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Warren Lewis Sotheby's International Realty is thrilled to announce that Associate Broker Ellen Blau had an exceptional year, earning herself the title of Warren Lewis Sotheby's International Realty's Top Broker for 2014. She is sure to shine again in the new year.

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To learn more about Ellen Blau or to view her listings, visit her website at ellenblau.warrenlewis.com

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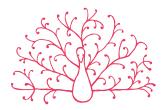








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## CONTRIBUTORS



NICOLE CACCAVO KEAR's memoir, *Now I See You*, debuted June '14 by St. Martin's Press, and she contributes regularly to *Parents* and *American Baby*, as well as *Salon* and *Babble* in between her dispatches at the *Reader*. You can keep up with her misadventures in Mommydom on her blog, *A Mom Amok* (amomamok.com). A native of Brooklyn, she lives in the Slope with her three firecracker kids, one very patient husband, and an apparently immortal hermit crab.

SALLY KOHN is one of the leading progressive voices in America. She is currently a CNN contributor and columnist for the *Daily Beast*. Sally was previously a Fox News contributor, the motivation for her widely-seen TED talk, as well as a regular guest on MSNBC. Sally's writing has appeared in the *Washington Post, New York Times, New York Magazine, More Magazine, Reuters, USA Today, Salon, Politico, Time* and many other outlets. GINA FERRANTELLI ROSSI (front Cover) is a Colorado mountain girl who moved to Park Slope in 2004 and hopes to never leave. She lives with her husband and two children on 3rd St. (the shady side) where she is part of a menacing stoop gang. When she isn't stooping, Gina is a graphic designer, creating books and ephemeral products for MoMA, The Met, and Storm King Art Center, to name a few. Her visual musings can be followed on Instagram at ginarossisobossy.

ANGELA JOHNSON is a Brooklyn-based freelance writer, yoga teacher and television industry employee. When she's not working, she loves reading and exploring Brooklyn with her toddler and preschooler in tow. Her guilty pleasures are 90s music and (some) reality television shows.

WHITNEY MCINTOSH lives in Brooklyn and writes about television and sports. You can usually find her obsessing over *Jane the Virgin* or *The Good Wife*. If not, she's treating the closest Boston sports bar as her home base. Other work can be found at *The UConn Blog* or *Sound on Sight*.

MELANIE HOOPES is the writer and director of Laurie Stanton's *Sound Diet* (sounddietradio.org), a hilarious but darkly painful radio drama show that's been described as a twisted, urban version of Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. She also creates funny and poignant pledge drive spots for WNYC and WBUR (public radio stations). She's an Executive Storytelling Coach for The Next Level, Inc. and the Magnet Genius Machine and she teaches solo performance at the Magnet Theater. She lives in Westchester with her husband and their two kids and is a proud Girl Scout leader.

LIANE NELSON enjoys the finer things in life, or at least the latest deals available on Groupon. Having relocated to the Big Apple after receiving her masters in journalism in London, she can be found in various cafes or yoga studios. Like any self-respecting journalist she is a travel junkie and self-proclaimed wine aficionado.

NANCY LIPPINCOTT is a writer living in Brooklyn, though she makes frequent trips to Queens just for the pho. She has strong opinions about tacos, sandwiches, and negronis.

JESSICA PHILLIPS LORENZ has been teaching yoga and creative drama classes to children and families in NYC for over a decade. Also a playwright and lyricist, she has performed many original solo works and her songs appear on the award-winning children's record *Come Play Yoga*. Her work has appeared in *Mutha* magazine. Jess lives in Brooklyn with her husband and two kids, who sometimes co-teach family yoga classes with her.

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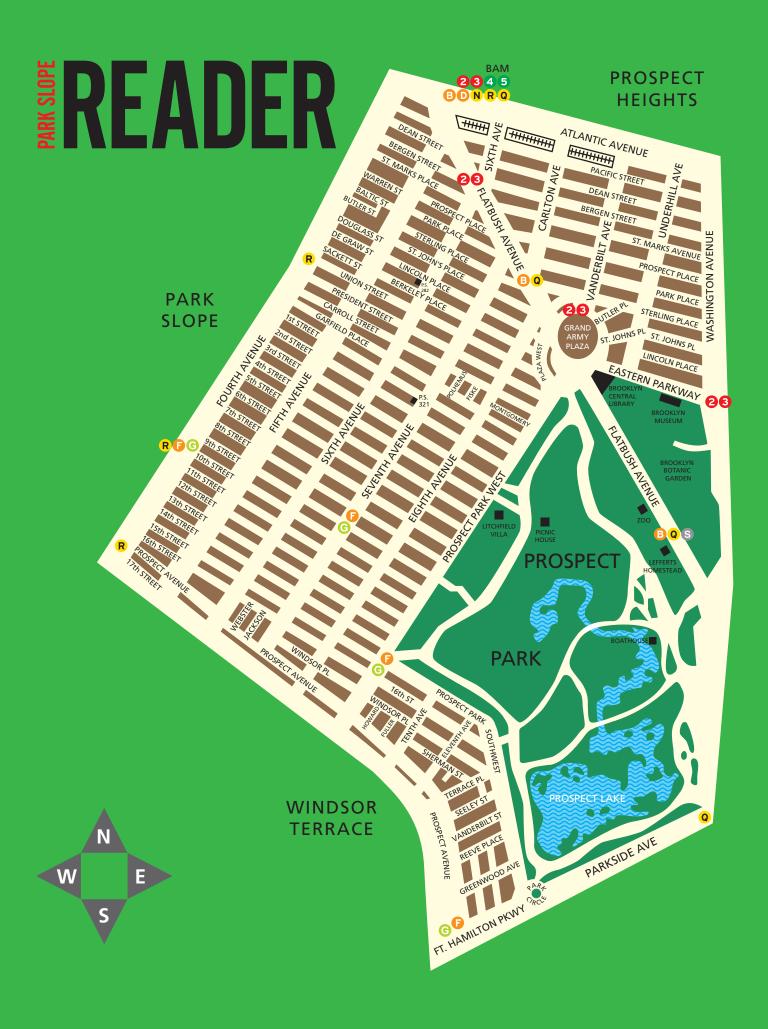
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# THE TOOTH FAIRY SCREWED UP LAST NIGHT



Big mistake, as Tooth Fairy Fails go. Taking the tooth and leaving the money are pretty much the only job responsibilities the Tooth Fairy has. Forgetting both is grounds for termination, some might say. And if they did say, the Tooth Fairy might say back, "Best news yet. Why don't you just fire me? I am begging you to. I never applied for this job in the first place." **BY NICOLE CACCAVO KEAR, ART BY CAITLIN MALONEY** 



In her defense, let me say this: The Tooth Fairy is exhausted, and overburdened, and juggling too much. She bites off more than she can chew, that one, works herself to the damn bone, and for God's sake, she's ONLY HUMAN AFTER ALL.

Did I say human? I meant "superhuman," obviously. The point is, even the Tooth Fairy makes mistakes sometimes.

This is what I had to tell my seven-year-old daughter when she woke up and found her tooth still under the pillow and no money there, either.

"Mommy!" gasped Seconda, "The Tooth Fairy didn't come last night!"

The fact that I managed to utter a string of expletives only in my mind is a testament to my pretty spectacular self-control.

I shot a look at my husband, David.

"I thought you were on top of that," his eyes said.

My eyes replied: "Me? What about you? You're not capable of swapping a tooth for cash?"

His eyes got loud: "Oh don't even. Don't you even start!"

"OK fine, forget it. It's no one's fault," my eyes backed off. "Just detain her, would you?"

Because we've been married roughly eighty years, we can have this non-verbal argument in approximately two milliseconds. We've nailed it down that well.

Within a second, while Seconda was rushing across the living room to show her dad the tooth that had been left in its tiny designated treasure chest, I was rushing over to my wallet, extracting three dollars and shoving it under the pillow in her bedroom. I was only going to give one dollar but added two dollars because of the two hundred percent guilt surcharge tacked on to the original amount.

Then I ran back into the living room and pointed out casually: "Well, did you check under the pillow really well? Maybe she left money WITH the tooth."

My world-wise nine-year-old, Primo, shot me a half-disgusted, halfdisappointed look, like "What kind of stunt are you trying to pull now, Ma?"

I gave him a look that said, "Lay off, kid. A mom's gotta do what a mom's gotta do." (Our family is very talented at facial expression communication.)

