 'n Woord wat dikwels gemeet word in bankstate, eiendomme en besittings. Tog het ek oor tyd geleer dat ware welvaart selde iets is wat in syfers vasgevang kan word. Dit lê eerder opgesluit in die manier waarop ons kies om die lewe te benader en deur watter lens ons kyk en leef. Nie in wat ons besit nie, maar in wat ons mettertied leer waardeer.

Om welgesteld te wees, is om op 'n winter fietsry- oggend die warmte van die son op my rug te voel. Dit is om tyd te hê vir 'n gesprek wat nie gehaas word nie, om saam te lag om 'n etenstafel, of om in stilte dankbaar te wees vir wat reeds meer as genoeg is.

Voorspoedig wees beteken nie dat die lewe sonder uitdagings is nie. Dit beteken eerder dat, te midde van onsekerheid, ons steeds rede vind om hoopvol te bly; dat ons die moed het om bedagsaam en sagkens om te gaan met jouself en ander, die wysheid om dankbaar te leef, en die insig om te verstaan dat die kosbaarste dinge in die lewe nooit gekoop kan word nie.

Welvaart lê nie buite jouself nie, jy vind dit in jouself en deel dit dan na buite

Laurinda



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SOUTH AFRICA'S TINY LEOPARDS

For decades, scientists have wondered why the leopards of South Africa's Cape Floristic Region are so much smaller than their counterparts elsewhere in Africa. While leopards are known for their adaptability and wide distribution across the continent, the Cape population has long stood out because of its noticeably reduced size. New research has finally provided an answer, revealing that Cape leopards are not only smaller, but also genetically unique and specially adapted to their environment.

Researchers studied the complete genomes of Cape leopards and compared them with leopard populations from across Africa. By analysing genetic similarities and differences, they reconstructed the population's evolutionary history. The results showed that Cape leopards have been largely isolated from other leopard populations for between 20,000 and 24,000 years.

This isolation began during the Last Glacial Maximum, when cooler and drier conditions altered habitats and restricted animal movement across southern Africa. As a result, the Cape leopard population followed its own evolutionary path, gradually becoming distinct from other African leopards.

The study found that Cape leopards form their own unique genetic group. Unlike many small and isolated wildlife populations, however, they have managed to retain relatively healthy levels of genetic diversity. This is encouraging news for conservationists, as genetic diversity helps species adapt to environmental changes, resist disease, and maintain healthy populations.

Scientists also uncovered clues explaining the leopards' smaller size. Around 90 genes linked to body size, muscle development, bone structure, and energy use were found to be more common in Cape leopards than in other populations. These traits appear to be adaptations to the unique conditions of the Cape Floristic Region, where prey is smaller and often less abundant than in other parts of Africa.

Unlike leopards elsewhere that frequently hunt larger antelope species, Cape leopards survive mainly on smaller animals such as rock hyrax, klipspringer, and Cape grysbok. A smaller body size likely requires less energy, giving these predators an advantage in a landscape where food resources are limited. Over thousands of years, natural selection appears to have favoured smaller, more efficient animals.

Today, fewer than 1,000 Cape leopards are believed to remain in the wild. They occupy mountainous areas across parts of the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape. Their survival is increasingly threatened by habitat fragmentation, road fatalities, poaching, and conflict with humans.

Researchers say the findings highlight the importance of protecting this unique population. Because Cape leopards represent a distinct evolutionary lineage, conserving them means preserving thousands of years of natural adaptation and genetic history.

Source: SciTechDaily

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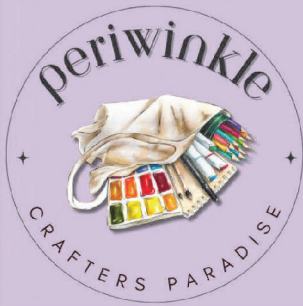
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WHY GRIEF HURTS

Understanding the brain in loss

Grief is one of the most universal human experiences, yet it remains deeply personal and often misunderstood. Many people ask: Why does grief feel like physical pain? Why can't I think clearly while grieving? Can grief actually change the brain?

The human brain is hardwired to form attachments. It keeps track of our closest relationships through space, time, and emotional connection. When we are separated from loved ones, the brain maintains these bonds by predicting when, where, and whether reunion is likely to happen. These dimensions can be described as here, now, and close — our ability, developed during childhood, to comfort ourselves by mentally holding onto the image of someone we love and trusting that we will reconnect.

During grief, the brain areas responsible for regulating emotion and pain become highly active. This is why the loss of a loved one can feel like literal physical pain. The term “broken heart syndrome” is not just a metaphor — the brain processes emotional loss through many of the same pathways involved in physical pain.

At the same time, the brain experiences cognitive suppression, reducing our ability to think clearly, plan, and concentrate. This is why many grieving people experience “brain fog,” forgetfulness, exhaustion, and difficulty focusing.

As the brain slowly tries to make sense of the loss, it begins redrawing the neural pathways connected to the relationship.

As the brain slowly tries to make sense of the loss, it begins redrawing the neural pathways connected to the relationship.

Older neural maps still expect the person to be here, now, and close. This is why people may instinctively reach for the phone to call a loved one, momentarily forget they are gone. Each time reality confronts these outdated predictions, the brain gradually updates itself.

You are not “going crazy” — your brain is rewiring itself in response to loss.

