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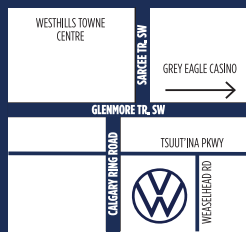


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# CONTENTS

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- 6 CA BOARD CONTACT LIST
- 7 TAKE ON WELLNESS: STARTING FALL SMART
- 9 RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES: BRINGING WILDFLOWERS TO THE ALLEY
- 11 MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT: UNDERSTANDING WHY SOME MEN STRUGGLE WITH EMOTIONAL AVOIDANCE IN RELATIONSHIPS
- 13 BUSINESS CLASSIFIEDS



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**News, Events,  
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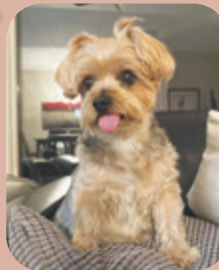
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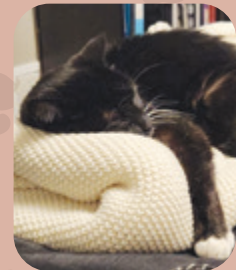
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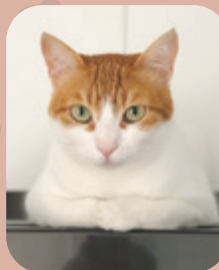
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## Starting Fall SMART

by Recovery Alberta – Community Health Promotion Services

Fall is the time to set goals! Goals help us make positive changes in our day-to-day lives that move us towards our hopes for the future. Goals are like a map – they guide us. They provide us with a sense of ease and comfort knowing we have a plan. Setting them gives us an opportunity to reflect and prioritize what we find most meaningful. Goals that we share and work on with our family, friends or colleagues can also build stronger relationships and closer connections.

Goal setting should not have to be overwhelming, which is why many reframe it and call it “intention” setting. Intention is rooted in our beliefs and values but focuses on present actions rather than far-off outcomes. Whether we set goals or intentions, we need to give ourselves the freedom to change our minds and adjust our goals as we move towards them.

One tool that can support your process in setting goals is using the SMART strategy.

- Specific – What exactly would you like to do? What is your aim?
- Measurable – How will you know if you are moving towards your goal? What will you see?
- Achievable – Can you act to reach your goal? Is it something you can do?
- Relevant – Does this goal have meaning for you?
- Time – When would you like to reach this goal?

All parts of our lives can benefit from setting meaningful goals. Here are a few ideas on where you could get started today:



- Attitude (e.g. Being positive, hopeful, and grateful or seeing the good)
- Physical Health (e.g. Being active, eating healthy food, sleeping, and drinking water)
- Relationships (e.g. Spending more time with family and friends)
- Public Service (e.g. Volunteering, helping your community)

Taking the time to write, type, or vocalize our goals, will set the stage for us to reach them! Another important piece is to celebrate our successes along the way. Focus on all that you have done rather than on things you still need to do.

Remember to be kind to yourself. This is a good year to think about what is important and fall gently back into our routines again!



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### Bringing Wildflowers to the Alley

by Paula McGarrigle

There are few things we can control in life, and these days the news cycle can feel overwhelming. But sometimes small things, like planting flowers, can make a difference.

I was inspired by Wildflower Alley in Belfast, a neighbourhood space once known for garbage dumping and vandalism. In 2015, about 40 neighbours came together to repaint fences, and add planters filled with flowers and herbs. Today, the alley has become a vibrant green hub that's sparked over 50 similar projects across Belfast.

After watching a feature on Wildflower Alley on Gardeners' World, I thought: Why not try something similar here?

One brisk April morning, I made a simple poster encouraging neighbours to put out some flowers for the summer. I printed 40 copies and walked around the block, dropping them into mailboxes. I also offered extra empty pots and a few seedlings I had grown from seed.

I felt a bit awkward ringing doorbells and interrupting people's day, but the idea sparked curiosity for some. People asked more about what had been done in Belfast and said they were interested.

After the May long weekend, flowers slowly started to appear. One neighbour, who always maintains a lovely plot behind their fence, led the way. Others followed, placing pots and planters around the alley.

