



Health & Wellness
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**Five Ways To
Fail At A Diet**
Which Have You Done?

Your Nutrition
Sugar Smackdown!

Your Health
Care For The Caregiver

Your Car
Teen Drivers With Attitude

Five Ways To Fail At A Diet

4

Most people gain and lose weight in yo-yo cycles while others lose it and keep it off. It's not that the successful ones are naturally gifted. They are simply doing things differently.

Sugar Smackdown!

10

Cakes. Candy. Ice Cream. Or my favorite, cookies. Isn't it amazing how sometimes we just get a hankering for something sweet?

Columns

Your Health	8
Your Home	10
Your Car	14
Take A Break	18
Your Fitness	20
Your Money	22
Your Business	24



Photo: Roxana Barbulescu

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Five Ways To Fail At A Diet

Which Have You Done?

By Chris McNeil

Most people gain and lose weight in yo-yo cycles while others lose it and keep it off. It's not that the successful ones are naturally gifted. They are simply doing things differently. People who are successful at long term weight loss know how to avoid the typical traps. The five diet failure traps I discuss here are very prevalent patterns, but if you know what to do about them, you can create the body you want and keep it.

Here are the five ways to fail at a diet, with a solution strategy for each:

1. Try to change all your habits at once

Sure, the author of the latest best-selling diet book is a guru but, he doesn't know you. A plan that works is shaped from your natural habits. Sure, you can try to jump out of your "comfort zone" into something alien, and prescriptive, that doesn't take your life into account. You then are unable to truly internalize the changes as habits. So, when the discipline and motivation wane (as they will at some point) you

slip back to your old ways. The alternative is to shape gently enough from your normal habits that you permanently create new, healthier ones. That doesn't mean you can't get ideas from diets. Just look at them as suggestions for strategies. Assess them from the

perspective of their fit to your own eating challenges. Then, mold the relevant philosophies into manageable bites of new behaviors, picking no more than three to focus on at a time.

Choose them for maximum impact per unit effort. The new habits should feel close to how you normally live while giving you the caloric reduction and metabolic impact to get you to the body you want. Attend to these carefully chosen "behavior goals" until it feels natural to do them automatically. This normally takes about two months. Then you can add more new habits. Repeat until you are happily maintaining your goals.



Photo: Sigurd Decroos

Antidote: set goals for a just a few, impactful healthier habits that are based on how you normally live.

2. Use the scale as your only feedback

Biochemist and exercise guru Covert Bailey said it best- using the scale is like going

to the meat counter at the grocery store and saying "I'd like 5 pounds please." What would the answer be? Maybe "Umm, 5 pounds of what?" When somebody says they lost 5 pounds in a week, you can ask that very question. I know it won't be all fat loss, but mostly water weight. And, that water weight will come right back. Also, over-dependence on the scale reinforces losing calorie-burning muscle. As #4 reinforces, you want to increase your metabolism, not reduce it. Muscle is denser than fat, so by swapping fat for muscle you can be smaller and look better without knowing it by your

weight.

Sure, we've been brought up with tunnel vision on the scale.

Insurance companies use it to calculate health risks with their charts. The BMI (Body Mass Index) only takes weight and height into account. But, these are outdated perspectives. The scale builds frustration in, so let it go.

While body composition testing, which shows you the ratio of fat and lean weight, is ideal, it is not always easily accessible. You can, however, easily translate your weight goal into the equivalent measurement changes. A loss of an inch in the waist for a male or inch in the abdomen for a female is equivalent to a loss of 5-7 pounds of fat. Aim for losing an inch in the appropriate measurement every 4-6 weeks. Your net weight is, at best, irrelevant as a goal unless you know how much is fat, muscle, and water.

Antidote: set goals for losing inches off your waist or abdomen instead of tracking weight.

3. Try to eat “perfectly”

There will always be foods that you want and enjoy that aren't healthy. If you completely deprive yourself of them, the part of you that enjoys those foods will eventually get pretty ticked off and rebel. You won't have the congruence that comes from getting every part of you working together.

Pretend you have two people inside of you - the “healthy” you and the “enjoyment” you. They both need to agree with your plan. You can satisfy both needs when you give the enjoyment part exactly what it wants ... just enough of the time. It is like an “inner negotiation” where you have a meeting with your different eating motivations to work out a deal. The right compromise might be a “cheat day” once a week or it might be having that ice cream you crave every 5th day or so. I don't know how you will find the right balance between health and enjoyment but I do know that doing so supports your long term success.