During this vulnerable time, it is important to keep supportive people close and communicate your needs clearly. Allow yourself to feel your emotions rather than suppressing them, and give yourself permission to cry and grieve. Preparing emotionally for anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays may also help, as these moments can trigger unexpected waves of grief.

Mindfulness and self-care can support healing. Gentle exercise, journaling, spending time in nature, connecting with others, or engaging in creative activities can help regulate the nervous system and support emotional recovery.

Moving forward does not mean forgetting the person you lost. It means learning to carry their memory differently while continuing to live, grow, and honor the love that remains.

Mel Tiedt



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TWIN HEART MEDITATION: A SERVICE TO HUMANITY

Service is what we give in order to uplift and better humanity. It can take many forms. At its heart, service is an expression of love, offered through our actions, our knowledge, and our willingness to support others in meaningful ways.

Why do we meditate, and how can meditation be a form of service? Meditation is indeed a form of service, because it uplifts both the individual and humanity as a whole. When we become more peaceful, loving, and aligned within ourselves, we are better able to share those qualities with the world.

Through meditation, we open ourselves to the presence and guidance of the soul. In stillness, we create the inner conditions through which higher energy, wisdom, and blessing can flow into our lives and outward into the world.

Twin Heart Meditation, given to us by Master Choa Kok Sui, is no ordinary form of meditation. Its practice begins by activating the heart chakra and then the crown chakra. When these two centres are awakened, divine energy may flow from God, or the Supreme Being, through the higher soul and into the heart. In this way, we become channels through which blessing, peace, and loving-kindness may be directed to Mother Earth and all life upon it.

As we remain open and receptive during meditation, this divine energy raises our vibration and helps cleanse the physical, emotional, and mental bodies. The more purified and open these inner channels become, the more easily higher energy can flow through us for the benefit of others.



For this reason, it is wise to cultivate purity in thought, feeling, and action. A clean and balanced instrument allows a stronger and steadier current of blessing to pass through. Peace flows more fully through one who is peaceful, and love flows more deeply through one who has allowed love to grow within.

In the silence, we begin to experience who we truly are: the Soul. From that awareness, service is no longer merely something we do; it becomes something we are. Through meditation and loving action, we participate in the upliftment of humanity and the blessing of the world.

When practiced in a group, Twin Heart Meditation can magnify the descent of divine energy and strengthen its blessing power.

Therefore, let us continue to practise with sincerity, consistency, and devotion.

Danette Roux



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THE NEED FOR CONSERVATION

We frequently ask ourselves what the hype about conservation of the environment is. Why are certain people always on about clean water, clean air, conservation of indigenous plants animals and even micro-organisms that we cannot even see with the naked eye, waste re-use and waste recycling? Is it a trend? Is it even necessary?

And the easy part of the answer is – if you care about your own or your children's health, it is very necessary to heed the calls for conservation – because environmental conservation is not about the plants, the birds, the mammals, the micro-organisms, the water and the air – it is the need for the preservation of human health.

The World Health Organisation estimates that modifiable environmental risks – polluted air, unsafe water and climate change, account for nearly 24% of global fatalities. This means that the air we breathe that is contaminated by vehicle emissions, dust caused by industrial activities such as poorly maintained gravel roads, various wood treatment facilities, foundries and factories, household burning of solid fuels or just poor indoor ventilation is directly responsible for the sinus, allergies and other respiratory illnesses as well as cardiovascular health that eats away at your health.

The chemicals that accumulate in the soil where our food is grown, whether originating from industrial activities – run-off from industrial sites, old infrastructure such as lead or asbestos - contribute to diseases, neurological and developmental issues that eventually cause fatalities, or require costly medication to restore your health.

The same applies to the food we provide the animals that forms part of our diet and waste that is disposed of incorrectly.

The water contaminated by industrial activities, raw or semi-treated sewage not only reduces the available water for consumption; it also carries illnesses like diarrhea, establish breeding ground for mosquitoes – posing a malaria risk or other waterborne illnesses such as dengue fever.

Even the way we design our cities and communities impact on our health – the lack of safe green spaces limits physical activities, proximity to heavy transport exposes the communities to noise pollution and chronic stress.

Noise pollution on by itself disturbs sleeping patterns, result in stress and hearing impairment.

A number of these illnesses and health conditions sound very familiar and then we ask ourselves where all these conditions originate? We create them ourselves by ignoring the need for environmental conservation.

So the next time you think that environmental conservation is just a trendy mission for a selected group of people, think about your own health.

Ina Bezuidenhout

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MUSEFEES 24 – 26 SEPTEMBER GROOT-BRAKRIVIER/GREAT BRAK RIVER



Wanneer die lente haar eerste spore deur die Tuinroete trek, is dit weer tyd vir Musefees in Groot-Brakrivier. Van 24 tot 26 September 2026 word feesgangers genooi om hulself te verdiep in 'n wêreld van stories, musiek, geskiedenis, natuur en kreatiwiteit.

