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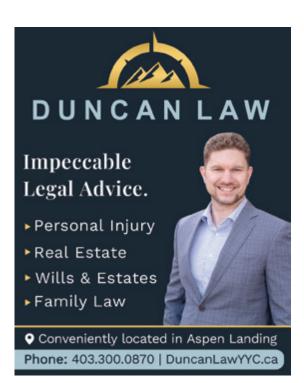
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February Snow

by Garth Paul Ukrainetz, Poet of the Blackmud Creek

February snow can't miss your falling Always sure to drift my way Cling to pant legs, holding tightly

Cling to pant legs, holding tightly Begging me to come and play

Slide upon a long toboggan

Skate across a pond of ice

Downhill ski on powdered mountain

Friendly little snowball fight

Wintertime is over soon

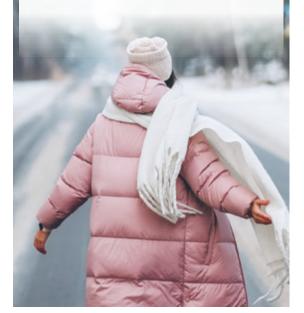
February snow I know you're lonely
This time of year I feel it too
Maybe we should get together

Glide along the trails cross country

Snowshoe thru the meadows white

Snowmen build in brightest sunshine

Angels make on moonlit night





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Real Estate Statistics



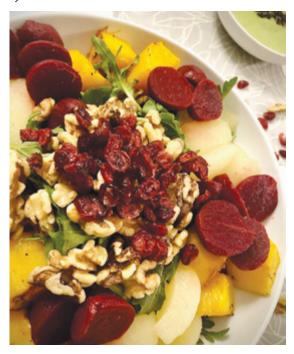


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Winter Salad with Green Dressing

by Jennifer Puri



Cranberries are rarely eaten raw due to their acidic and sour taste. They are typically consumed dried, in a juice, sauce, or as supplements. Dried cranberries are typically sweetened with sugar or a sugar alternative.

Related to blueberries, bilberries, and lingonberries, cranberries are a rich source of plant compounds and antioxidants which include flavonoids and polyphenols. These help in keeping blood vessels healthy and cranberries' vitamin C and calcium content assist in maintaining strong bones.

There are a multitude of ways to enjoy cranberries as they can be added to muffins, tarts, breads, stuffing, smoothies, spritzers, sangria, or a salad as shown in the winter salad with green dressing recipe below.

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 small butternut squash
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. coarsely ground salt
- 1 tsp. coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 small can sliced pears or peaches, drained
- 1 small can beets drained, rinsed, and cut in halves
- 6 cups arugula or baby spinach leaves
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries

Dressing:

- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- · 3 green onions, sliced
- 1 cup Greek yoghurt
- 1 cup of fresh coriander and parsley leaves
- 2 tbsp. honey
- · 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- Juice of half a lemon
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. coarsely ground black pepper
- 34 tsp. salt or to taste

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Slice butternut squash into 1-inch-thick pieces and remove seeds, pith, and skin.
- Place squash pieces in a bowl and toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper.
- Line a baking tray with foil and place the squash pieces on it. Bake on middle rack of oven for approximately 30 minutes or until tender. Allow to cool and then cut into bite size pieces.
- In a blender place the garlic, green onion, yoghurt, honey, mayonnaise, parsley, coriander, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Pulse until smooth and then slowly add the olive oil and pulse for a few more seconds.
- Place arugula or spinach leaves in a large salad bowl.
 Arrange the squash pieces, beets, pear or peach slices around the edges of the bowl and the walnuts and cranberries in the center.
- Serve with green dressing and crusty, sourdough, or ciabatta bread.

Bon Appétit!

February Is Heart Month

by Alberta Health Services



Do you know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and what to do if someone experiences these? Knowing may make the difference between life and death. Recognizing and responding immediately to the warning signs of a potential heart attack may significantly improve survival and recovery. February is Heart Month: take the time to be heart safe and learn how you can reduce your risk.

Common Signs of a Heart Attack

(Any, or all, of these signs and symptoms may occur)

- Chest discomfort described as simply a mild pressure up to a 'crushing' pain; may also be 'squeezing' or a 'heavy' sensation.
- Discomfort may move to the shoulders, arm, neck, or jaw.

- May include shortness of breath, sweating, or nausea/vomiting.
- Signs may vary person to person and can differ between men, women, and the elderly.

Heart Attack Risk Factors

- Obesity*
- Sedentary lifestyle*
- Smoking*
- · High cholesterol*
- Age/Gender
- Family history

Speak with your doctor about how to treat your modifiable (*) risk factors and learn to be heart safe.