Primo, of course, knows the Truth about the Tooth Fairy. He made me confess to being Santa last summer and after that my cover was compromised and it only took a few hours before he came rushing over wanting to know if the Easter Bunny and Tooth Fairy were also big, unforgiveable lies too.

"Not lies," I'd explained, "Stories! Fun, magical stories!"

"Just tell me the plain truth!" he'd exclaimed, fully fed-up with my evasions and more than a little betrayed: "Are you the Tooth Fairy and the Easter Bunny, too?"

"Yes," I confessed, "I am all of them."

Then I forbade him to utter a word of this to his little sister, implicating him in the lie. He is now an accomplice. And also, inconveniently, in a position to shame me when I screw up and don't fulfill my fairy responsibilities.

Seconda was too excited, though, to notice her brother's response.



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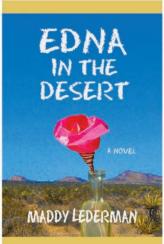
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She found the money under the pillow and was thoroughly relieved, if a bit confused.

"Wow! We got to keep the money AND the tooth?" she wondered aloud.

"You know what, honey?" I ventured. "I bet the Tooth Fairy just forgot the tooth. I bet she gets really tired because she's up all night collecting teeth and she probably got home to the Fairy Castle and was like, 'Oh shoot! I forgot to take the tooth again! Darnit! Now I have to go back and get it tomorrow night!"

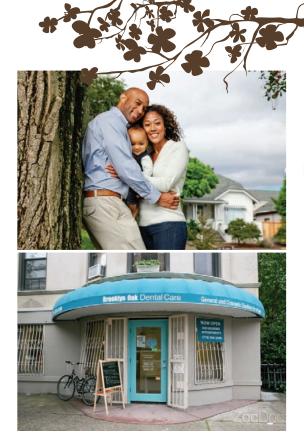
Sec piped in: "Yeah, because if she doesn't, she'll get fired!"

Little does she know this particular Tooth Fairy would love to get someone else to take over her dental collection duties. Or at least issue a reminder. This Tooth Fairy needs an admin assistant, someone to prep the money and let her know when it's time to make the switch. Am I crazy or is there an app for that?

Nicole C. Kear is the author of the memoir Now I See You (St. Martin's, 2014). You can find out more info on nicolekear.com and follow her mis-adventures in motherhood on her blog, A Mom Amok.



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## HYPOCRITE'S ALMANAC

## SHALLOW IN THE SLOPE

BY MELANIE HOOPES ART BY JENNIFER GIBSON



#### Dear Hypocrite,

I read your column without fail every issue. Now, finally, I've got a problem worthy of your attention. I'm a single male in my late thirties and I'm looking for a committed relationship. I'm searching in all the usual places (Match, Chemistry, OKCupid, PlentyofFish) but I haven't had any luck. I really thought I'd be with someone by now. I had a crazy time in my twenties and then I started a business in my early thirties. Because I had to pour all of my energy into it, dating was impossible. I didn't have a lot of money or time, I didn't sleep a lot, I didn't take care of myself and looked like Hell as a result. But I've gotten my act together since and I couldn't be more ready to meet "the one." The problem: I am picky as Hell when it comes to women. Looks are very, very important to me. I like a woman who wears makeup, paints her nails, tweezes her eyebrows, has straight white teeth, big breasts and a big booty. She should wear high heels and have a nice hairstyle with no gray hair. And she should take care of herself. Down there. If she doesn't do all of these things, I won't ask her out for a second date.

And me? I'm not "hot." I'm 5'6", I have a large nose (although I've been told by some it's my best quality), I'm losing my hair and have gained weight in the past few years. To top it all off, I don't really know how to dress. But here's what I do have to offer: I've got a great sense of humor, I'm financially stable, and I can make a mean salami omelet. That's not so bad, right?

I don't blame my friends who say they won't set me up anymore because I am unrealistic and have outrageous expectations. It's true. I know the gap between what I expect and what I can get is massive. But that's what I'm attracted to and there's a part of me that believes I'll get it while the other part of me is getting lonelier and lonelier and wants to lower my standards. I just don't know if my body will follow, if you get my drift.

Please don't be too tough. I can't help being this way.

Pig on Prospect Place

#### Dear Pig,

What I find most disturbing here (beside the salami omelet, yeech!) is that you write of no other qualities that you're looking for in a partner. No mention of spirituality, politics, sense of humor, disposition. Nada. Weird, don't you think? You gotta know that looks are the only thing that don't last. I was a looker in my thirties but now, nearing fifty, my face has begun its descent down my skull. You have/had a mother and a grandmother. They were once on the market and someone was kind enough to overlook their physical imperfections and have sex with them to make you. You need to get over this. Now. It's standing in the way of your happiness.

Pig, even if you were a George Clooney look alike, I'm not sure the woman you're waiting for exists. She might for a couple dates but then I expect you'd find her ass a little flat or her skin a little rough. You've been watching way too much porn. Go online and see what Cindy and Beyoncé look like without airbrushing. Women don't look like the images you have in your head. You have an illness, and frankly, I don't have a

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### **HELPING PARK SLOPE FAMILIES RESTRUCTURE SINCE 1995**

lot of empathy for you. Men like you who internalize all the crap But, I also hear that you understand how crazy you are and that you want to change so that makes you a smidgen likable. So... here's a story for you.

When I was in high school I dated a boarding student at the prep school up the street from my house. Spenser was handsome, rich, drove a Beamer, and was known to date beneath him. That's where I came in. I was "a townie" which to him meant I knew the back roads and where to buy beer after the first six places carded. On weekends Spenser and I would make out in his common room and later I would watch him play lacrosse. One night someone had some pot, and we were in the woods sitting on logs around a small fire. Spenser and I were making out as usual and suddenly I had the sensation that I was macking a giant golden retriever. He wasn't the best kisser to begin with, but he was profoundly horrendous after a little weed. After that night, and I'm not proud of this, I couldn't bring myself to see him anymore. I made excuses the following three weekends which was enough time for him to find someone else to slobber on. "The Spenser Effect" trailed me for half a dozen years after that night. It would happen without warning (with or without pot) and ruin whatever fledgling relationship I was embarking on. All of sudden his butt looked like an eggplant or his laugh sounded fake or his ugly shoes made fart sounds. I would find one thing to distort and obsess on which would dash the tenderest of potential love upon the rocks.

I finally shook "The Spenser Effect" in my mid twenties and settled down all cozy with a complete psychopath for a few years, just when "The Spenser Effect" actually would've done me some good. Today, I've been with the same guy for over fifteen out there that makes women feel really shitty about themselves. years and he's got a toe that looks like a smashed jellybean and it doesn't bother me at all!

So that story is one to let you know, I kind of hear you. I never needed my man to be ripped or wax his chest but I did need him not to kiss like a dog. How did I get over it? I wanted love in my life. I learned to acknowledge the effect and move through it toward the light—the light within the person. Yes, his nose breath smells like vinegar but so do Easter eggs. I like Easter eggs and I like the way he listens to me even when I have no idea what I'm saying. It's not "settling." It's stepping out of the fantasy world where all girls bleach their anuses and into the world where a deep connection with someone is possible.

Here's the practical advice.

Find someone you like. Silently acknowledge your pig voice when it tells you about her crooked teeth with a "thank you for noticing, inner pig." Then, if your date is kind and interesting and somewhat appealing to you, go out with her a second time. And then a third. Delay the physical contact for as long as you can. When you think you can wait no longer, wait one more date. Then, go to bed. Now, by this time you'll be so comfortable with each other, she might just let you tweeze her eyebrows as foreplay. This might not be love, but it will be a step toward something real.

I hope you soon learn that girls who don't paint their nails can be goddamn sexy. Just as I hope they learn that short balding guys with big noses can be sizzling hot. I have moderately-sized hopes for you, Pig. Keep in touch.  $\Box$ 

See you next time.



## PARK SLOPE LIFE

## SALLY SAYS



## TO GET A DOG OR NOT TO GET A DOG that is the question

I happen to think that off-leash hour at Prospect Park, especially on weekends, is one of the greatest things about Park Slope. Many a weekend morning, when we can manage to get out of the house on time, my partner and I take our six-year-old up to the park and wander around, meeting the big dogs and the little dogs, the friendly dogs and the aloof dogs, the clean dogs and the muddy dogs. It's like a Dr. Seuss book. **By Sally Kohn**  It's so much fun it's even worth enduring the stares of the dog owners, who look at us suspiciously since we don't have a leash in our hands. It's as though we're sexual predators prowling a playground. Which is only another reason to want a dog of our own.