Vanjaar se program bring 'n besondere verskeidenheid aanbiedinge na die dorp. Isabella Niehaus, bekroonde kookboekskrywer en kos-entoesias, bring haar passie vir kos, mense en saamkuier na die Musefees by Charcoal & Charm Restuarant. Albé Grobbelaar gaan feesgangers meevoer op 'n reis deur die verlede met sy bekende Historiese Almanak, wat reeds vir dekades luisteraars op RSG boei. Ilne Fourie, 'n skrywer, aktrise en stemkunstenaar en veral bekend vir haar komiese eenvrouvertonings kom ook kuier. Jacobi & Olga bring hul unieke mengsel van musiek, humor en storievertelling na die fees met Byna Beroemd, 'n stylvolle kabaret wat die fyn lyn tussen droom en werklikheid ondersoek. Schoemé Schoeman, is die koördineerder vir die ATKV Tiener- en Tjokkertoneel asook deeltydse dosent en beoordelaar. Die kleuters kan nader sit vir haar Puppe Trix vertonings. Meesterklasse bied geleentheid om nuwe vaardighede aan te leer en inspirasie te vind. AfriHardware gaan ons bemaatig met sy doen-dit- self praktiese aanbiedinge. Vir die natuurliefhebber maak die program voorsiening vir die unieke skoonheid en biodiversiteit van ons dorp. Die immer gewilde Bo-baas Braaibroodjie- & Worskompetisie vind weer vanjaar by Searles Village plaas.

Kom deel in die inspirasie, gesprekke en verrykende ervarings wat kennis en kreatiwiteit bevorder. Kom vind jou “muse” in Groot-Brakrivier.

Laurinda: 082 738 8011

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TOYOTA STELLENBOSCH WOORDFEES, 3 – 11 Oktober 2026

Die program vir die 2026 Toyota Stellenbosch Woordfees is nou bekend en is aanlyn beskikbaar op die fees se webwerf by woordfees.co.za. Kaartjieverkope open 18 Junie vir die publiek. "Met 15 weke om te beplan is dit nou die tyd om 'n feesgids nader te trek en te beplan aan 'n unieke feeservaring. Daar is iets vir almal, met uitstaande werk van ons voorste kunstenaars," sê Saartjie Botha, direkteur van die Toyota Stellenbosch Woordfees.

Die fees vind oor nege dae dié lente plaas en vanjaar se feestema is "Hoog Tyd". En met meer as 400 uiteenlopende programitems is daar 'n rede vir almal om Stellenbosch toe te kom.

- Kom span uit met jou kampstoel by die Toyota Musiekfees-opelugkonsertere by die Jan Marais-natuurreservaat. Jeremy Loops, Booshle G., Zaan Sonnekus en Tasché en Spoegwolf bring die klanke.
- Bring jou instrument na die Jazz at the Konserve-reeks om ná elke vertoning saam met die kunstenaars te jam.
- Die Toyota Stellenbosch Woordfees en Strauss & Co. se kunsveiling vind vanjaar in die Stadsaal plaas, waar die kollig val op artistieke uitnemendheid en erkenning van kontemporêre style.
- Daar is nege debute op die Spier Toneel-program. Hieronder tel My kind drup (Shimmy Isaacs), Skanse (Dawid Minnaar), Vlindervry (Cindy Swanepoel), 'n Middel (Tinarie van Wyk Loots), die wenstuk van die 2026 Reinet Nagtegaal-teksprys, Grootmeisie (Daneel van der Walt), Krapp se laaste band (Carel Nel), I Lord Hamlet (Carlo Daniels), Wie call die shots? (Miché van Wyk) en Elke briljante ding (Albert Pretorius).

- Die woord sit nie verniet heel voor in die Toyota Stellenbosch Woordfees se naam nie: Boeke en skrywers bly die hartklop van die fees. Vanjaar is daar meer as 50 aanbiedings op die EasyEquities Skrywersfees. Lesers, denkers en boekmense kan uitsien na boeke oor alles van rugby tot resensies, geld en geskiedenis, huwelike, honde, en hoe om 'n lewe te maak op 'n leë stuk grond in die Karoo.
- Op die Leefstylprogram is daar 'n behoorlike smorgasbord van smake en ervarings: 13 demonstrasies uit blinknuwe kookboeke, met jou gunsteling- TV-kosmense, sosiale media-sterre en kosskrywers op die verhoog in die Hofmeyersaal se demo-kombuis.
- Die Spier Toneel-program bied ook 'n goeie skeut humor met komediante soos Marion Holm, Marc Lottering, Marianne Thamm, Schalk Bezuidenhout en Nik Rabinowitz.
- Ensembles soos Darkroom Contemporary, Reach for the Stars, SboNdaba Dance, Jazzart Dance Theatre, Figure of 8 Dance Theatre, Stellenbosch Balletvereniging en Garage-dansensemble vertaal die ekspressiewe taal van dans.
- Jaco van der Merwe het nog 'n blink én bekostigbare filmfees saamgestel met 17 speelfilms en nege kortfilms, wat insluit die 2026 kykNET Silwerskermfees-program, Nico Scheepers se riller Hen, 'n reeks "poëtiese" dokumentêre wat hy beskryf as "dokufiksie", horror-gore, Hip Hop en meer. Die meeste van die flieks op die filmfees is gratis, terwyl die speelfilms billik geprys is teen R60 en R70. Laat die reuk van springmielies jou innooi by die Road House Cinema in die Neelsie en kom kyk waarom daar steeds 'n behoefte is om flieks op die grootskerm te sien. Toyota Stellenbosch Woordfees, 3 tot 11 Oktober. Kaartjies by Quicket.

Candice Jantjies



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LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Sometimes the most powerful remedy doesn't come in a bottle

Over the past few months, we have explored how our bodies function as interconnected systems — from the origins of early humans along our own Southern Cape coastline, to the role of biotics, and more recently, the conversation between the gut and the brain.

This month, the lesson arrived in a far less scientific — but far more joyful — way.