What To Do When Seconds Count

- Call 911, immediately. Early treatment can greatly reduce heart damage and be the difference between life and death.
- Treatment starts the moment EMS arrives. Paramedics can provide oxygen, start an intravenous, and perform an electrocardiogram (ECG).
- Paramedics can also administer important medication(s) in the early minutes of a heart attack to lessen heart damage.
- During transport, EMS will share information with the hospital so that definitive treatment can begin immediately upon arrival.
- Take a CPR/AED course. Training is widely available from many reputable organizations. It's easy and could make a significant difference in the outcome of someone experiencing a heart attack.







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		Properties		Median Price	
		Listed	Sold	Listed	Sold
December	24	3	2	\$1,624,500	\$1,574,450
November	24	1	3	\$1,595,000	\$1,492,500
October	24	4	3	\$2,998,000	\$2,970,000
September	24	5	4	\$1,463,950	\$1,452,500
August	24	5	3	\$1,395,000	\$1,395,000
July	24	5	3	\$2,499,000	\$2,600,000
June	24	8	5	\$2,349,000	\$2,275,000
May	24	6	3	\$1,495,000	\$1,515,000
April	24	2	5	\$1,495,000	\$1,490,000
March	24	7	6	\$1,747,500	\$1,730,000
February	24	6	5	\$1,595,000	\$1,550,000
January	24	10	2	\$1,887,450	\$1,872,500

To view more detailed information that comprise the above MLS averages please visit elbv.mycalgary.com

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How to Know if You Are Ready For Couples Therapy or Not

by Nancy Bergeron, R.Psych. | info@nancybergeron.ca



There are many approaches to couples therapy such as Gottman Method, Emotionally Focused Therapy, and IMAGO to name a few. The decision to seek couples therapy requires evaluating your relationship and your willingness to work through challenges. The following are some key signs that you may be ready:

- **1. Communication Issues** Do you struggle to express your feelings without arguing or shutting down? Are there unresolved conflicts that keep resurfacing?
- **2. Feeling Disconnected** Has the emotional or physical intimacy in the relationship declined? Do you feel like roommates rather than partners?
- 3. Recurring Problems Are you stuck in repetitive arguments or unhealthy patterns? Have individual efforts to fix these issues failed?
- 4. Life Changes or Stressors Have recent events (moving, new baby or job) put a strain on your relationship?
- **5. Trust Issues** Has there been a betrayal such as an infidelity or broken promises? Are you struggling to rebuild trust?
- **6. Desire to Improve** Are you both willing to put in the effort to strengthen the relationship? Do you believe the relationship has potential for growth?
- 7. Mutual Commitment Are you both open to exploring therapy, even if one of you is more hesitant at first?
- **8. Individual Challenges Impacting the Relationship** Are personal issues such as stress, trauma, or mental health affecting how to connect with each other?

If you relate to some of the above, couples therapy could be beneficial. Even if you're unsure, seeking therapy to explore some of these concerns and set goals can be a proactive step.

The following are some signs that couples therapy could be unproductive or even counter-productive:

- **1. Lack of Commitment to Change** One or both of you are not genuinely willing to work on the relationship. Going to therapy just to 'check the box' or appease the other.
- 2. Blaming Without Accountability If either of you is solely focused on blaming the other without reflecting on your own role in the relationship's challenges.
- **3.** Unwillingness to Communicate Honestly If either of you are unwilling to be vulnerable, open, and honest, your therapist won't have a full picture to be able to help you.
- **4. Hidden Agendas** If therapy is being used as a way to justify leaving the relationship rather than to repair it, the process won't be effective.
- **5. One of You is Being Forced into Therapy** If one of you does not want to attend or doesn't believe in the process, lack of engagement can hinder the process.
- **6. Ongoing Abuse** Couples therapy is not the right setting to address physical, emotional, or verbal abuse. These situations require specialized interventions to ensure safety and require individual therapeutic attention.
- **7. Unresolved Individual Issues** If personal issues such as active addiction or untreated mental health conditions are dominating the relationship dynamics, individual therapy is a better starting point before engaging couples therapy.
- **8. Timing is Off** If there are active external factors like intense work stress, a recent traumatic event, or other life circumstances, it will leave little energy or focus for therapy. It may be better to wait.
- **9. Desire for Separation** If one of you has already decided to end the relationship and sees therapy as a formality, it will obviously prevent any genuine engagement.