But urban dog ownership is, to say the least, a huge commitment. First, there's the poop. When I see my distinguished looking neighbors, in their nice work clothes or Sunday best, stooping with little baggies, I always think of the Jerry Seinfeld joke about how if aliens suddenly landed on Earth, they would think dogs are in charge. "If you see two life forms, one of them's making a poop, the other one's carrying it for him, who would you assume is in charge?"

And that's really just the beginning of it. My friends who live in the country, their dogs are more subservient. They have yards they get confined to, or even giant fields in which their poop is merely useful fertilizer, and some of the dogs even work herding sheep or something farmish. But my city friends are subservient to their dogs. They get up in time to walk the dog and home in time to walk the dog and in the middle of the day they pay someone else to walk the dog. Some of them actually take their dogs to daycare. Those exist. I'm told that some of them have live feed video streams so you can watch your dog while you're at work. Like nanny-cams for dogs. I haven't checked but I'm pretty sure that one month at a doggy daycare in New York costs more than a four-bedroom, three-bath in Kansas. Just saying.

But consistently, for the last three Christmases, plus Hannukah, her birthday, Memorial Day, any holiday she can think of, my daughter Willa has been asking for a dog. Increasingly begging. And I know that in theory a dog would be great for our family. An ever-present furry friend for my only-child daughter, one who can cuddle up to her at night and help teach her some bigger-kid responsibilities. Plus, who doesn't want someone waiting for you every evening when you open the door, excited to see you no matter what, even if that excitement is only because of a transactional kibble-based relationship? Still it's something.

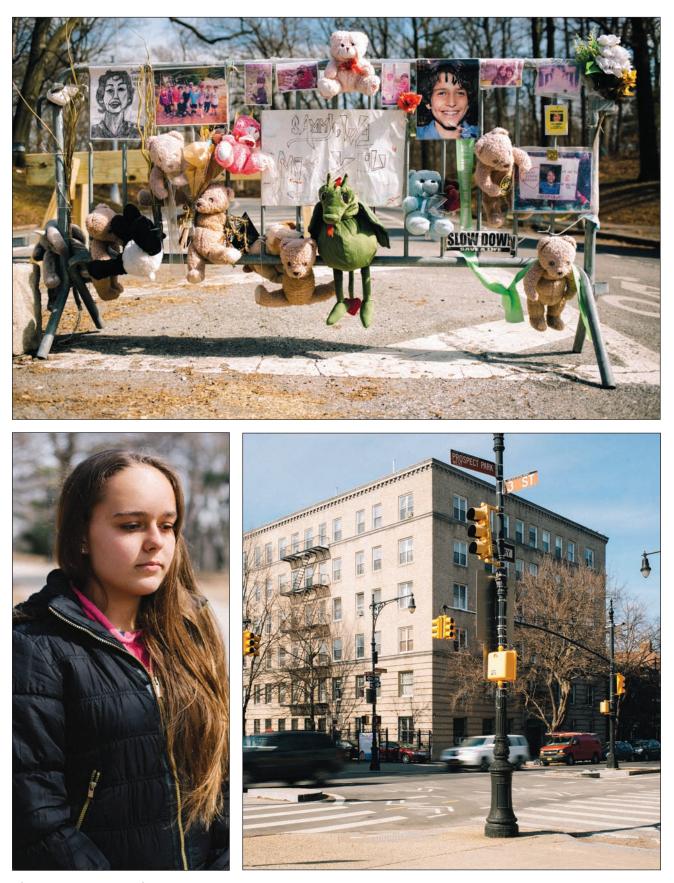
Then I think about picking up poop. And paying for a dog walker. And feeling guilty about leaving the dog home when we go out to do something on some Saturday. Or worse, taking the dog with us and leaving it tied up outside a restaurant or wherever, sitting there with its sad face shooting guilt rays through the window, probably whimpering, eliciting pity from all who pass. I'm quite comfortable with my current role judging other people for leaving their super-sad looking pups tied up outside the Food Coop or a restaurant. I don't want to be the one being judged. And I have plenty of guilt already, thankyouverymuch.

People who have dogs in the city tell me that once you have one, your life is immeasurably changed and enriched for the better. People once told me the same thing about having a kid. Which was, thankfully, quite true, but in both cases it's not like you get a try out period. You have to make the decision before you actually know how you're going to feel about it. I mean, yeah, you could always give the dog back or find it another home. I suppose you could, technically, do the same with a kid. But like I said, I already have enough guilt. Plus, eventually, kids learn to deal with their own poop.

Getting a dog in New York is a commitment. If we're going to get a dog, I want to be committed first. So dear Park Slope dog owners, if you see me wandering around, leashlessly prowling the park scoping out the various models of dogs or judgmentally pitying your dog tied to a signpost outside Union Market, know that I'm just trying to figure out if I have what it takes to be you. To dog or not to dog? I remain firmly undecided.  $\Box$ 



## PART OF THE SOLUTION



## VISION ZERO A NEW KIND OF STREET SMART

Following three tragic pedestrian fatalities of local M.S. 51 students, ambitious 14-year-old takes safety matters into her own hands. BY LIANE NELSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHARIF KARIM

n the wake of the three tragic pedestrian deaths of local M.S. 51 students this past year, fellow student and advocate for pedestrian safety awareness, Alison Collard de Beaufort, decided it was time for action. Beaufort personally knew the three victims Mohammad Naiem Uddin, Sammy Cohen Eckstein, and Joie Sellers and recalls what it was like to suffer the loss of her friends and classmates. Both Sellers, twelve, and Uddin, fourteen, were killed by hit-and-run drivers in the Park Slope neighborhood, while Eckstein was killed near Prospect Park when fetching his soccer ball which had rolled into the street.

Reaching out to heavy-weight champion for pedestrian rights, Councilman Brad Lander, in hopes of finding a solution to the seemingly growing hazard of street safety in Brooklyn, the ambitious sophomore of Brooklyn Technical High School aimed to start a social action group specifically targeted for students. "Since most groups are for adults and parents, Councilman Lander and I had a meeting [about] how to get students involved with the matter—which is how Vision Zero Youth Council was created," Beaufort elaborates.

Vision Zero, a series of traffic legislations originally implemented in Sweden to eradicate serious crashes, made its way to New York City this past year when Mayor Bill de Blasio placed

Lefthand page, clockwise from top: memorial at 3rd Street and Prospect Park West, view of intersection from park side, Alison Collard de Beaufort. This page: Vision Zero poster on memorial. the act at the top of his transportation priority, with policies of lowering driving speeds and expanding automated enforcement. Following in the footsteps of the Swedish model and mantra of having an anticipated zero deaths or serious pedestrian injuries by 2020, New York City is embarking upon both technological and legislative changes to help facilitate the muchneeded social revolution of pedestrian safety. A few items in the works include the planned additions of 120 speed-tracking cameras near schools, following the impressive example by Sweden who has installed more than 1,100 cameras, along with the goal of reducing the citywide speed limit from 30 miles per hour to 25.

New York City's Transportation Department is keen on blending both Swedish-style design principles along with engaging public awareness campaigns. The reasoning lies simply with the notion that despite changing speed limits and traffic design, the ultimate preventative measure in pedestrian accidents lies in properly educating both drivers and pedestrians. We are admittedly in the age where there are a plethora of technological distractions—whether it is a driver on the phone or a pedestrian with headphones in and in order for change to occur both parties must do their part in adopting safe practices.

But all this legislative banter clearly isn't reserved for adults. The Vision Zero Youth Council is a means for students in the New York City area, grades four to twelve, to join the call to social action, come up first hand with solutions to on-going problems, offer input for pedestrian safety around schools, and liaise directly with school faculty members. Of course parents are welcome to join the meetings, but they should be prepared to take the back seat to these vocal



"The first time it happened it's a big shock, you don't expect it. Then having to go through it a second time and then a third time all within fourteen months was completely surreal. It is a pain that no one should have to experience."

Alison Collard de Beaufort

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## VISION ZERO

and opinionated young people. Of the two meetings the council has hosted to-date Beaufort notes, "Though we have only had two meetings so far, one held each month, there has been great discussion and brainstorming among local students and faculty members, and the future membership for the group looks very promising." Faculty members of local schools are doing their part in spreading the word of the council, encouraging students to get involved and attend the meetings.