Antidote: Feed the “enjoyment” side of yourself often enough and you'll be able to stick with your plan.

4. Neglect Strength Training and Lose Muscle

Research says that if you diet without strength training, about 20% of the weight you lose is muscle weight. Muscle is metabolically active: it burns calories even while at rest.

Depending on which study you look at, every pound of muscle burns between 30 and 50 calories each day. Fat, on the other hand, is stored energy: the calories waiting to be burned.

So, if you lose 40 pounds without that essential strength component, you have lost eight pounds of muscle and about 300 calories a day of metabolism. Since a pound of fat has 3,500 calories, that means you will now gain a pound every twelve days with the calorie level that would have maintained your weight before.

Conversely, if, instead you gained 2 pounds of muscle, you would now lose a pound of fat every five to six weeks with that same food intake.

Muscle equals metabolism. Don't lose it, gain it.

Antidote: Strength train to add muscle and metabolism. You can then be just as lean with a higher, more reasonable calorie level intake.



5. Think You Can Eat Anything If You Exercise

Exercise is perhaps your most powerful tool in your lifelong weight management toolbox. It both burns calories and, especially if you do it right, increases your metabolism so your body burns more calories all the time. However, you can still out-eat any level of fitness. A six pack of beer offsets the calories burned in three hours of walking. Sumo wrestlers don't lack exercise. So, use exercise as a tool to enhance your fitness and weight management, but don't depend on it to do it all by itself. The synergy of exercise and managing your eating together can work miracles, though. They support each other. Healthy eating gives you the energy to exercise. Exercise supports your belief that you are a health-conscious, fit person who naturally wants to eat good

things. Use both.

Antidote: Use the synergy of finding the right balance of exercise and healthy eating.

Think of how you can use the five antidotes as a component of the five-fingered hand of the full plan of long term weight management. The fingers of the hand work together to do tasks you couldn't imagine a finger doing on its own, like playing a guitar. You also need all of them to succeed at a similarly challenging task like losing weight permanently. **MIT**

Chris McNeil's Pensarc Software was recognized as an “Innovator 2008” by the Charleston Regional Business Journal for developing www.fitmenu.net. Chris has also won two national awards for innovation for web-based fitness software. Follow fitmenu on twitter at www.twitter.com/fitmenu You can reach Chris at chris@pensarc.com.



Your Nervous System

Chiropractic care can be the key to detecting the cause of your problem. If detected early enough, Chiropractic adjustments can often return the joint to its normal position, releasing the pressure on the nerve and eliminating the Nerve Impingement Syndrome.

Your ProAdjuster Chiropractor's job is to relieve as much Nerve Impingement Syndrome as possible. By

allowing the nervous system to freely transport the nerve impulses throughout your body, you will begin to feel like new again; free to enjoy life to the fullest! Chiropractors work to achieve the highest level of function for your body, relieving the pain, eliminating the symptoms. With the help of modern technology, the job of improving your health just got easier. Many people learned the importance of proper nervous

system function as they watched the story of actor Christopher Reeves unfold. He played Superman in the movies. A horseback riding accident damaged his spinal cord in a very dramatic way

and the consequences were profound.

There is also a basic simple fact, that if one can grasp and remember, will make true sense on a very basic, instinctive level. This is called "innate intelligence," the wisdom that our bodies know what is right. Breaking down the complexity of spinal anatomy, neurology and physiology into a simple, usable and reproducible idea would go something like this: The brain controls and regulates every system, organ, cell and tissue in the body through the nerves.

The nerves are our wiring system with hundreds of thousands of nerves running throughout the body. They transmit chemicals and electrical impulses to tell the body how to function. If they can do this without interruption from outside influences, then the body would have the ability to function at a near perfect state,

which we can call health. If the nervous system is assaulted or interfered with however, it will either not be able to send a signal at all or only send a partial signal to its final destination. This might be a muscle, an adrenal gland, the stomach or another organ or tissue. The nervous system can be assaulted through obvious ways like direct and severe trauma as was the case with Christopher Reeves or, less obviously, through poor posture, sports, minor falls or simply bumping your head.