As grandparents, my wife (Granny) and I (Grandpa), both proudly over 70 and very much part of the baby boomer generation, were given the exquisite privilege of looking after our 20-month-old granddaughter, Aurora, while her parents set off on a five-day hike along the Otter Trail.

For five days, we revisited something we had not experienced in decades — the full, uninterrupted rhythm of caring for a small child.

On day two, Aurora introduced us to a game she had invented. We named it PEGS.

The rules were simple. Granny and Grandpa sat on the deck beneath the washing line. Aurora would then launch a bucket of clothe pegs into the air, sending them crashing down around us. This was followed by suitably dramatic exclamations from the grandparents — which, in turn, triggered uncontrollable belly laughter from Aurora.

This cycle repeated itself... again and again and again.

At times, Aurora would pause mid-game to deliver a high five, followed by a hug and a kiss — before returning to the serious business of PEGS.

It is a small miracle the neighbours did not call emergency services.

Moments like these remind us that joy, connection and human interaction are not separate from health — they are central to it. As we explored in our previous article, the gut and brain are in constant conversation. Laughter, emotional connection and positive experiences influence this dialogue in ways science is still working to fully understand.

Stress softens. Breathing changes. The body settles. Unconditional love from a grandchild, paired with shared laughter, may not come with a label or dosage instructions — but it has a way of restoring balance that few modern interventions can match.

Perhaps the old saying holds more truth than we realise. Because sometimes, the best medicine is not something we take. It is something we share

“Unconditional love, shared laughter, and a handful of pegs — sometimes that's all the medicine we need.”

Harry Trisos



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SLAGOFFERS VAN NARSISTE

Om deur die optrede van 'n narsis te loop, is traumaties. [PTSD](#) (post traumatic stress disorder) is dikwels die gevolg hiervan. Toxic Reality, 'n erkende skepper van sosiale media-inhoud skenk aandag aan die kwessie van trauma op haar Facebook-blad deur onder andere te sê: "Mental abuse is when someone breaks your spirit without ever laying a hand on you, then acts like nothing happened."

Die narsis ontken gebeure blatant en verdraai feite wat jou verwar en jou later jou geheue laat betwyfel. Die einddoel daarvan is dikwels om bloot jou te dwing om hul weergawe van die sogenaamde waarheid te steun. Hul doel is beheer en die patologiese leuens skep permanente wantroue. Slagoffers begin twyfel in hul intuïsie, raak hiperwaaksam en voel emosioneel uitgebrand. Hulle verduidelik en verdedig hulself onophoudelik, maar dit val op dowe ore!

Dis wanneer die narsis uitgevang word, dat die poppe begin dans. Wanneer hulle in 'n hoek vasgekeer word, volg wat sielkundiges na verwys as [DARVO](#): DENY – ATTACK – REVERSE – VICTIM –OFFENDER. Hulle verwerp feite, val jou karakter aan, draai die blaam op jou, hulle word die slagoffer en maak van jou die oortreder.

SWEATING IT OUT

The science behind the health benefits of a sauna:

What's not to love about having a sauna? There are great health benefits, it's a place to catch up with friends or meet new ones, and be part of a wellness community that is growing as more people understand why having regular saunas is so good for you - mentally and physically.

Research shows that frequent sauna use significantly boosts cardiovascular health because the heat mimics moderate exercise by elevating the heart rate and promoting blood flow. Other benefits include: reduced blood pressure and lower cholesterol levels.

Sauna sessions also support brain health in terms of lowering risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, and reduced stress through endorphin release, and improved sleep patterns.

Then, when you add cold water immersion to the process, you take the health benefits to a whole new level. By alternating between sauna heat and cold exposure (ice baths/cold sea plunges) it creates a vascular 'pump' effect that increases blood flow and relaxes muscles (heat) and reduces inflammation and flushes metabolic waste (cold). The result is enhanced muscle recovery and better circulation.

And the best news? A Hot Huts mobile sauna, with its authentic wood-fired oven and big postcard window, will soon be heating things up on beaches along the Garden Route. Apart from public sessions, you can hire it out as the perfect solution to host events, birthday parties, or team building.

Hot Huts Garden Route launches on 17 July 2026, so be sure to visit [@hothutsza](#) to find out more.

Daarom:

1. Moenie byt aan die aas en jouself verdedig of verduidelik nie,
2. Reageer kort en neutraal (volg die [grey rock](#) beginsel),
3. Aanvaar die narsis wil jou beheer – niks anders nie. Jou reaksie voed hulle boeligedrag.
4. Verbreek alle kontak as jy kan.
5. Soek hulp by 'n klinies opgeleide terapeut om jou te help om uit hierdie vernietigende verhouding te kom.

"A narcissist will never forgive you for what they put you through. Read that again." – [Toxic reality](#)

Bronnelys:

[PTSD:](#)

<https://www.charliehealth.com/post/ptsd-from-narcissistic-abuse>

[DARVO:](#)

<https://youtu.be/jPGRxHEcnp8?si=r4sHZjgrDXPEDszw>

[Grey Rock:](#)

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/grey-rock>

[Toxic reality:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1D5ahkBDUs/?mibextid=wwXlf>

Marika du Toit-van Heerden

EERSTE VIR GROOT-BRAKRIVIER

POLAR BEAR/YLSBEERSWEM kom Groot Brak toe op 25 Julie 2026. Om 12h00 sal die waaghalse die koue water aandurf.

Die geleentheid sal plaasvind by 'Suiderkruis strand', by die doodloop van Orion Straat.