After just coming to creation in January of this year, the Vision Zero Youth Council has had a notable attendance of approximately thirty members to each meeting as well as mustering hundreds of likes and followers on its social media pages, which are all personally manned by Beaufort when she is not figure skating or spending time with her school's engineering club. The Vision Zero meetings, held once a month at local M.S. 51, have an open forum style where students are welcome to voice their concerns and work together to find solutions. Though the council does not have an official board yet, the strategic fourteen-year-old has picked her allies with care, as councilman Lander and the Department of Transportation have played prominent roles in laying the foundation for the council.

Councilman Lander has shown time and time again that pedestrian safety in the city is of upmost importance with his newest call to action, the Driver Accountability Task Force just passed early March in partnership with Brooklyn District Attorney Ken Thompson and Street Safety Advocates. The avantgarde approach of the Driver Accountability Task Force aims to increase prosecution of reckless driving and eliminate loopholes in legislation, which allow drivers who cause injury or death to pedestrians to escape punishment.

The force—formed in response to the third tragic hit-andrun fatality of 14-year-old Mohammed Naiem Uddin who was hit in a cross-walk when a driver failed to yield—will comprise stakeholders from the NYPD, advocacy groups, local and state governments, and criminal justice experts. While advocacy groups like the Zero Vision Youth Council serve to take preventative measures for pedestrian accidents, the Driver Accountability Task Force will ensure that justice is met when unfortunate accidents occur. The hope is to foster a cultural shift in the ethical implications of driving responsibly and to further force drivers to face the repercussions of reckless driving.

In the wake of the local tragedies, support and advocacy groups consisting of victims of traffic violence and families who have suffered loss from reckless driving have sprung up. Families for Safe Streets, formed in early 2014, has played a crucial role in lobbying for changes in legislation such as lowering city speed limits. The group wants to make a conscious effort to turn their grief into action and create a city in which pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles safely coexist. Going with the notion of strength in numbers, the Vision Zero Youth Council plans to partner with Families for Safe Streets and other social action groups in order to tag-team legislative changes through rallies, events, and social media campaigns to engage public discussion.

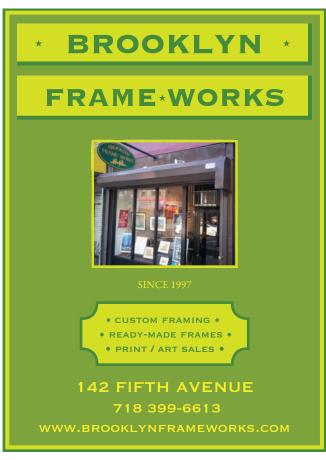
Other groups such as Transportation Alternatives are more on the extreme end of the pedestrian activist spectrum, suggesting vehicles be eliminated altogether, promoting bicycling, walking, and public transit as a means to get around. While it might not seem totally realistic to banish the car completely here in Brooklyn, the big brother group, founded in 1973, has managed some notable accomplishments such as Citi Bike, parkingprotected bike lanes, Select Bus Service, and automated speed enforcement cameras just to name a few. Possible future projects could include ways to reduce cyclist fatality rates, as Swedish authorities are channelling efforts to find an energy-absorbing pavement to alleviate the severity of a fall. Like that of Families for Safe Streets, their ultimate goal is to see change and eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries in the city's streets.

New York City might be similar to Stockholm in the essence that it is the national epicenter for the Vision Zero initiative, and leading by example might encourage other metropolitan cities in the country to jump on the pedestrian safety bandwagon and take the necessary steps to propagate change. San Francisco adopted the Vision Zero plan at the same time as New York City in January of 2014, with Boston shortly after in March 2014, and most recently Portland as of February 2015. Car companies like Volvo are also taking matters into their own hands and have initiated projects for automatic braking and steering, pedestrian and cyclist detection systems, and even a bit of a robotic-esque sensor that can read road signs. On the topic of drinking and driving, Sweden ensures sober driving by installing breathalyzers in nearly all school buses and government vehicles as well as onethird of taxis-all of which New York City might think about incorporating in the future.

With a full plate of agendas and a seemingly endless list of pedestrian safety topics, what really is the Vision Zero Youth Council's main goal? Beaufort emphasizes, "We really want to put an end to pedestrian deaths and make zero fatalities and injuries a reality by 2020." And of course, spreading awareness of the issue: "I want students to know that this isn't just an annoying topic that teachers pester us about. This is a real problem that has directly affected us and change needs to happen." With the progress made by the group already in its short time of existence, there is no limit to what these driven students can accomplish within the next five years.

For more information on the Vision Zero Youth Council and for meeting dates and times visit their website: http://visionzeroyc.wix.com/vzyc2015





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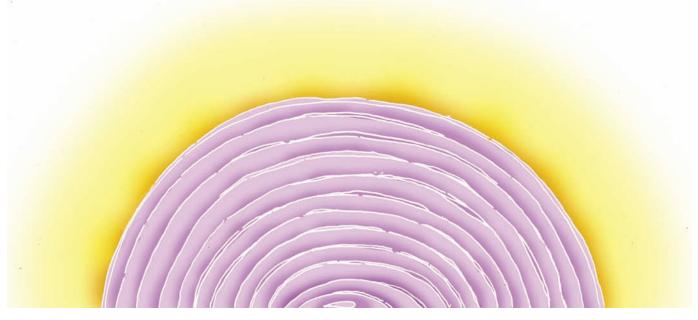




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Anyone who has ever dumped the entire contents of their closet on the floor and given garbage bags of clothes away knows this power intimately. But what I am going to suggest is that this spring you go one layer deeper. This season, while you spring clean, also focus on intentionally reorganizing your living space into a microenvironment that subtly shifts your behavior so you can achieve your health goals with ease and sustainability. Yes, I basically want your environment to trick you into being a healthy, happy person.

As a health coach, I am fascinated by human behavior and what facilitates lasting, behavior change. Almost every patient I've worked with has a genuine desire to be healthy and happy and also, seems to have about the same five health goals. They even know what they need to do to achieve those goals. Yet, only a fraction of them seem to be able to create the change they desire despite being motivated, intelligent people with lots of integrity. What gives?

No, I have not come to the conclusion that we are all just lazy and dishonest. As we learn more about human behavior, it appears we outsource a lot of our decision-making and behavior cues to external factors, rendering a large percentage of our decision making unconscious. Our brains seem to get decision fatigue rather quickly, so in order to save our brainpower for the really vital decisions, we form neural networks that ingrain daily decisions into habits that occur mostly on autopilot. Hence, willpower, while a nice idea, ends up being overrated and largely unreliable.

Habits are made up of a cue—routine and reward. Traditionally, we emphasize going straight to changing the routine with less emphasis on reworking the cue or replacing the reward. Without getting overly technical, a lot of exciting research is emerging that shows a lot of our behavior cues are housed in our external environment. It appears when we change our environment, we change our behavior with relative ease (For more information check out the recent NPR article on heroin addiction and Vietnam soldiers.) You can harness this phenomenon in your own home to achieve some of the most common and evasive health goals. Here are my top three tips in order to make your home one big, health-inducing cue!

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#### practice? My number one tip is designating a location in your home as

your meditation area (or corner or window). Start by pondering what kind of environment will seduce you into sitting down to practice. Don't worry too much about size here. Placing a candle in a windowsill or the corner of a room counts. Put things that you love and that inspire you there. Keep it fresh and updated. Then meditate every day for about a month in that spot (even if just three minutes). By the end of this time period, you should have the start of a strong meditation habit with the help of this physical cue!

1. CREATE A DESIGNATED MEDITATION

The desire to sustain a regular meditation practice is one

of the most common health goals people come to me with. In our fast paced world, it is increasingly vital to actively pursue relaxation and contemplation to cultivate healthy brains, nervous systems, and hearts (both physically and emotionally).

In the health sphere, meditation continues to crop up as the latest

panacea for our physical, mental, and esoteric ailments. How can

our environments support building a sustainable meditation

AREA IN YOUR HOME

### 2. HIDE YOUR DEVICES

These days, reducing screen time is something many of us strive to do. Despite acknowledging that our increase in screen time contributes to feelings of isolation and disconnection, many still feel powerless over our usage. While the rampant, nearly constant use of technology may feel inevitable and out of our control, we benefit enormously when we bring an element of conscious choice back to our tech habits. This allows us to make empowered decisions about how we'd like to engage with technology so it fosters intimacy and connection, rather than detracts from it.