The brain controls and regulates every system, organ, and tissue in the body through the nerves.

MLT



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Your Nutrition

By Michelle Pfennighaus

Sugar Smackdown!

Cakes. Candy. Ice Cream. Or my favorite, cookies. Isn't it amazing how sometimes we just get a hankering for something sweet? Something chocolatey or creamy but definitely something sugary?

In addition to midday cravings, my special time of day was always at night after dinner. Growing up, this was the time that my mom and I would talk, drink tea and enjoy some cookies. My favorites were Chips Ahoy or Oreos. They still are!

I kept with that routine of after-dinner tea and cookies long after I moved out of my mom's house. It was a nice, comforting ritual. But I was eating half a box of cookies each night. No kidding! It was as if I couldn't get enough. I didn't see this as a problem. After all, cookies were a treat to myself for a hard day.

In my work as a health counselor I hear stories like this all the time. For me it

was cookies, for one of my clients it is frozen yogurt, or chocolate covered pretzels. Almost everyone admits that in the absence of their favorite treat, they'll 'make do' with straight chocolate chips or a sugary drink or crackers with jelly. Everyone needs their fix!

So, do you have a sweet

tooth? Probably. Americans have teeth – no, scratch that – we have entire bodies made of sweets. You are what you eat, right? Not long ago I had a body made of Double Stuff Oreos and mocha lattes. I didn't make the connection then, but I can tell you now that my Oreolatte body felt tired, anxious, and weak. I was often napping on the couch or dealing with my

IBS. I had a lot of trouble calming down and having satisfying relationships.

Now that I know better, I can see that I needed a sugar smackdown!

Sugar is a highly refined substance. (I'm talking about white sugar here, not the stuff naturally found in apples or oranges.) Sugar as a processed product is big business, along with all of its cousins [www.findyourbalancehealth.com/2008/08/fun-game] – brown sugar, sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, and evaporated cane juice to name a few.

Every sugar I just named is a highly powerful substance, marketed to us in millions of ways. Sugar has the ability to lift us up, make us feel good and silly, give us energy and bring a smile to our face. Inevitably, the lift is followed by a fall. Our mood and energy plummet. As a refined substance, our body cannot digest sugar without pulling minerals from our bodies' reserves. Therefore, each cookie or candy weakens the body in a very direct way.



Photo: Jade Gordon

Sugar Smackdown! Continued

Sugar is a contributing factor or cause for many, many health conditions. Insulin resistance and adult onset diabetes is epidemic in this country – a direct result of a poor diet high in sugar. Sugar is also a major contributor to obesity, cancer and thousands of other conditions like anxiety, IBS and ADD.

So why do we keep eating sugar? Why do we fall for its tricks over and over again – the lift and then the fall? Why do we let it ravage our bodies for the sake of a sweet treat?

The way sugar reacts in our bodies is similar to nicotine. It tastes good and feels good, initially. Then we crave more and more...and more. When we kick the habit we go through withdrawal – headaches, fatigue. Sounds more like a drug than a food. Have you ever craved broccoli or suffered withdrawal from carrots?

Yet every day children are rewarded for good behavior with candy. Adults continue this mindset by treating themselves to midday snacks

or nighttime desserts. We even celebrate people's birthdays by loading up with sugary cakes. Happy birthday, your gift is the energy crash you're going to feel in 30 minutes!

Aside from our constant snacking and treats, sugar is everywhere in our food supply. Ketchup, yogurt, canned soup, marinara sauce – they are all full of sugar. Just read the labels of anything in your pantry and

there's a great chance you'll find sugar or one of its cousins on the label...sometimes more than once!

No wonder we are constantly craving and feeding into our sugar addictions. Americans are pumped full of supersized sodas and candy bars. Do you ever stop and wonder why things are the way they are – why we have violence and sickness and so much

uncertainty in our world?

I propose the radical notion that eliminating sugar from American diets would benefit society more than any drug, any law, or any healthcare system. **MLT**

Wouldn't you love to get a handle on your sugar cravings and unique health issues? It's possible to live life more fully when you feel your best. Email michelle@findyourbalancehealth.com to set up your free health consultation.