Inskrywingskooi/entry fee: R100.00pp

Volkleur medalje/ full colour medal.

Die gedagte is om as groep in die water te gaan en ongeveer 3 minute in te bly of solank as wat jy wil. Navrae kan aan Felix (082 851 4584) gerig word of aan Laurinda (082 73 88011).



SURFACE TENSION

Anyone who has spent enough time pondering a moody sea has witnessed this phenomenon. At first glance, it appears dirty, unnatural, eerie or as if something has gone terribly wrong. To many, it appears chaotic, almost violent, yet what we are witnessing is simply physics and biology meeting turbulence, resulting in the all captivating all-consuming force that is sea foam.

Sea foam forms when rough water traps air beneath breaking waves. Millions of bubbles are churned into existence, but bubbles alone are not enough to support themselves. The ocean contains dissolved proteins, oils, microscopic organisms, decomposing seaweed, as well as countless organic and inorganic compounds.

Many of these substances act as natural surfactants, lowering surface tension and stabilising bubbles long enough for them to persist and gather into a visible stable foam. Strong winds further inject more air into the water and larger waves create even more turbulence.

The rougher the sea becomes, the more abundant the mass of foam. What appears to be something new emerging is simply material that existed all along becoming visible because environmental conditions have changed.

In this sense, foam is not an anomaly but a byproduct of interaction between energy and what is already present in the system. Nothing new is created in the storm, rather existing material is redistributed and made visible.

Foam does not indicate that the ocean has become something else, it indicates that conditions have made parts of it temporarily visible in a different form.

Perhaps people are not entirely different. We all move through life carrying invisible things beneath the surface. Grief quietly packed away, disappointments never spoken aloud, loneliness disguised as independence, exhaustion at the mundane hidden behind routine.

Much like the ocean's collection of matter, these feelings remain suspended, unseen by others and sometimes even by ourselves. It lingers waiting to come to the surface. Sometimes for us what emerges during rough seasons is not unsightliness appearing for the first time, but accumulated weight finally becoming obvious.

Likewise, the most visible responses to hardship are often not signs of emptiness but signs that something substantial exists beneath the surface.

When foam is whipped up, perhaps understanding and resilience are found by allowing the waves to churn what already exists within us, therefore accepting that rough conditions reveal what is kept beyond the surface. Trust that eventually the sea ultimately settles, the foam will dissipate and draw comfort knowing the ocean along with its ability to sustain life will remain.

Scott Thomson



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BRAINROT

The Silent Digital Epidemic Affecting Children

Meta Description: Discover what “brainrot” means, the effects of excessive screen time on children, and practical ways parents can build healthy digital habits at home.

Children today are growing up in a world of endless scrolling, short videos, gaming, memes, and constant digital stimulation. While technology offers incredible learning opportunities, many parents are becoming concerned about the impact too much online content is having on children’s focus, emotions, and behaviour.

One word increasingly used to describe this is “brainrot.”

What Is Brainrot?

“Brainrot” is a slang term describing the mental exhaustion and overstimulation caused by consuming too much fast-paced online content.

It often includes:

- Endless social media scrolling
- Watching short-form videos for hours
- Difficulty focusing offline
- Emotional dependence on devices
- Overstimulation and anxiety

While children joke about “brainrot,” the effects can be serious:

- Shortened attention spans
- Sleep disruption
- Mood swings
- Reduced creativity
- Poor face-to-face communication

The Good and Bad of Technology

Technology itself is not the enemy. Used correctly, it can encourage creativity, learning, problem-solving, and connection. Digital literacy is now an essential life skill.

The problem begins when screen time becomes excessive and replaces real-world experiences. Too much digital stimulation can affect emotional regulation, patience, social confidence, and creativity. Children still need offline play, conversation, boredom, and human connection to develop healthy life skills.

6 Ways Parents Can Protect Children from Brainrot

1. Prioritise Real Conversations

Family meals, car chats, and device-free conversations help children build emotional intelligence and communication skills.

2. Set Healthy Screen Boundaries

Create structure with screen-free bedrooms, no phones at meals, and offline family time. Boundaries help children feel secure and balanced.

3. Teach Children How Content Affects Them

Help children understand how algorithms work and why overstimulation affects focus, mood, and sleep.

4. Encourage Creativity and Boredom

Reading, outdoor play, music, drawing, and journaling give children’s brains time to rest and grow creatively.

5. Model Healthy Digital Habits

Children learn from adults. Put your phone down during family time and demonstrate healthy screen balance yourself.

6. Focus on Connection, Not Control

Instead of shaming children for loving technology, stay curious and connected. Open conversations build trust and help children feel safe asking for help online.

The Goal Is Balance, Not Perfection

No family will manage screen time perfectly. What matters is creating a home where communication is open, boundaries are healthy, and real-life connection still matters. **Social Kids**



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DIGITALE ERA BLAAS NUWE LEWE IN OPENBARE BIBLIOTEKE

Openbare biblioteke is lank reeds die middelpunt van opvoeding, inligting en gemeenskapsleer. Waar gebruikers voorheen biblioteekgeboue fisies moes besoek om toegang tot materiaal te verkry, het die digitale era splinternuwe geleenthede geskep om biblioteekdienste ver buite fisiese mure uit te brei.