To get a hold of your technological addictions, I recommend implementing a digital sunset at least one hour before you'd like to go to bed. To structure this ritual within your home environment, the concept of out of sight, out of mind is vital. Most of us don't have that much control over our addiction to technology and need a physical barrier in order to not be lured back in. Designate a "hiding" spot for your devices. For phones, iPods and iPads, I suggest having a designated drawer or basket you put them in. For TVs and computers, cover them with a blanket. Next, pick a digital sunset time each day and stick to it. To make this easier, I recommend linking this ritual to something you already do each day (this powerful technique is known as habit stacking). For example, shut down and hide your devices right after dinner or right before you brush your teeth. For extra credit, hide your devices when you eat as well.

Finally, focus on consciously replacing the "reward" you get from engaging with your beloved devices with something that feels like a worthy replacement. Perhaps this is your time to pursue something creative. Maybe it's when you get to connect more deeply with your partner, read the stack of novels you've been meaning to get to, or a chance to get really into taking bubble baths. If nothing else, this habit will do wonders for your sleep as the light of screens impact our circadian rhythms by suppressing the release of the sleep promoting hormone melatonin.

3. DON'T BRING UNHEALTHY FOOD INTO

6 6 5

#### YOUR HOME. IF YOU DO, HIDE IT

This may seem a little extreme but if you are serious about changing your diet, this massively increases your odds of success. We encounter plenty of unhealthy food temptations in our daily lives operating in the birthplace of SAD, the notoriously awful and embarrassing Standard American Diet. If your home is a clean food zone, you will likely reach some semblance of balance. When healthy food is what's most readily available and easily accessible, you'll eat healthy foods. Seems like kind of a no-brainer but we often forget to harness this fact. For example, when Google changed up their cafeteria so water and healthy beverages were at eye level and soda stored below-soda consumption dropped by 7 percent and water consumption increased by 47 percent (http://newsfeed.time.com/2013/09/03/ google-study-gets-employees-to-stop-eating-so-many-mms/). In other words, the default, easy choice is generally what we pick, so work this to your advantage!

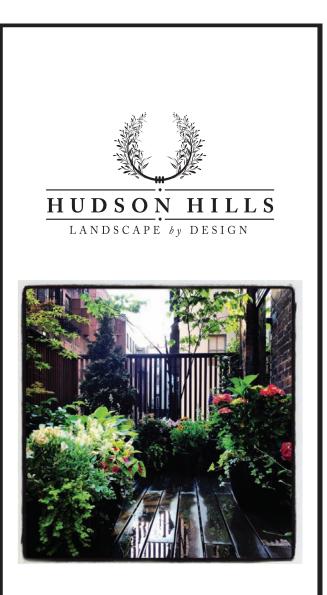
Let's come back to reward replacement. If you have developed a habit of coming home and eating Ben and Jerry's every night to activate your pleasure centers after a long day, make sure you are replacing it with a reasonable substitute that lights up the reward center at least a little bit. If I you try to go from eating Ben and Jerry's every night to just drinking water, you better believe you're going to find yourself at the nearest bodega buying more ice cream. Replacement of the reward is key as you build healthier habits because no one responds well to having something taken away without a decent replacement (including our brains!). You may be wondering, WTF could replace Ben and Jerry's? Good question. Answer: Nothing! But you might try something like dark chocolate (70 percent or above for less sugar and more antioxidants), chocolate mousse made with bananas or tofu, coconut milk ice cream or fresh fruit.

## WHERE TO FIND THE READER

Back to the Land - (142 7th Ave bet Carroll & Garfield) Barnes & Noble - (267 7th Ave @ 6th Street) Bierkraft - (191 5th Ave, Bet Berkeley and Union) The Chocolate Room - (86 5th Ave bet St. Marks & Prospect Pl)

Colson's Patisserie - (374 9th St @ 6th Av) Diana Kane - (229 5th Ave bet President & Carroll) Fermented Grapes - (651 Vanderbilt bet Bergen & Dean Sts) Kos Cafe - (249-251 5th Ave @ Garfield) Union Hall - (702 Union St near 5th Av) Union Markets - (754 Union St @ 6th Av)

- (402-404 7th Ave. bet 12th & 13th St) Warren Lewis Realty - (124A 7th Av bet Carroll & President)



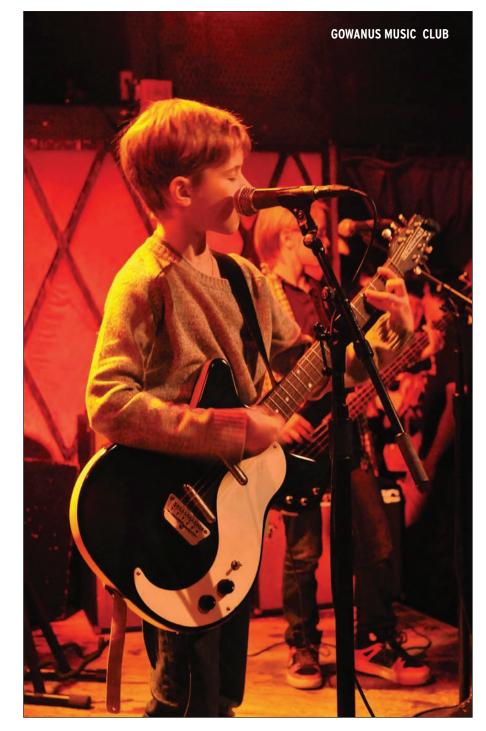
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#### SUMMER CAMP PICKS

#### BY ANGELA JOHNSON

fter dealing with subzero temps and mounds of snow, planning vour child's summer activities might be just the thing to help your family get over the winter blues. But if you think summer camp is only about bug bites and roasting marshmallows, think again. Cooking, dance, robotics, and skateboarding are just a few of the many summer camp program options available in and around Park Slope. And while it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the abundance of opportunities, many programs have flexible scheduling and drop-in options, making it possible to try more than one. So pull out your sunscreen and shades and get ready for camp.



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Brooklyn Locations: Brooklyn Guitar School, 81 4th Avenue Queen of All Saints School, 300 Vanderbilt Avenue Williamsburg Northside School 299 North 7th Street www.bricks4kidz.com Program Dates: July 6–August 21

#### **Brooklyn Arts for Kids**

This three-week Summer ArtsCamp fosters creativity by exposing kids ages 7–11 to a variety of artistic mediums. One half of the day is spent painting, drawing, and sculpting, while the remainder of the day is devoted to the performing arts. Kids split their time between the Prospect Range art studio in Windsor Terrace and beautiful Prospect Park. Guest artists and field trips to the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens and the Brooklyn Museum of Art also provide the young artists with inspiration. The program culminates with an exhibition for family and friends.

1226 Prospect Avenue www.brooklynartsforkids.com Program Dates: June 29–July 18

#### **Brooklyn Robot Foundry**

Themed sessions let campers in grades 1–7 use engineering principles to understand how things work. Along the way, they will design and build several of their own projects that move in different ways. There is even a session that teaches the basics of programming and electronics, giving kids the ability to create robots that can interact with each other. At the end of the session, campers get to take home everything they make.

303 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn www.brooklynrobotfoundry.com Program Dates: June 15–August 28

#### **Drake Bennett Summer Schools**

Learning doesn't have to stop when the school year ends. Kids entering grades 1–6 rotate through six classes per day in this summer school program. They learn from a group of teachers who are experts in their respective fields. The day is split in half, with an emphasis on reading, math, and science curriculum in the morning. The afternoon is reserved for sports and the arts. There are also five fun recess sessions interspersed throughout the day.

Brooklyn Location: The Park Slope Jewish Center 1320 8th Avenue www.drakebennett.org Program Dates: August 3–28

#### **Gowanus Music Club**

Kids ages 8-17 are able to experience being part of a band at this five-day intensive Rock Camp. Participants form bands based on skill level and experience. Throughout the week, the bands collaborate on all aspects of a performance from set lists to visual effects, under the guidance of experienced professional musicians from around the world. The camp culminates with a



rockin' live show at the Rockwood Music Hall in the East Village for family and friends.

Complete Music Studios, 227 St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn gowanusmusicclub.com Session 1: July 6–10 Session 2: July 27–31

#### Homage Skateboard Academy

A Park Slope indoor training facility is the site of this fun camp for ages 7-14. In addition to technique, the camp emphasizes safety and skate park etiquette. When they're not skating, campers also participate in a variety of arts and crafts.

615 Degraw Street, Brooklyn www.homageskateboardacademy.com Program Dates: June 29–September 4

#### Lango

Kids in Pre K through Grade 3 immerse themselves in Spanish or Mandarin at this summer language camp. In addition to using flash cards and books, little ones engage in singing, dancing, and games in their language of choice. In addition to learning a new language, program participants also gain an appreciation for other cultures by studying food, music, and dance.