Michelle Pfennighaus

is a holistic health counselor and registered yoga instructor based in Boston, MA. For many years she suffered from debilitating anxiety and digestive disorders until finally healing herself through changes in diet and lifestyle.

Michelle received training from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and a 200 hour yoga teacher program. Currently, she works with clients all over the country to improve their health and happiness. She also offers cooking classes and workshops for groups.

To learn more about Michelle, visit her website www.FindYourBalanceHealth.com.



Photo: Andrea Kratzenberg

Teen Drivers With Attitude

For teens, learning how to drive is not easy. Sure, most teens can figure out how load their MP3 player, send text messages and accomplish a host of other high tech stuff, but when it comes learning how to become a safe driver, that's a challenge.

Of course, just about any teen driver can get in a car, turn the key and think they know the basics. What they don't know is how they would react to a situation when they have no previous knowledge and no previous experience out on the highway. When you consider that more than 5,000 teens are killed out on the roads each year and more than 350,000 will become seriously injured, it starts to become clear that we must all do something to help our young, inexperienced teen drivers.

I recently drove past my old high school where I had graduated from a number of decades ago. It got me to thinking about the first time I

got behind the wheel as a teenager. You see, unlike many teen drivers, I had somewhat of an advantage back in the day. What I had was a Dad who was determined to make sure I learned what he thought I needed to know about safely operating a motor vehicle. I use the term motor vehicle because my Dad was in his own business and he had a variety of different types of service vehicles that I

would soon be driving. One such vehicle was a 2,000 gallon fuel oil delivery truck.

Try imagining a young inexperienced teenager behind the wheel of an oil truck with over 8 tons of weight tooling down the highway. To most teens, that would be a problem. It makes me stop and think about the time my Dad and I were out making a delivery in that truck and someone in front of us decided to stop for a green light. Yes, to anyone,

especially a teen driver, someone stopping for a green light was a completely unexpected surprise. I can still remember the look on my Dad's face after I brought that truck to a safe stop behind that car. Although I had been following at what we both would have considered a safe following distance, it was just one of those unexpected situations that come out of nowhere that day. One thing's for sure, that experience taught me the classic example of why it's so important to leave plenty of space between your own car and the car in front of you.

Like many parents, my Dad knew he was handing over a good deal of responsibility to me and he also realized that it was going to be those kinds of early driving situations that would begin to shape me into the kind of driver I was going to become. As I think back, he definitely had confidence in his ability to share his knowledge and experience of how to stay safe out on the highway.

How can we help young



Photo: Juan Vasquez

drivers become safe teen drivers? It's all about attitude. For many teens, driving a car seems just as natural as riding a bicycle. Of course, teens need to learn the basics of maintaining control under all types of driving situations. And much has been done through driver education and graduated drivers licensing programs. Do these programs really work? Some may think so. However, many times it's not a lack of ability that faces these young drivers as much as it is a lack of understanding of their own mental beliefs, feelings, values and disposition to act a certain way in certain situations. Yes, it's my feeling that teen driver safety all comes down to attitude when a young driver gets behind the wheel. How they're going to react in certain situations is much more important than the time spent teaching driver education. We've all been there and we've all witnessed it for ourselves out on the road. Call it road rage, aggressive driving, whatever you like, at the center of it all

is our attitude and how we're going to respond to the careless actions of other drivers.

As parents, friends and families of teen drivers, we need to work together and focus in on this delicate subject of attitude. We need to take the time to talk about and explain the values of patience, tolerance and the use of good judgment out on the roadway. Teen

drivers need to understand and clearly see the importance of taking defensive action, rather than constantly reacting to the personalities of other drivers. Like my Dad, each and every one of us needs to take action and use every opportunity we have to share our own driving knowledge and experience to help shape our young drivers into safe teen drivers.

But wait, there's more we can do. We need to make sure our teen drivers and passengers are wearing their seat belts. Why? Simply because statistics clearly show that more than one half of the 5,000 teens that die each year in motor vehicle crashes were actually unrestrained at the time of the fatal crash. Yes, it's hard to imagine that such a large number of teens die because they simply weren't buckled up. Unlike those fancy slogans, wearing your seat belt is not about Click It or Ticket. It's simply a matter of saving lives. **MLT**



Photo: Reid Parham

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Take A Break

By Laura Sherman

Family bonding through chess

Think back to when you first learned to play chess. Did your mother or father teach you? Maybe a grandparent? Over the years I've heard many wonderfully warm stories about people's first introduction to chess. Those memories are cherished through adulthood, as chess is truly a bonding experience.