Being ready for couples therapy requires mutual willingness and effort, but readiness can evolve with time and self-reflection.



Learning About Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

by Alberta Health Services

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a common condition that is caused by a hormonal imbalance. Hormones control the activity of different cells and organs in your body. With PCOS, the hormone imbalance can affect your period and your overall health. It causes the ovaries to produce higher levels of the hormone testosterone. With PCOS, your ovaries may also develop enlarged, fluid-filled follicles that are often referred to as cysts.

Because of the extra testosterone, people with PCOS may have:

- Missed periods, irregular periods, and very light periods (including spotting)
- Extra hair on the face or body
- Thinning hair on the head
- Severe acne
- Difficulty managing weight
- Difficulty getting pregnant
- · Darkening of skin on the neck, armpits, or groin area
- If you notice sudden, unusual hair growth on your face or body or new wide purple stretch marks on your body, contact your healthcare provider right away.
- You may also have symptoms of:
- Sleep apnea
- Fatigue
- · Anxiety, depression, and mood changes

 High blood pressure, high blood glucose, and high blood lipids (your healthcare team can test for these things)

People living with PCOS may be at an increased risk of sleep apnea, diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy complications, and endometrial hyperplasia.

Visit Your Healthcare Provider

It's important to consult your healthcare provider about PCOS. Write down how you feel, your symptoms, when your symptoms started, what makes your symptoms better or worse, and any concerns you have. Make a list of questions and concerns. During your appointment, your healthcare provider may ask you several questions about your health history and your family's health history.

They may ask about your:

- Menstrual cycle
- Past pregnancies or attempts to get pregnant
- Unwanted hair growth
- Symptoms
- Weight management
- Medicines and supplements
- Ethnicity

These questions help your healthcare provider diagnose PCOS and know how to best support you and your overall health.

Your healthcare provider will also check your height, weight, and blood pressure. Because PCOS can increase your risk of diabetes and heart disease, knowing your

current height, weight, and blood pressure will help your healthcare team manage these risk factors and also manage your PCOS symptoms.

Your healthcare provider may also do an exam to check for signs of high testosterone levels, insulin resistance, and other conditions. This exam includes:

- Looking for skin tags and dark, thick, velvety skin in your body folds and creases.
- Looking for extra hair in different parts of your body, especially on your face and chin. You may want to delay shaving, plucking, or doing any hair removal before your appointment.
- Looking for wide purple stretch marks in your belly area and other parts of your body.

Work with your healthcare team to decide what is best for you as you manage your PCOS and find resources and services in your community:

211 Alberta helps people in Alberta find the right resource or service for whatever issue they need help with. 211 is available any time, day or night, by phone (call 2-1-1), text, and online chat. It is confidential and available in over 170 languages over the phone.

The Alberta Healthy Living Program has workshops, classes, and services to improve your health and quality of life.

The Alberta Health Services Chronic Disease Management program has links and resources to help people living with chronic conditions.

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The Art of Finding Work: Job Search Success Is Not Complicated

by Nick Kossovan

Most people over-complicate the process of achieving success.

Achieving success is often perceived as a complex puzzle, or according to those who play the 'I'm a victim!' card, only available to those who are supposedly privileged. The fact is there's a simple equation for achieving success, which Zig Ziglar famously encapsulated, "You can have everything in life you want if you will just help other people get what they want."

Side note: "all you want" should be interpreted as "all you need."

I recommend considering the hiring process from the employer's perspective. By doing so, you'll empathize with employers and understand that positioning yourself as a candidate who has the skills, experience, and proven track record of helping employers get what they want is a job search strategy that'll set you apart from your competition, who aren't approaching their job search with an "I want to help employers" mindset as they have the all-too-common "I want!" mindset.

Success isn't a complicated journey. With the right mindset, it's a simple path—help others achieve what they want. However, the mindset I come across most often is the exact opposite; job seekers focused on what they want, as opposed to what employers want, resulting in employers being turned off. Who isn't turned off by someone solely concerned with their needs and wants, who comes across as "predatory"?

Most job seekers: "Employers need to understand my issues and needs."

Savvy job seekers: "I need to understand the employer's issues and needs."

Job seekers who are thinking clear and show employers how they can help them achieve what they want are few and far between. Being that rare candidate makes you unique and highly valuable, which is a significant competitive advantage. I can guarantee that your interviewer almost never encounters a candidate who projects an "I'm here to help you" aura.

When viewed holistically, employers want five things:

- 1. Be profitable
- 2. Reduce/control costs
- 3. Have low employee turnover
- 4. Optimize employee performance
- 5. Provide excellent customer experiences

How can you help an employer achieve any of, or a combination of the above?