93 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn www.langokidsnyc.com Program Dates: June 15–August 21



#### **Oasis Day Camp**

If you're looking for a traditional day camp setting, Oasis in Brooklyn Bridge Park gives kids ages 3–11 the opportunity to have fun and make new friends with a fascinating view of the Manhattan skyline in the background. The programs are designed to be age-appropriate. Regular activities include sports, swimming nature activities, and the arts. Special events such as Color Wars, Olympics, and field trips give your child the opportunity to make unique memories that will last well into the next school year.

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn Heights www.oasischildren.com Program Dates: June 29–August 31

#### The Pixel Academy

This Digital Summer Camp lets your little gamers learn more about how their favorite games come to life. Eight week-long sessions cover topics such as Programming for Minecraft, Video Came Design, and Digital Music Creation. If you're worried about your kids getting too much screen time, the program incorporates time for outdoor activities and free play. Fresh lunch and snacks are provided, courtesy of Red Rabbit.

163 Pacific Street, Brooklyn www.campixelacademy.org Program Dates: July 6–August 24

#### **Spoke The Hub**

Kids ages 3–6 can explore some of their favorite characters and authors in a series of half-day themed sessions such as Fancy Nancy, Sandra Boynton, Action Heroes, and the circus. The program combines arts and crafts, creative movement, and free play to equal a lot of fun. Kids entering grades 1–3 participate in a multi-arts program that incorporates music, dance, creative writing, and cooking. Older kids (grades 4–6 and 7–9) will explore theater, filmmaking, yoga, martial arts, and fashion design. For tween and teens (ages 8–15) they will be launching their debut, month-long dance intensive in August for serious young dancers.

748 Union Street, Brooklyn www.spokethehub.org Program Dates: July 6–August 28



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#### **Textile Arts Center**

Campers ages 5–11 take part in weaving, sewing, printing, and felting. Each weekly themed session incorporates a field trip to a New York City arts facility. Additionally, participants have an opportunity to share their creations with family and friends at an open house event at the end of the week.

www.textileartscenter.com/summercamp Program Dates: July 6–August 14

#### The Co-Op School

The Summer Program at The Co-Op School combines creative and performing arts with reading and science principles, resulting in an innovative and fun experience for kids ages 4–8. Six one-week sessions allow kids to collaborate on multi-disciplinary projects. Participants study the movement of Capoeira while building their own wooden instruments, developing a drama and creating their own sets, as well as incorporating gymnastics with sculpture. Each week ends with a performance to showcase the participants' work. There is also a preschool program for ages 2–4.

40 Brevoort Place, Brooklyn www.theccopschool.org Program Dates: July 6–August 14

#### **Brooklyn Acting Lab**

This program encourages kids in Pre K–Grade 8 to use their imaginations to create their own theater productions. Campers are guided by professional actors, dancers, and musicians to develop their own characters, design costumes, and build sets. At the end of each week, the children have the opportunity to share their creations with family and friends. This year, participants will draw inspiration from themes such as nature and the environment. Flexible weekly participation options are available.

Pre-K - K: 298 6th Avenue, Brooklyn Grades 1-3: 1012 8th Avenue, Brooklyn Grades 4-8: 160 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn www.brooklynactinglab.org Program Dates: Programs run June 22–August 28 (check website for agespecific program details); Early Summer Program for Pre-K–Grade 5: June 15–June 19

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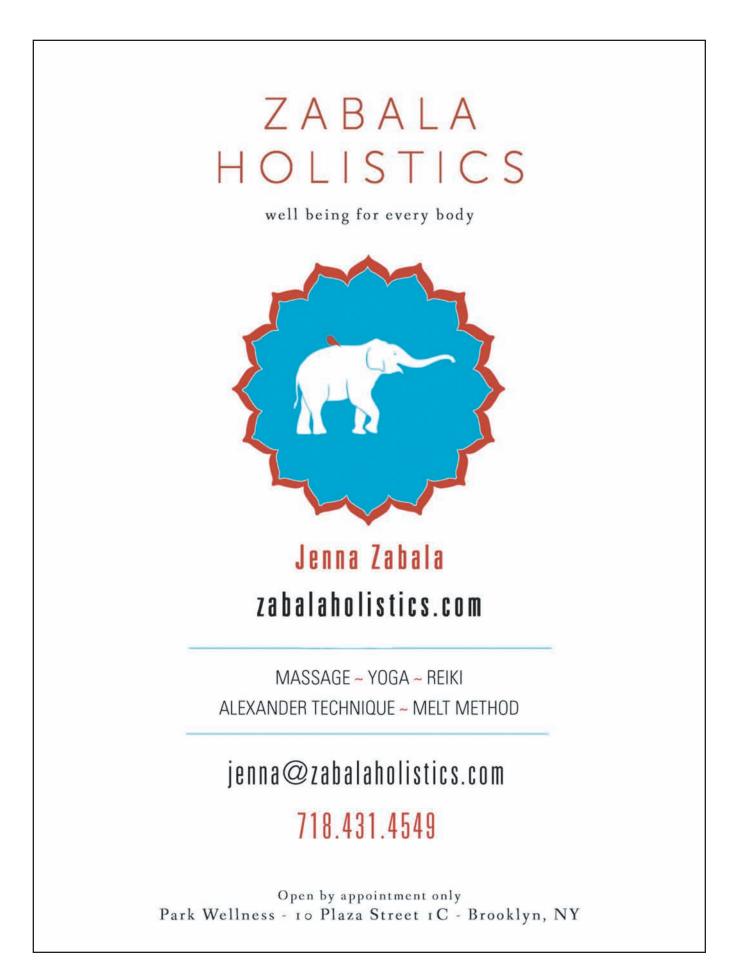
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#### THE SPLENDID CASE OF INCREASING

WES ANDERSON COLLECTIONS

with Matt Zoller Seitz



Matt Zoller Seitz is the Editor-in-Chief of RogerEbert.com, the TV critic for *New York Magazine* and Vulture.com, a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism, and the author of multiple books about the life and films of Wes Anderson. That last part is the most important for the purposes of this interview, for which he was kind enough to speak with *Park Slope Reader*. 2013 brought the first *The Wes Anderson Collection*, which celebrates and analyzes all seven of Wes' films that were released up to that point. This February, *The Wes Anderson Collection: The Grand Budapest Hotel* followed as a second volume focusing on only Anderson's most recent film. Here, Seitz talks about the differences between the two books, the fun of elaborate footnotes, and the surprise expense of novelty trinkets.

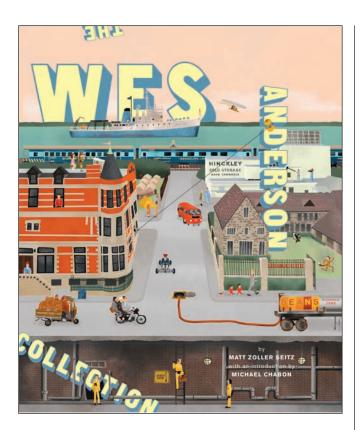
#### Interview by Whitney McIntosh

The major difference between your first Wes Anderson book and this one is that the first volume had everything—all seven of his previous films and analyses of each of each of them uniquely. Did you prepare for this one differently because it was only based on one movie, or was the process pretty similar?

We had a few options. One was to put out a second edition of the first book that included The Grand Budapest Hotel but we didn't want to do that because it didn't seem right to ask people to buy the same book twice, so we decided on a second book. Once we knew that, we had the opportunity to take a slightly different approach, really concentrate on a single film in greater length and great detail, and also to bring in interviews with other people. It wasn't just me and Wes-now it was me interviewing Ralph Fiennes and interviewing Milena Canonero or Adam Stockhausen, their production designer. Then on top of that, more critical essays by people who knew more about each particular deal, and that's how we ended up with Ali Arikan on the writing of Stefan Zweig and how that might or might not have influenced Wes Anderson, and Olivia Collette writing about the score (she's a classical musician.)



That almost mirrors the narrator-driven and detailed structure of the film, and you also incorporate what might be considered extraneous information, such as the various actor career arcs or the Stefan Zweig excerpts. Was there a specific reason you wanted to include those?