Een van die belangrikste ontwikkelings van die afgelope paar jaar is die bekendstelling van die Libby-toepassing (app). Hierdie innoverende platform verander die manier waarop die publiek toegang tot literatuur verkry. Met slegs 'n paar klikke op 'n slimfoon, tablet of rekenaar bied Libby gratis toegang tot duisende e-boeke, audioboeke en digitale tydskrifte, direk vanaf 'n gebruiker se plaaslike biblioteek se digitale versameling.

Hierdie verskuiwing beteken nie die einde van die tradisionele biblioteek nie, maar verteenwoordig eerder 'n opwindende evolusie daarvan. Dit maak kennis en inligting meer toeganklik as ooit tevore, veral vir mense wat weens afstand, vervoeruitdagings of besige skedules nie die biblioteek persoonlik kan besoek nie.

Hoewel die reuk en gevoel van 'n papierboek altyd sy eie bekoring sal hê, bewys toepassings soos Libby dat openbare biblioteke suksesvol by die moderne era aanpas om hul gemeenskappe steeds effektief te dien.

Wat is Libby?

Libby is 'n gratis digitale platform wat biblioteeklede met 'n geldige biblioteekkaart direkte toegang gee tot duisende

e-boeke, audioboeke en tydskrifte op hul slimfone, tablette, rekenaars of skootrekenaars.

Die voordele van Libby is omvangryk. Die toepassing is draagbaar, skakel geografiese grense uit en ondersteun getletterdheid onder oud en jonk. Dit is omgewingsvriendelik, gebruikersvriendelik en gerieflik, terwyl dit gebruikers ook in staat stel om funksies soos lettergrootte aan te pas volgens hul individuele behoeftes.

In Suid-Afrika het Libby die lees- en audioboekkultuur 'n beduidende hupstoot gegee deur groter buigsaamheid en toeganklikheid aan gebruikers te bied. Daar bestaan egter steeds uitdagings. Die digitale gaping beteken dat toegang tot slimtoestelle, internetverbinding en data nie vir almal ewe beskikbaar is nie. Daarbenewens plaas lisensiebeperkings en begrotingsdruk verdere uitdagings op biblioteke.

Nietemin verteenwoordig Libby 'n belangrike stap vorentoe vir Suid-Afrikaanse biblioteekdienste. Dit brei die bereik van openbare biblioteke ver buite hul fisiese mure uit en bevorder lewenslange leer.

Moderne biblioteke het toenemend 'n hibriede model aangeneem wat beide tradisionele en digitale dienste kombineer om aan die veranderende behoeftes van hul gemeenskappe te voldoen. Om relevant te bly, moet biblioteke voortdurend aanpasbaar, innoverend en vooruitstrewend wees.

Ellen Van Rensburg Grootbrak Biblioteek



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UITNODIGING AAN SKRYWERS

Is jy 'n skrywer met 'n boek wat wag om ontdek te word? Die Musefees nooi plaaslike en streek skrywers uit om deel te wees van hierdie inspirerende fees deur hul boeke aan feesgangers ten toon te stel en te verkoop.

Die Musefees bring jaarliks kreatiewe geeste, kunsliefhebbers en nuuskierige besoekers bymekaar – die ideale geleentheid vir skrywers om hul werk aan 'n breër gehoor bekend te stel, met lesers in gesprek te tree en hul passie vir stories te deel. Of jy nou fiksie, nie-fiksie, kinderboeke, poësie of plaaslike geskiedenis skryf, ons verwelkom jou deelname. Dit is 'n unieke geleentheid om jou publikasies te bemark, nuwe lesers te ontmoet en deel te wees van die Musefees; wat kreatiwiteit, inspirasie en gemeenskap interaksie bevorder.

Belangstellende skrywers word versoek om Laurinda (laurinda@musefees) te kontak vir meer inligting beskikbare ruimte en deelname voorwaardes. Aansoeke sluit 20 Julie vir vroeë en aansoekvorms. oor

Kom deel jou stories en laat jou woorde nuwe lesers inspireer by die Musefees 2026!

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE WAY

THE CALL OF THE WAY, religious for some, spiritual for others—or perhaps both. You will feel it growing stronger over time, until one day you make the decision and take the plunge: TO SET OFF!

On the final day before departure, it is time to check everything: equipment, footwear, clothing, routes, and lists of accommodations—guesthouses, hostels, monasteries, and abbeys.

There is no turning back. You travel to the starting city by plane, train, bus, or high-speed rail. The challenge lies ahead: 2,300 kilometres in 80 days—1,000 in France and 1,300 in Spain.

You will pass through legendary places: Arles, Montpellier, Toulouse, Oloron-Sainte-Marie, the Somport Pass, then Puente la Reina, Burgos, León, and finally arrive in Santiago de Compostela. The first night brings the first doubts. The rising pressure is inevitable, but you manage the stress calmly. You have prepared seriously, both physically and mentally.

The first stage brings the first questions: Will I lose my way? Get injured? Forget or lose something? How will the weather be? Can I cover the distance? And ultimately, will I reach the evening's lodging?

All these fears build up during the first few days, but as time passes they begin to fade and eventually disappear. Physical effort takes over: walk, keep going, do not stop, push through, stay motivated—one step after another.

Then the miracle of the Way gradually unfolds. You become lighter, both physically and emotionally. Your focus shifts entirely to the beauty of the landscape, your breathing, and the spiritual dimension of the journey.

There will be moments of discouragement: deserted villages with no provisions available, forcing you to go without food until midday. There will be route diversions caused by forestry or road works, adding extra kilometres to your journey.