What's Your Employee Value Proposition?

For instance, you can never go wrong assuming the employer wants to be profitable; hence, suggesting cost-saving measures or revenue-generating ideas during your interview will demonstrate your desire to help the company get what it wants, which is to be profitable.

Imagine yourself as a hiring manager. One of your standard interview questions is: "How will you contribute to the company's success?" or, more directly, "Why should I hire you?"

Candidate A:

"If hired, I will bring enthusiasm, dedication, and hard work to the team. I am a fast learner and have a strong work ethic. I am also a team player."

Candidate B:

"I bring over 15 years of technical expertise, problemsolving skills, and a commitment to innovation. As head of Gekko's IT, I led a project to streamline its data analysis processes, increasing efficiency by 20% and reducing employee hours. I achieved this by implementing Cyberdyne Systems' latest data visualization tools and automating repetitive tasks. I plan to bring this kind of efficiency oversight to Soylent Corporation."

Which candidate would you lean towards hiring?

Candidate A offers nothing more than their unsubstantiated opinions, which, as I've stated in previous columns, employers don't hire; they hire



results. Opinions about yourself, which you should rarely give without quantifying, don't help your interviewer envision how you'll help the company get what it wants.

On the other hand, candidate B outlined how they can help the company achieve wanting to optimize employee performance and cost savings. Candidate B thinks like an employer and understands employers are a sucker for candidates with a track record of helping employers get what they want.

Getting hired doesn't come down to having the shiniest resume, with all the right keywords, being impeccably dressed, having a perfect smile, or sheer luck. Employers hire candidates they feel will get them what they want.

Consider all the successes around you and why they exist.

- Amazon: Shopping delivered to your door.
- Apple iPhone: Handheld communication.
- Facebook: Having a voice. Keeping in touch.
- Starbucks: Coffee served around an experience.
- Taylor Swift: Music young people in angst can relate to.
- MasterCard: Easy to use credit.
- Ziq Ziqlar: Motivation and encouragement.

The success of the above can be attributed to the fact that they've designed their offering with the end-user in mind, helping people get what they want.

Amazon: Convenience

Apple iPhone: Connectivity

Facebook: Popularity

Starbucks: Self-care

• Taylor Swift: Understanding

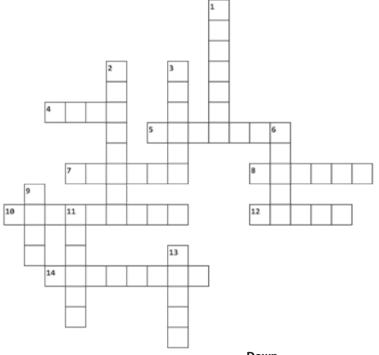
· MasterCard: Lifestyle

· Zig Ziglar: Hope

All successful businesses are based on selling a product or service that will help people get what they want, which is usually intrinsic. A product or service must satisfy a need or want in order to sell. The same applies to job searching. You must fulfill an employer's need or want. Think of employers as the end users of your services; how do you help employers achieve what they want? Are you communicating your how and willingness to help throughout your job search?

Showing how you can help employers get what they want is how you achieve job search success.

February Crossword





Across

- 4. Canadian filmmaker, Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi adventure film _____: Part Two first premiered in February 2024.
- 5. Fleetwood Mac's best-selling album, _____, was released on February 4, 1977, featuring songs such as "Dreams" and "Go Your Own Way".
- 7. Born on February 1, 1994, England-born pop sensation, Harry _____ rose to fame as part of a boy band before going off on his own.
- 8. On February 21, 1948, the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, best-known as _____, was founded.
- 10. Something that is typically given to a significant other or friend(s) during the month of February.
- 12. February is National _____ Month, highlighting the importance of cardiovascular health.
- 14. Singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, Joni , was inducted into Canada's Juno Hall of Fame on February 5, 1981.

Down

- 1. In February of 1917, this famous Spanish artist, best known for Cubism made his first trip to Italy.
- 2. February's purple birthstone, the ______ is believed to be a symbol of protection.
- 3. The Grammy Award-winning song "No__ by TLC was released on February 2, 1999.
- 6. 2025's Chinese Zodiac is this slippery, slithery creature.
- 9. Angie Thomas' young adult bestseller, *The U Give* was originally published on February 28, 2017.
- 11. Canadian actor, Page, was born on February 21, 1987, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 13. _____ History Month was made official by U.S. President Gerald Ford in 1976 and is observed every February.



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50 WORDS

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