

# ESCAPING OUR REGULAR ROUTINES

## WITH HELP FROM BILL MURRAY AND 'GROUNDHOG DAY'

At the beginning of February, all eyes will be on Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to see if the most famous groundhog in the world, Punxsutawney Phil, sees his shadow. Superstition asserts that we'll get six more weeks of winter if he sees the shadow. Groundhog Day is a time-honored tradition that Americans have recognized for over a century. I think Groundhog Day is a fun holiday. The groundhogs might not always be right, but neither are our meteorologists, so we can't get too upset when they get it wrong. Plus, the holiday helped inspire one of the greatest Bill Murray movies of all time, "Groundhog Day."

"Groundhog Day" imagines Murray's character trapped in a time loop, where he is forced to repeat the same day over and over again. Throughout the film, Murray tries to change little things to see if he can break from this time loop. I think many of us feel like we're living in an endless loop, much like "Groundhog Day." We get stuck in a rut or fall into a routine in which every day feels the same. A woman recently confided to me that she used to call her daughter on the way to work every morning to say she was driving back to hell. Yikes!

It feels like we all get stuck inside the hamster wheel of life, going through the same motions day in and day out. Yet, we often do this expecting different results. Sometimes, we even recognize we're stuck and try to think our way out of it. We try to make a minuscule change hoping to create a different outcome. Yet, making these small changes is like slightly adjusting the direction of an airplane on autopilot. Even if you make a 1-degree deviation, you'll end up somewhere different than before.

One of the best ways to break out of a negative routine is to be intentional with your thoughts and actions. I learned this from my children. It's easy to continue on autopilot and go through the motions. One way to be more intentional is to start journaling. When I've journaled in the past, I've seen change and growth in my own life. I can better organize my thoughts and be more intentional with my plans.

I've always found difficulty in breaking from routine because I'm a creature of habit. Normally, every night, my wife and I will eat together, take the dog out, and then read. This past December, we decided to be more intentional with our nightly routine. One Saturday night, we went to a Dave Koz Christmas concert. He's an extraordinary saxophonist. Everyone in the audience was singing along, having a great time. After the concert, my wife and I realized how long it had been since we had a night out like that and vowed to spend more time going to plays or concerts in the future. It was a rejuvenating experience that helped lift my spirits immensely.

If you find yourself stuck in a rut, try to be intentional and jot down the ideas troubling you. If you're unsure why you feel like you're in a loop, find someone to talk to and be vulnerable enough so they can help. Find someone you trust who has experience in various areas of life. Before long, you'll develop a plan to break out of your rut and remember what it's like to have some fun again!



*-Jim Monast*

# INSTEAD OF PURCHASING FOAMING SOAPS

## CREATE YOUR OWN WITH JUST 3 INGREDIENTS

We've all seen the foaming hand and dish soaps at our local supermarkets — some of you may have one by your sink or in a cabinet. But when you run out of soap, what do you do? Do you throw out the bottle and purchase a new one? Or do you buy a new bottle and attach it to the dispenser? Buying soap replacements all the time is costly, but you can save money and soap by creating your own foaming dish and hand soap! You only need three things: a foaming dispenser, liquid soap, and water.

### Is making your own foaming soap *that easy*?

Yes! The entire process may take you only five minutes to complete. The most important item you need is a foam dispenser. You can reuse a foaming soap container or purchase one online. After rinsing your bottle, add one part liquid soap and three parts water. Avoid shaking the bottle after screwing the cap back on. The suds and bubbles in the container will affect the dispenser and produce less foam when you pump the device.

And that's it! You just created foaming hand or dish soap in seconds. You don't need to add lots of liquid soap to your concoction. If you look at foaming soaps in the supermarket, you will notice that it's mostly water. So, less is more in this instance.

Once you begin making these, you'll notice that you use less soap, making the product last longer and keeping more money in your pocket.

Not only does this foaming method work for hand and dish soaps, but you can also make your shampoo, body wash, and other cleansers foam — it's all about the dispenser. If you decide to convert other products, avoid creamy soaps because they have moisturizers that can clog the foaming dispenser.

Once you start making your own foaming soap, you will never go back to purchasing them. This DIY method is easy, quick, and inexpensive. Happy cleaning!

## CLIENT STORY: GINA STELZER

One of the most delightful people we know is our client Gina Stelzer. She and her husband of 35 years, Joe, have been clients for years, and we are better people for knowing them!

An Ohio gal through and through, Gina was born in Lancaster and raised in Logan. After high school and college, these crazy kids moved to Delaware, Ohio, where Gina worked for the city schools for 16 years as a cook/cashier. This meant getting up at 5 a.m. and working seven hours a day to prepare meals for students and brighten their days with her smile and encouragement.

Adam Sandler years ago penned a fun song about lunch ladies, and I certainly remember going through the line thousands of times from elementary through high school. As anyone who cooks for a living or even for their own family knows, meal preparation takes planning and lots of activity. When cooking for hundreds of students, it's also heavy work, involving lifting large kettles and boxes of canned goods. Gina, who looks up to our Wilma at 4 feet, 11 inches, had a left shoulder rotator cuff and biceps tear lifting a heavy box. Her surgery failed and she had a revision. This also failed. Eventually, she had a reverse total shoulder arthroplasty (replacement). Her opposite right shoulder had to bear the load for both sides, and ultimately, it became painful and weak. She developed another large cuff tear and had the same RTSA procedure on her right shoulder.