Then come the exceptional moments: the evening meal shared with hosts and fellow pilgrims. Everyone tells the story of their journey, their anecdotes, fears, adventures, challenges, and the invaluable information needed for the next stage of the Way.

The world has come to you, and you have gone out to meet it. Almost every nation is represented—from China to the United States, from Poland to South Africa—and English serves as the universal language.

L'EXPERIENCE DU CHEMIN

L'APPEL DU CHEMIN, religieux pour certains, spirituel pour d'autres ou pourquoi pas les deux. Vous allez le ressentir crescendo, alors un jour vous prenez la décision, vous vous lancez ! PARTIR !

Dernier jour avant le départ, il faut faire les inventaires, matériel, chaussures, vêtements, itinéraires, listes des hébergements, gîtes, auberges, monastères ou abbayes. Vous ne pouvez plus reculer, vous voyagez vers la ville de départ, avion, train, bus, TGV. Le challenge est devant vous : 2300 kms en 80 jours, 1000 en France et 1300 en Espagne. Vous allez traverser des villes de légende, Arles, Montpellier, Toulouse, Oloron Sainte-Marie, le Col du Somport, puis Puente la Reina, Burgos, León, et en finale l'arrivée à Compostelle.

Première nuit et premiers doutes, la montée de la pression est inévitable mais vous gérez ce stress sereinement, vous vous êtes préparé sérieusement, physiquement et moralement. Première étape et premières questions : s'égarer, se perdre, se blesser, oublier ou perdre des effets, la météo, la distance, et en finale, l'arrivée au gîte du soir.

Toutes ces peurs vont s'accumuler les premiers jours, mais au fil des jours elles vont s'atténuer et finir par disparaître. L'effort physique va prendre le dessus : marcher, continuer, ne pas s'arrêter, ne pas s'écouter, se motiver, un pas après un autre pas. Et puis le miracle du chemin va progressivement s'accomplir, vous allez vous alléger physiquement et moralement, vous n'allez plus vous concentrer que sur la beauté du paysage et sur votre souffle, sur le spirituel.

Il y aura parfois des moments de découragement, les villages déserts traversés, n'offrant aucun ravitaillement et vous obligeant au jeûne de mi-journée ! Le chemin détourné pour causes de travaux forestiers ou routiers, vous obligeant à faire des kilomètres supplémentaires. Il y a les moments d'exception, le repas du soir partagé avec les hôtes et les pèlerins, chacun raconte son chemin, ses anecdotes, ses peurs et ses aventures, les difficultés rencontrées et les renseignements indispensables pour l'étape du chemin.

Le monde est venu à vous, et vous êtes allé à sa rencontre. Tous les pays ou presque sont représentés, de la Chine aux USA, de la Pologne à l'Afrique du Sud, l'anglais sert de langage universel.

Jean Robert Fortina



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DANCING IN THE RAIN

Gratitude is one of the simplest things in the world to speak about and one of the hardest things in the world to truly live out. It's easy to be thankful when life feels soft around the edges. When money is flowing, relationships are healthy, and the people you love are safe beside you. Gratitude feels natural when the sea is calm and the horizon is painted in gold.

But life does not always arrive gently.

Sometimes it crashes through the front door like a storm with no warning. Finances tighten. Careers unravel. Relationships fracture beneath the weight of disappointment and exhaustion. Sometimes the phone rings and life changes forever in a single moment because someone you love is suddenly gone.

In those seasons, gratitude can feel almost impossible. The heart becomes heavy. The mind becomes consumed with survival. You begin bracing yourself for the next wave before you have even recovered from the last one.

That's the dangerous thing about hardship. It narrows your vision until all you can see is pain.

And yet, hidden quietly beneath the rubble of difficult seasons, life still leaves small pieces of beauty behind for us to find.

That is where gratitude lives.

Not only in the grand moments, but in the tiny ones we almost overlook. The ordinary moments that seem insignificant until we truly stop long enough to notice them. Gratitude is rarely loud. It doesn't demand attention. It whispers softly in the background of our lives, asking us to slow down long enough to see what is still good.

For me, gratitude often arrives in the smallest ways.

It is the sound of my daughter laughing without restraint, the kind of laugh that makes the whole world feel lighter for a moment.

It is the simple comfort of a good morning message from the woman I love, reminding me before the day has even begun that somewhere out there my heart is being held gently.

It's standing quietly beneath a burning sunset while the sky looks like it has been brushed with fire and gold by the hand of God Himself.

Sometimes gratitude finds me while standing among horses in complete silence, watching their different personalities unfold so honestly and naturally.

There is something deeply calming about them. They do not pretend to be anything other than what they are. In a world so full of noise, masks, and performance, there is something healing about witnessing such quiet authenticity.

These moments may seem small, but they are not small at all. They are anchors.

Because when life becomes difficult, gratitude is not about denying pain or pretending everything is perfect. It is about refusing to allow darkness to blind you to the beauty that still exists around you. It's the decision to actively search for light even while standing in the middle of the storm.

That takes effort.

It takes intention.

If you don't consciously look for those moments, you will miss them entirely. Life will slowly pull your attention toward fear, frustration, bitterness, and exhaustion.

You will begin living in survival mode, constantly preparing for impact, constantly expecting the next thing to go wrong.

Warren Moulton



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HOLIDAY - CHILDREN?

The school holidays are here, and for many families that means one thing – finding ways to keep energetic youngsters entertained while making the most of quality family time. Fortunately, the Garden Route offers endless opportunities for fun, adventure and exploration, making it one of South Africa's favourite family holiday destinations.