My father taught me to play when I was 9 years old. I was fascinated by the boards set up all around the living room, each displaying a different position. I was so eager to learn. My father loved something called postal chess, where he would play people from far away exotic lands through the mail. Most of his opponents lived in Russia, so it took months for each move to arrive. It was always an exciting day when that postcard arrived with its intriguing stamps. It held the mysterious code known only to chess players, informing my father of the next move.

I quickly fell in love with the game and when I beat my father for the first time I quickly made the decision to try out tournaments. Although Dad was more interested in postal chess than over the board play, he joined me in my first tournament, so that

I wouldn't be alone. Now the first thing I noticed, in that small Connecticut tournament, was that I was the only girl and the only child. A little intimidating, but Dad was there, so it was okay. I soon became engrossed in my games, throwing myself into the battle, eager to conquer my opponent, forgetting that the odds were stacked against me. I'm not sure who was more surprised and excited, my father or I, when I won second place.

As an adult I spent a year traveling around the country playing in tournaments. When I attended the NY Open, Dad came

up on the train from Connecticut to watch me play. After each game we would talk about the high and low points, analyzing my play, sometimes disagreeing about my strategies (especially when I chose to sacrifice a piece for a dubious attack).

Throughout my life chess has aided me in real life situations. The skill set I learned from getting good at the game gave me true advantages in life. Not only did I learn how to think logically, but I discovered I could create successful long-term strategies and short-term tactical plans, which would give me many victories on and off the board. To this day I see any challenge in life as simply a king on the board ready to be checkmated.

Of course most people do not get into competition play, but chess is still an amazingly adventure and wonderful bonding experience for any family. Whether you take a set on family camping trips or out to the beach or just stay home enjoying family-time after dinner there is nothing like chess for bringing a family together.

In this day and age with television and video games, wouldn't it be wonderful to see families playing chess with one another? And just imagine for a moment what heights our children can reach if they gain the self-confidence and strategic prowess that a sound knowledge of chess offers. **MLT**



Photo: Josep Altarriba

Laura Sherman founded Your Chess Coach with her husband, Dan Sherman. Together they teach children to play chess through various schools in Pinellas County, Florida, as well as privately in students' homes and online.



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Care For The Caregiver

I settled in for a long plane ride from Canada to Europe to attend my brother's wedding. The flight attendant instructed us on seatbelt use, emergency exits, and oxygen masks. She reminded us that it was important to take care of our own needs first, before helping the person next to us – whether a small child, elderly parent, or someone struggling with their mask. The explanation was simple. We are no good to anyone else if we don't take care of our needs first...if we pass out before we get our own mask on, we won't be able to help the person next to us.

This philosophy can be applied to all areas of our life. Unfortunately, many of us do not heed this simple logic. We tend to put the needs of others over and above our own. We care for children first, then our spouse or significant other takes priority, followed by work obligations and maybe even volunteer work, and we

inevitably put our own needs last. We think that at the end of the day, if we are not already exhausted, we may then spend some time on ourselves.

However, it's important to fuel the body, mind and spirit on a daily basis through proper eating, relaxation techniques, prayer, and exercise.

We need to fuel our bodies with adequate foods and not skip a meal because "we don't

have time." Food gives us energy. It should not make us late for our next appointment.

Also, realize that pampering ourselves with a warm bath, practicing stretches or taking time to read a chapter from a favourite book should not send us spiraling into the depths of guilt. Life is too

short not to enjoy everyday.

Prayer, when combined with quiet time, can decrease respiratory rate, heart rate, elevated blood pressure and muscle tension. During prayer, the body escapes from the stresses of

everyday life and enters into a relaxed state.

Finally, keep in mind that energy begets energy. So if we're feeling tired and rundown, that's the time that we really need to focus on increasing our exercise. A brisk walk or strength-training program can give us the boost we need to motor through the day. Remember, when we feel nourished and energized, we are better able to deal with all the demands in life. Taking time for you is not selfish; it's necessary!