Ironically, I was the last to get mine out. I picked up some discounted flowers with bright yellow and purple blooms

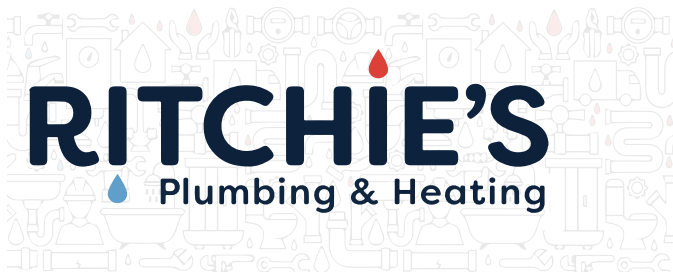


and arranged them in a few favourite pots. I spent the morning tidying the alley and backyard. But just ten minutes after I placed them out... they were gone.

I was frustrated, but I didn't want to give up. I went back to the drawing board with a new plan. I brought out older, heavier pots that were hard to carry off. I filled them with compost, added some Bachelor Buttons from the front garden, threw in a few wildflower seeds, and reused an abandoned insect hotel. I also reinforced a couple of hanging baskets to make them harder to remove.

Today, we have ten homes participating and more than 20 flowerpots out in the alley. Every time I walk through and see the blooms, some big, some just beginning—I smile.

It's not changing the world, but it is a start. For me, it's a reminder that small acts, done together, can transform shared spaces.



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## GAMES & PUZZLES

### Guess the School Tool!

1. In the early 1960s, the first one of these was created to assist with number manipulation.
2. Before rubber, tablets of wax and crustless bread were both used at one point to do the job of this school tool.
3. A semi-circular measurement tool that deals with angles.
4. An organizer typically characterized by its circular or D-shaped retainers.
5. The first of these vibrant, attention-drawing school tools was invented by Dr. Frank Hon in 1963.
6. Alphabetical reference books that are always being updated, named after the Latin word for "the act of speaking".



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# Understanding Why Some Men Struggle with Emotional Avoidance in Relationships

by Nancy Bergeron, R.Psych. | [info@nancybergeron.ca](mailto:info@nancybergeron.ca)

As a relationship counsellor many women ask me: “Why is my partner so emotionally unavailable?” or “Why won’t he open up to me?”. If you’re in a relationship with a man who seems emotionally distant, you’re not alone. Emotional avoidance is incredibly common among men (and women too). While it can feel confusing or painful in a relationship, it’s often rooted in early life experiences and cultural messages, not a lack of love or care.

### 1. Cultural and Social Conditioning

From a young age, many boys are taught to suppress their feelings. Messages like:

“Don’t cry.” “Man up.” “Be strong.” are often used to discourage boys from expressing emotions like sadness, fear, or vulnerability.

Over time, this social conditioning can lead men to associate emotional expression with weakness or failure. Vulnerability feels unsafe. Many men grow up believing they must always appear “in control,” which means avoiding emotions, both their own and others’.

### 2. Early Childhood Attachment Patterns

Many emotionally avoidant men learned, early in life, that emotional needs wouldn’t be met. Perhaps their caregivers were:

Emotionally distant. Critical or punishing when they expressed feelings. Overwhelmed and unavailable themselves.

As a result, these men developed an avoidant attachment style. They learned to cope by shutting down emotional needs, relying only on themselves, and avoiding dependence on others. In adult relationships, this can look like:

Withdrawing during conflict. Struggling to express affection or emotional presence. Feeling overwhelmed when their partner expresses strong emotions.

### 3. Fear of Shame and Vulnerability

Opening up emotionally requires risk. For many men,



emotional intimacy feels like stepping into unknown and possibly dangerous territory. They may fear:

Being judged. Saying the wrong thing. Being seen as “not enough”.

To protect themselves from the possibility of shame or rejection, they pull back emotionally. This doesn’t mean they don’t care. It means their nervous system is trying to protect them.

### 4. Lack of Emotional Awareness or Language

Many men simply haven’t been taught how to identify, name, or communicate their feelings. Emotional intelligence is a skill set, one that needs modelling and practice. Without that early modelling, men may not even recognize what they’re feeling, much less how to express it in a way that feels safe or clear.