I just thought they were fun. [In] the first book I did a little bit of that as well. In fact, there's really three different books happening in the original *The Wes Anderson Collection*. One of them is this interview book with me talking to Wes, the other one is this collection of critical essays by me, and then you have the third book in the footnotes. Footnotes are kind of the sneakiest of the three books. Those are very digressive and almost random most of the time. I'm a huge fan of David Foster Wallace who would have these footnotes that would go on forever and a lot of times the footnotes would be things that there was really no rational,

defensible reason why something was in a footnote but he would put one in anyway. Or it was a way of including things that he would otherwise have had to cut (laughs). So we did even more of that in this book. At one point Wes Anderson and I are talking about the narration of his movie, and we both realize that there's a possibility that we're both talking out of our butts on this particular subject and he says, "You know, maybe we can check this." And I said, "OK I'll talk to my expert," and I emailed David Bordwell who I know. He wrote me a very long email about the history of voiceover narration in cinema. It's not really even a footnote. It spans two pages. I would say not all of them are defensible, but on the other hand, I think part of why

these books have been the best is [because] they're not all meat and potatoes; there's personality to them. You kind of get a sense of the personalities of people who make books. Me and Martin Venezky and Max Altman.

There are the different aspect ratios and design aesthetics in this book, just as in the film. Did you have a hand in that or was that mostly your illustrator and your designer? I told my editor I wanted this book to change aspect ratios like the movie did and I wasn't sure how we were going to accomplish that. I had originally talked to my editor about having the page size change. At one point there were going to be three different sizes of paper stitched into the binding of this book and when you moved from one section to another the actual physical size of the page would change. We priced that and we realized it was entirely too expensive. Martin came up with another solution that was simpler and cheaper, which was to map the page. And if you notice, there's three standard sizes for the book. When you're in the interview sections it fills up the entire book. The critical essays are slightly smaller. And the interviews with Canonero, Fiennes, Desplat etc. are slightly smaller than that. So that's our version of our change of aspect ratios.

You face a lot of those kinds of situations where you have your extravagant idea and then you have your realistic one. The original *Wes Anderson Collection*, very early on in the process we talked about selling it in a little box and the box would look like a little keepsake box like the ones you see at the beginning of *To Kill A Mockingbird* and you would open it up and the book would be inside and there would be seven little trinkets each related to his films. We realized that would cost \$250 a piece to do so it was unrealistic so we just went with the book (laughs).

#### You'd have to come out with a Christmas ornament collection or something! (You can put that idea in your back pocket.)

We've discussed that. We've discussed putting the first and second book together, and you know if there's a third book we'll add that one as well.

#### You had a lot of fun with this one because you were only focusing on the one movie and you could have fun with the cover and the different aspects of it. Did you have ideas for different things that didn't pan out design-wise or interview-wise that you'd like to share?

The big thing was the changing page size. I really wanted to do that because I've never seen that done before in a film book. If I had to do it over again, more interviews. But I say that

Wes Anderson movies are a really great illustration of the idea that just because a movie's fun doesn't mean it's not serious. understanding that if there were more interviews, there might be more pages, and then it might get more expensive and unrealistic again. I do believe that once a thing is done I like to leave it alone. I asked Wes about that in the first book. I said why is it that you don't like the director's cuts and he said that his feeling was once the movie is done then it's "archival". He said that means the thing is what it is, then I'm done with it. It's a record of something in time and I don't want to go back because I feel like I'm distorting history in a way. That's his feeling. That's why there's never been director's cuts of his movies. I don't believe there's been more than one or two deleted scenes. I don't think he's ever put a deleted scene on a DVD now

that I think about it. I'm also in so many different things I can't afford to obsess over what might have been. I don't tend to make a practice of it.

At one point in the book you mention that the movie really feels like a culmination of his career. More melancholy moments, more overt comedic moments. Did you go into it wanting to talk about, say, Kumar Pallana even though he wasn't in *Grand Budapest* because he

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#### had passed away, or was that something you decided to leave in because you felt like it was appropriate?

Talking to Kumar was...we were at the Algonquin hotel/bar and somehow we just got on the subject of Kumar who had died a few months earlier. We got on a level of discussion of a guy he worked very well with because he had been in a number of films and it was a classic digression. Kumar wasn't related to *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. He wasn't in it and there's really no reason to include that section other than because it was about Kumar a lot and we thought it would be a nice gesture to his family.

There's actually an entire other chapter of this book that we cut. It's an entire other section where Wes called me up and said, "Hey, I would like to do a conversation where we don't talk about *The Grand Budapest Hotel*—we just talk about movies." And I said, "Okay!" So we talked for about two hours about all kind of things including train travel, Japanese animation, disaster films, and our childhoods in Texas. At the end it was fifteen to twenty pages of text, and it just seemed like too much so we cut it. So there's digressions in the book, but it's not nearly as digressive as it could've been.

#### Now you're going to make people want a separate pamphlet of you and Wes Anderson talking about Japanese animation.

He actually knows a lot. It's funny because he'd never seen any of that until his girlfriend Juman [Malouf] introduced him to it. So that influenced his work on *Fantastic Mr Fox*. He's really into that stuff. We also talked about Steven Spielberg which is something we almost always talk about when we're together just because we're both major, major, major nerds for Spielberg. For the first *Wes Anderson Collection* when you watched most of his movies you didn't know you were going to write a book and analyze them on such a level. Is this the first movie where you watched it in advanced knowing in the back of your mind that you were maybe writing a book about it? Did it alter the way you went into it the first time in that screening room? Or did you just block that part out and watch it as you normally would a Wes Anderson film the first time?

Well the production process was different. In the first book you're dealing with the conception and that I've seen [the films] when we were laying the book out and doing the chapter on each. I didn't have any history with The Grand Budapest Hotel. I was experiencing it as a regular viewer, really. I mean, I got to see it slightly in advance of most critics. He showed me a nearly completed cut that had some color timing issues, maybe one or two audio issues, and incomplete special effects. That was in November of 2013, shortly after the book came out. I was able to see it just that time and then I did my first interview. I said to him before we even had a contract, "Hey, Wes, I have no idea yet if we're going to be able to integrate this into a future volume of the book. If so, how about maybe we go ahead and do an in-terview just in case." And he said, "Yeah, good idea—let's do it." So before the movie was released I had seen it maybe three times and interviewed Wes at least two times. I did more interviews with Wes than I collected in the book. Breaking things into the three acts is a storyteller's trick. Months of conversation at the Algonquin hotel happened. There are parts of the first conversation that I moved to the second chapter, and parts of the second that I moved to the third. It's a case where you talk to somebody again and again and maybe the first time you talk about the costumes and the second time you go off on a tangent about the



costumes again and it doesn't make sense when you're editing to be bringing up the costumes in all three acts. I always tell people that these books are documentaries in book form. That's supposed to mean it's not like you're pointing the camera or tape recorder at somebody and this is exactly what happened. You're arranging it, and you're cutting things that are basically irrelevant or uninteresting. You make the experience as pleasurable as possible for the consumer.

As far as The Grand Budapest Hotel goes, my relationship with the movie kept getting deeper the more times I saw it. In that sense, I would say a major difference between the second book and the first is that my attitude towards everything was basically settled in the first book when the time came to make it. The only exception to that was Moonrise Kingdom. My experience with this movie is being formed as you read the book. You can see in the preface that I admit the first time I had only had one view of the movie - so my impressions are probably not going to be so deep, and they're not. But then the second time, I had a chance to live with the film a bit more and my thoughts are a little more settled and a little more detail oriented. And then by the time you get to the third one, I'm thinking about the architecture of the story. So when I say it's a documentary in book form, it's not only a documentary about the movie in the form of a book, but it's also secondarily a documentary about my making this book.

#### As you mentioned before, you talked to Anderson about the costuming, the set design, shot set up, and camera movement. What's your personal favorite part of his movies—specifically this one?

I don't know if I have a favorite part of work in his movies or [a favorite] thing that he does. It's just too hard to say. It's like saying what's my favorite Monet painting. I don't know. It probably depends on my mood. But I will say that the thing I keep coming back to again and again is his sense of loss that's the driving force behind every one. That's something that I connected to on a very deep level, even very early in his career. I think a lot of people did. His movies are not trivial concoctions because they're about loss, they're about death, they're about mortality, they're about things fading away and how you just have to make peace with that because you don't have any control over it. That's the reason why earlier in his career-before there was this consensus that he was an important or interesting filmmaker – people got quite defensive when Wes Anderson was dismissed or criticized or ridiculed, because they saw this seriousness in his films. Wes Anderson movies are a really great illustration of the idea that just because a movie's fun doesn't mean it's not serious. He was always a serious filmmaker. Even going back to Bottle Rocket, which in many ways I still think is his lightest film overall. Maybe Moonrise Kingdom or maybe Fantasic Mr. Fox might be in a tie with it. But even Bottle Rocket deals with feelings of disappointment, youthful naiveté, emotional breakdown, mental illness, and criminality.