Blessings on the road to health! **MLT**

Kimberley Payne, a former Personal Trainer who lives in Ontario, combines Christian commitment with ten years experience in the health and wellness arena. Visit her Website www.kimberleypayne.com her Blog www.fitforfaith.blogspot.com, and you can connect over Twitter: [@fitforfaith](https://twitter.com/fitforfaith).



Photo: Cris Watk

Your Money

By Jeremy Woods

Trimming the Fat

In last month's article "Manage Your Money, Don't Let Your Money Manage You" we discussed the need for each of us to have a strong understanding of our expenditures and discussed some of the tools one can use to track our expenses. Many, if not most, readers undoubtedly determined that their expenses are in excess of their income. For those of you who find yourself faced with this reality you will need cut your expenses and live within your means in order to grow financially.

There are many ways to cut your expenses without sacrificing your quality of life. The simplest is clipping and using grocery coupons; a household can easily save \$5-\$10 per week just by using the coupons found in your Sunday newspaper. Another painless way to cut costs is to begin replacing, as they burn out, your standard light bulbs with energy saving bulbs; many experts suggest that a single household can lower its electricity use by as

much as ten percent using these bulbs.

There are many other ways to cut your expenses, but the common thread is simply to be aware of things; for example, if you're not going to be home for an extended period of time (even several hours) set your thermostat so that it will not run in your absence, allow the dishwasher to fill as much as possible before using so that it is run less frequently, etc.

Another way to cut your



Photos: Linusb4

overall expenses is to remove unneeded options from your utility bills. In this day and time, most people communicate

by cell phone so eliminate your home phone or if you do need to have a home phone revisit your phone service and remove unnecessary services such as voice mail, caller id, and long distance; if your cell phone has long distance service use your cell phone to

call long distance. If you have cable or satellite cancel your movie channels; there are so many channels that do not cost extra surely you can find some-

thing to watch anytime of day without paying an additional monthly charge. Many utilities also offer a bundle service; if so take advantage, it typically will add a credit to one of your existing bills.

These small cuts could save you up to \$100 each month which should enable you to save more money each month or at the very least, make paying your monthly bills less difficult. If these small cuts are not sufficient to correct any budget shortages you may have encountered more serious cuts may be necessary to achieve your financial goals.

The most important step is making a conscious decision to cut your costs and begin making choices that reflect this new found commitment. I feel reasonably sure that each of us can find items within our existing bills that we can easily live without. Trim the fat off your budget now and you'll thank yourself in a few years. **MLT**

Jeremy Woods: Any feedback can be sent to jrwoods47@bellsouth.net

New Channels For Your Expertise

I have been in the web development and design business for over years now. Things are changed considerably not only for the industry as a whole but also the focus of my own company. When I first got the idea around 1997 to not only get on the Internet but also develop for it things

were quite a bit different. It was a lot harder to make a web site “dynamic” for all practical purposes the web master would not only have to deal with the design and programming of a web site but also has been responsible for adding and editing the

content for the client. This can be relatively easy if all you are doing is say making a change in the address of a business or phone number or the name of a new employee.



Photo: Ilker

However the web moves a lot faster and people as well as search sites like Google, Yahoo and MSN are looking for new fresh and

compelling content. Why kind of content? We are always looking for news or rather what is new in a company, organization, their products, services or events coming up.

Business blogging is one of the most effective ways to distribute information on a

frequent basis. A blog is simply a block of information sorted by date. Much like a newsletter a blog can be used to share knowledge about your industry or organization, update readers on upcoming events or remind people how your products or services can benefit them.

Podcasting is very much the same thing as a blog except instead of text and still images the receiver gets the information in an audio or visual format. I often like to tell people that podcasting is a way send your information beyond the web. Podcasts are books and sales motivation tapes of the 21st Century. I subscribe to quite a few podcasts than help me excel in my area of interests like photography, design, technology plus some radio shows also redistribute their shows as podcasts and churches are distributing their sermons this way also.

Social media covers a lot of

ground. A blog can be a form of social media but you can also spread your message via micro-blogging platforms like Twitter and connected with friends, family, co-workers and like-minded individuals through Facebook and LinkedIn to name a couple of the ones I use myself.

Are you interested in learning more about these ways to share information and how to do it in a way that makes the best use of your time? I would love to connect with you and share how I help your business grow using these very economical channels of communication. **MLT**



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