Even when labeled "successful," these surgeries leave significant limitations. As an Industrial Commission orthopedist recently commented, Gina had only a moderate result from her surgeries (translation: a poor result). She has permanent severe limitations with both shoulders and arms. Her bones are tiny and fragile, and she is wisely and naturally cautious. The doctor, who spent many years doing defense exams, concluded this "very nice, polite, well-dressed, and cooperative" lady is incapable of work. The Industrial Commission agreed and placed her on permanent total disability.

Having represented many folks whose injuries ultimately knocked them out of the workforce, I know it can be scary. Your body just doesn't do what you want it to, and it's against our nature to ask others for help. It's hard on relationships, too. Gina is an inspiration to us as she continues the sometimes-daily effort to keep a smile on her face and a positive outlook. She is a bright light to those around her, and I am grateful we were able to perhaps ease some of the financial burden. We hope she and Joe will remain friends of ours for years to come!



**MAKING  
VIOLINS  
MORE  
AFFORDABLE**

**WITH  
HELP  
FROM  
A 3D  
PRINTER**

Many kids across the country are enthralled by music but cannot afford quality instruments to learn how to play. But learning to play music on a poorly made instrument can lead to poor technique. With this knowledge in hand, the Acoustical Society of America team put their heads together to develop a way to make instruments more affordable. With the recent advancements in 3D printing, they have begun to 3D-print instruments for hundreds of children and adults interested in learning to play.

The 3D-printed violin was first introduced by Mary-Elizabeth Brown at the Acoustical Society of America's conference this past December. The two-piece violin had a printing cost of only \$7 and an assembly cost of \$30. Violins regularly cost from \$500-\$5,000, so Brown's invention cuts the cost significantly. The 3D-printed violin is composed of a specially engineered plastic polymer substance that can replicate the tones and sounds made by traditional violins. The 3D-printed violin has a darker and more mellow sound than conventional violins.

"Our goals were to explore the new sound world created by using new materials, to leverage the new technology being used in other disciplines, and to make music education sustainable and accessible through the printing of more durable instruments," Brown said.

Violins are not the first instrument to get the 3D-printer treatment. Flutes, ocarinas, guitars, and even saxophones have all been 3D-printed in the past. It will be fun and exciting to see how this industry develops as further advancements are made.

The AVIVA Young Artists program of the Acoustical Society of America regularly travels the country, printing and selling their 3D-printed violins. If you're interested in getting a 3D-printed violin of your own or want to receive the patterns so you can print one yourself, subscribe to the mailing list at [PrintAViolin.com](http://PrintAViolin.com).

# SUDOKU

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**ANSWER**



**MUNCHIES WITH MOLLY**

## VALENTINE'S DAY DOG TREATS

*Inspired by [PrettyFluffy.com](http://PrettyFluffy.com)*

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups almond flour
- 1 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 3-4 tbsp coconut flour
- 1 tbsp coconut oil

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. In a small bowl, beat eggs and set aside.
3. In a separate bowl, combine almond flour, coconut oil, and dried cranberries.
4. Once combined, pour in eggs and mix with your hands. (The dough will be very wet.)
5. Add coconut flour 1 tbsp at a time; mix well after each addition. You want to achieve a consistency that is easy to roll, is not super sticky, and easily forms a ball.
6. Roll out dough and cut treats using bite-size cookie cutters. *Tip: Sprinkle a little coconut flour on top of your dough to keep it from sticking to the cookie cutters.*
7. On a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, place your treats. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until crisp. Let cool before giving to your pooch!

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# STAY SAFE ONLINE!

GUARD YOUR PRIVACY AND PEACE OF MIND

We live in a digital world where everything can be found online. Whether it's storing data or gaining access to information, we tend to use the internet constantly. With so many innovations and new technologies being created, it's no surprise that cybercrimes are becoming more frequent than ever.

### What are cybercrimes?

Cybercrimes are criminal activities that involve computers, networked devices, or networks. These are typically committed by cybercriminals or hackers looking for ways to steal information, damage computers or networks, or make a profit – whether personal or political.

### Some types of cybercrimes include:

- Email and internet fraud
- Identity fraud (where personal information is stolen and used)
- Theft of financial or card payment data
- Theft and sale of corporate data
- Infringing copyright
- Selling illegal items online

As more business transactions, such as paying bills, shopping, and trading, have moved online, cybercrimes have affected more people than ever before. Unfortunately, the ill effects often lead to extreme financial ruin for businesses and individuals.

### What happens if you're found guilty of cybercrimes?

Laws have been made to address criminal behavior that involves computers, computer systems, and the internet. In fact, each state has its requirements and potential penalties depending on the type of crime – and penalties may be severe, even for first-time offenders.

The penalties could include the following:

#### Fines

These range widely, but a misdemeanor conviction can result in minor fees of a few hundred dollars or possibly up to \$1,000. At the same time, felony convictions can have fines of up to \$100,000.



#### Jail or Prison

If someone is convicted of a specific cybercrime, they can face jail or prison sentences. The most severe crimes can even result in a prison sentence of 20 years or more.

#### Probation

Depending on the case, a person can be on probation for a year or more and need to report to a probation officer, pay court costs and fines, or maintain employment.

Though technology can make life a little easier, there are dangers we must avoid. So, create strong passwords, keep your systems updated, and be mindful of the information you're giving out.