Stretching from Mossel Bay through to Knysna and beyond, the region is packed with activities suitable for children of all ages. Whether your family enjoys outdoor adventures, wildlife encounters, creative activities or simply spending time together, there is something for everyone.

One of the biggest attractions for families is the abundance of beaches. Children can spend hours building sandcastles, collecting shells, exploring rock pools and splashing in the waves. Popular family-friendly beaches such as Santos Beach in Mossel Bay and Wilderness Beach provide plenty of space for kids to run and play while parents relax and enjoy the beautiful coastal scenery.

For families looking for a little more adventure, the Garden Route offers numerous hiking and walking trails. Many routes are suitable for younger children and provide opportunities to discover indigenous forests, spot birds and enjoy breathtaking views. Nature reserves and parks throughout the region make it easy to introduce children to the wonders of the natural world.

Animal lovers are also spoiled for choice. From wildlife parks and sanctuaries to farm visits and marine experiences, children can learn about South Africa's unique animals while creating unforgettable memories. These hands-on experiences often become the highlight of a family holiday.

The Garden Route's towns and villages also come alive during the school holidays, with markets, family events, playgrounds, visits to your local library and holiday programs providing additional entertainment. Many local businesses offer child-friendly activities, making it easy for parents to plan a full day of fun without traveling far.

Perhaps the greatest gift of a Garden Route holiday is the opportunity to slow down and spend time together. Whether it is sharing an ice cream on the beachfront, taking a scenic drive, enjoying a picnic in nature or watching a sunset over the ocean, these simple moments often become the memories children treasure most.

This holiday season, take advantage of everything the Garden Route has to offer. With its combination of natural beauty, outdoor adventure and family-friendly attractions, it remains the perfect destination for creating unforgettable family memories.

After all, the best holiday is not about how far you travel, but about the moments you share along the way.

Source: Mossel Bay Tourism

GETYKAART JUNIE 2026 - Mosselbaai

	Times of												
Day	Sunrise	Sunset	High Water				Low Water				Moonrise	Moonset	Moon Phase
			Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height			
1	0737	1732	0417	1.86	1644	1.89	1028	0.41	2240	0.52	1851	0849	
2	0737	1732	0450	1.87	1716	1.90	1059	0.40	2315	0.53	1951	0924	
3	0737	1733	0523	1.86	1750	1.89	1130	0.42	2352	0.56	2051	0955	
4	0737	1733	0557	1.82	1826	1.87	1202	0.45	---	---	2151	1023	
5	0737	1734	0633	1.77	1907	1.84	0031	0.60	1235	0.51	2251	1049	
6	0737	1734	0715	1.69	1953	1.79	0115	0.65	1312	0.58	2352	1119	
7	0737	1735	0803	1.60	2049	1.76	0206	0.70	1357	0.67	---	1142	
8	0737	1735	0905	1.51	2156	1.73	0307	0.73	1459	0.76	0056	1211	
9	0736	1736	1025	1.47	2311	1.74	0424	0.74	1629	0.81	0203	1245	
10	0736	1736	1159	1.51	---	---	0550	0.69	1809	0.77	0314	1325	
11	0736	1737	0027	1.80	1317	1.63	0705	0.58	1923	0.65	0428	1415	
12	0735	1738	0134	1.89	1417	1.79	0805	0.45	2022	0.51	0541	1517	
13	0735	1738	0233	1.98	1507	1.95	0856	0.34	2114	0.40	0648	1629	
14	0735	1739	0326	2.06	1553	2.07	0941	0.25	2202	0.32	0745	1743	
15	0734	1739	0413	2.10	1637	2.15	1023	0.20	2248	0.30	0831	1900	
16	0734	1740	0457	2.09	1719	2.17	1102	0.19	2331	0.34	0910	2011	
17	0734	1741	0538	2.03	1759	2.13	1138	0.24	---	---	0942	2119	
18	0733	1741	0617	1.92	1839	2.04	0012	0.42	1212	0.33	1010	2223	
19	0733	1742	0654	1.79	1918	1.92	0051	0.53	1245	0.45	1037	2325	
20	0732	1743	0732	1.64	1959	1.77	0131	0.66	1318	0.60	1103	---	
21	0732	1743	0815	1.49	2046	1.63	0213	0.78	1356	0.76	1131	0025	
22	0731	1744	0913	1.37	2151	1.51	0306	0.88	1450	0.91	1201	0125	
23	0730	1745	1102	1.31	2323	1.46	0437	0.94	1641	1.01	1234	0225	
24	0730	1745	1252	1.38	---	---	0634	0.89	1841	0.96	1313	0325	
25	0729	1746	0048	1.50	1348	1.51	0734	0.79	1937	0.85	1357	0422	
26	0728	1747	0144	1.59	1427	1.64	0814	0.68	2017	0.73	1448	0515	
27	0728	1747	0226	1.69	1459	1.75	0846	0.57	2050	0.62	1544	0605	
28	0727	1748	0301	1.78	1529	1.85	0916	0.47	2122	0.53	1643	0648	
29	0726	1749	0333	1.87	1558	1.94	0945	0.39	2154	0.46	1744	0725	
30	0726	1749	0404	1.93	1627	2.01	1012	0.33	2226	0.42	1845	0759	
31	0725	1750	0434	1.97	1657	2.05	1040	0.29	2258	0.40	1945	0827	

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