This lack of emotional literacy can come across as:

“I don’t know what I’m feeling.” “I’m fine.” (when they’re clearly not). Defensiveness or silence during emotionally charged moments.

### 5. Modelling and Role Expectations

Most men were raised in environments where male role models modelled emotional detachment or stoicism. If their fathers, uncles, or coaches didn’t show emotional vulnerability—or worse, shamed it—they may not have any roadmap for what emotional availability looks like. In adulthood, many men feel emotionally “lost” and unsure how to engage on a deeper level.

### 6. Protective Coping from Past Wounds

If a man has experienced trauma, betrayal, or loss in the past, emotional avoidance may be a protective strategy. Avoiding closeness can feel like a way to prevent being hurt again. Unfortunately, what once served as protection can eventually become a barrier to healthy connection.

**Book Suggestion:** *The New Rules of Marriage: What You Need to Know to Make Love Work* by Terrance Real.

## Creamy Beef Enchiladas

by Jennifer Puri

The idea of rolling tortillas around food originated in Aztec times but it was the Spanish Conquistadors who adopted the dish and added new ingredients like cheese, pork, and chicken.

Enchiladas, meaning “to season with chilies”, refers to stuffed corn tortillas that have been dipped in a chili sauce. A traditional Mexican dish, Enchiladas have a unique flavour and are a perfect combination of tortilla, meat, cheese, and sauce.

Smothered in sauce and baked, creamy beef enchiladas are filling and rich, so they are best paired with a simple bean salad or Mexican rice.

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

**Cook Time:** 30 minutes

**Bake Time:** 30 minutes

**Servings:** 5 to 6

### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lbs lean ground beef
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- ½ cup yellow onion, sliced
- 1 cup cooked and rinsed black beans
- 2 packets (24 gm each) hot and spicy taco seasoning
- 6 large flour tortillas
- 1 ½ tsp. powdered cumin
- ¼ cup all purpose flour
- 1 can diced green chili peppers
- 1 cup milk
- 2 cups light sour cream
- ½ cup low fat Greek yoghurt
- 2 cups Mexican shredded cheese

### Directions:

1. Heat oil in a medium size pan, add onion and sauté until it turns a light brown. Then add the ground beef and brown about 3 to 4 minutes. Next add the taco seasoning and the black beans and continue to stir for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add the water and simmer the beef and bean mixture for about 20 minutes or until the liquid has dried up. Remove from heat and allow to cool.



3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
4. Grease a large, rectangular oven-proof dish with butter. Place the tortillas on a flat surface and divide the cooled meat mixture between the tortillas. Fold tortillas and place them in the baking dish seams side down.
5. Prepare the cream sauce by combining the flour, cumin, sour cream, milk, yoghurt, and chilies in a bowl. Then spoon the sauce over the tortillas and sprinkle the cheese over it. Cover with non-stick foil and bake in the oven for 30 to 40 minutes.
6. Garnish with chopped tomato, avocado, and coriander leaves, and serve with a salad, salsa, and sour cream if desired.

Bon Appétit!

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		Properties		Median Price	
		Listed	Sold	Listed	Sold
July	25	25	18	\$576,950	\$554,375
June	25	32	28	\$754,450	\$760,000
May	25	31	25	\$569,900	\$630,000
April	25	28	24	\$794,450	\$789,500
March	25	36	31	\$465,000	\$472,000
February	25	23	15	\$550,000	\$530,000
January	25	19	11	\$485,000	\$485,000
December	24	4	9	\$475,000	\$475,000
November	24	12	19	\$699,900	\$808,888
October	24	25	20	\$481,350	\$480,500
September	24	32	22	\$497,400	\$523,500
August	24	19	20	\$479,900	\$473,950

To view more detailed information that comprise the above  
MLS averages please visit [sig.mycalgary.com](http://sig.mycalgary.com)



# David is our Realtor.<sup>®</sup>

With a successful background in sales and marketing, David's clients appreciate the value his marketing, communication, and negotiating skills bring when it's time to sell their home. David's ability to articulate the essence of a home, assess market dynamics and develop and implement a sales plan has been refined over his 10+ years in real estate.

**When it's time to sell, your neighbours choose David.**

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Friend  
Neighbour  
Realtor<sup>®</sup>  
**David Pellettier**



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