I actually just watched it this past weekend and it was really interesting. I haven't watched it for maybe ten years. It is striking how present those aspects are so early in his career, and you don't realize it the first time you see it or after you go away from it for a little while.

That last five minutes of *Bottle Rocket* feels like a preview of the rest of his career.

You can find bits of it in every one of his movies when you do go back through them, especially Owen Wilson's performance. Yeah, that moment when he's walking away from Bob and Anthony to the prison and he's all jocular and grinning and the hellraiser. And then it shifts in slow motion, and you see he looks back very subtly and you see that he's terrified. I think Wes Anderson's movies are contained in that one moment.

#### Last question. You have an Oliver Stone career book in the pipeline. Did you learn any lessons from your Wes Anderson books that you're applying to that or are you approaching it completely differently?

I learned a lot about practical things-layout, materials, intellectual property, things like that. We're definitely applying those. By the time we made the second book we knew what we were doing. And now with the Oliver Stone book we really knew what we were doing, so we're able to mix it up. With this book, it's not going to look anything like the Wes Anderson books. It's going to be something completely new that people haven't seen before. It takes its inspiration from Oliver Stone's films, which are very different films to say the least. It's much more of a biography. It's practically a life story with critical analysis dispersed in there. This is a guy whose life and films are so strongly entwined that you really can't separate the two. I think the trouble with this book is trying to figure out what is the best and most interesting way to reflect that visually. We're still going back and forth on it. It's also a political book because Stone is a political filmmaker. I'm trying to reflect his worldview in this book and his worldview is a very disillusioned one. This is a guy who was a young Republican, the son of a stockbroker, a child of privilege. He has deconstructed all of the lies to become someone else and it's been an ongoing process. He's told me many times that he considers himself a work in progress and he's seventy years old. So I would say if we do it right, this book is going to be a record of a person struggling to hopefully improve himself over the course of his life.

#### Right. I actually lied. I have one more question. I don't know if you've thought about this at all or if you just take his movies as they come, but what do you hope Wes Anderson does next? What direction does he push or new thing do you think he approaches in his next film?

I wouldn't presume to give Wes Anderson suggestions, but I personally would love to see him do a science fiction film—since I think he's often heading that direction anyway. He made a casual comment in an interview one time where he said he had a fantasy of shooting a science fiction movie in space in actual zero gravity. I don't think he was kidding.

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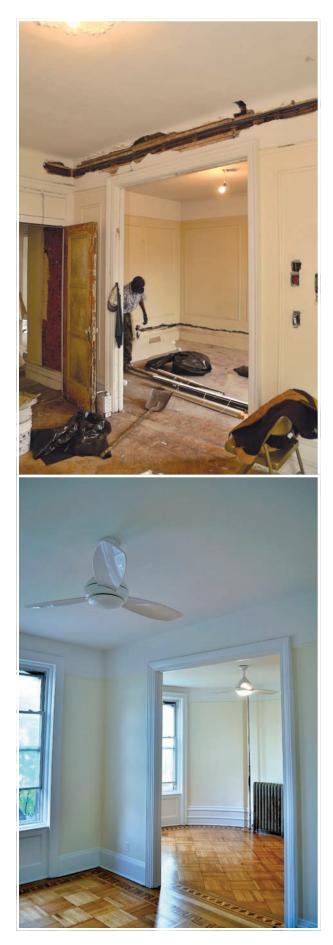
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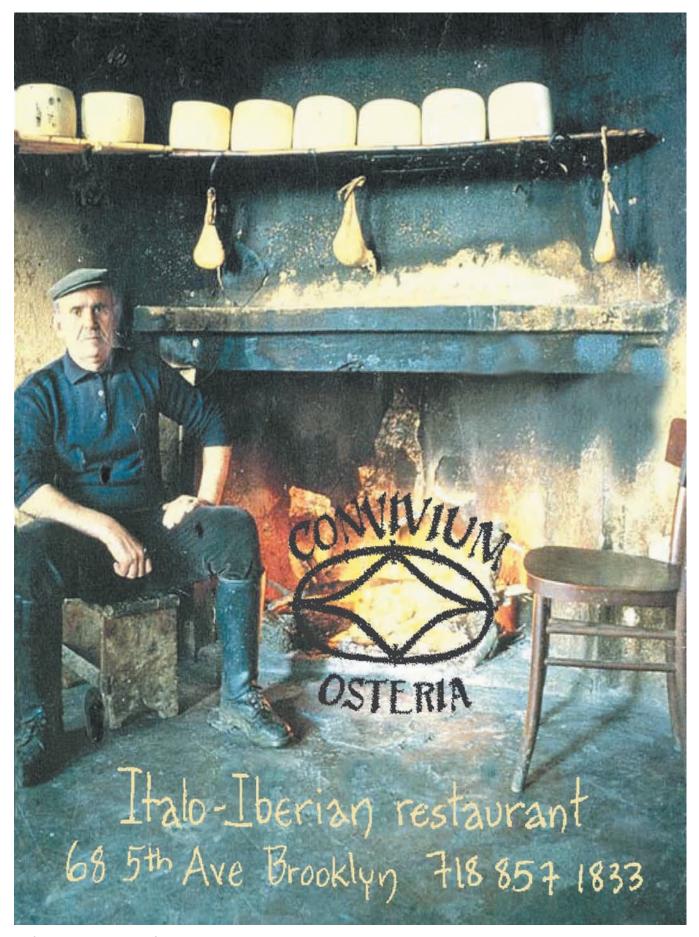
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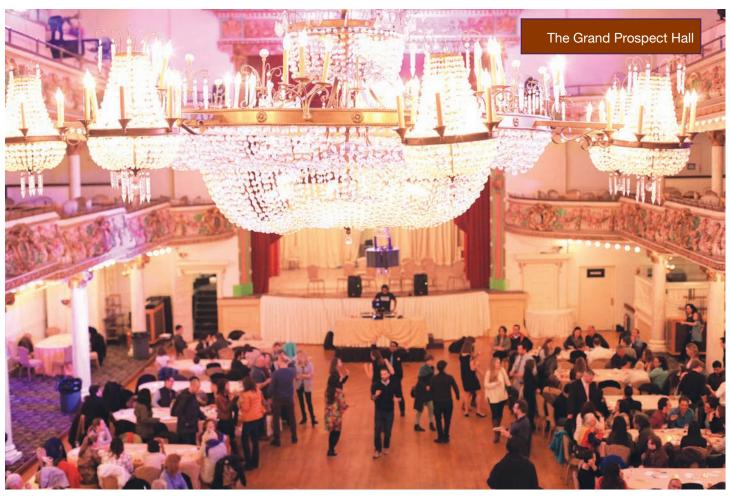
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#### EAT LOCAL



# A TASTE OF FIFTH

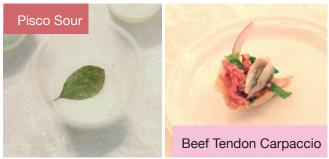
**On Wednesday, April 1st, A Taste of Fifth**—hosted by The Fifth Avenue Business Improvement District—showcased the culinary offerings of more than sixty local food and beverage heavy hitters. Participants included both veteran and newbie restaurants along Park Slope's Fifth Avenue, complemented with libations by wine and spirit vendors and craft breweries. The night was a rousing success, with sold out attendance and proceeds supporting local nonprofit organizations.

ARTICLE & PHOTOS BY NANCY LIPPINCOTT



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Spanish rosé poured by Acme Wine & Spirits

Under the chandelier-lit glow of the elegant Grand Prospect Hall, foodies from all corners of the Slope came to meet their favorite restaurateurs and imbibe with their neighbors. On one of the first spring evenings of the year, participants showed off their signature dishes and cocktails to a hungry and thirsty crowd of Park Slopers.

The best in show was the brand new Vietnamese gastropub, Bricolage, headed up by Chef Lien Lin

After breaking it down on the dancefloor, stuffed-to-the-brim attendees teetered out, content from a fantastic evening and with a renewed appreciation for the talent on what is arguably the tastier Fifth Avenue in New York. From one food lover to another, it's going to be a delicious spring here in Park Slope.

from The Slanted Door in San Francisco. Plates couldn't be replenished fast enough for an eager line swooping up the beef tendon carpaccio with cilantro, onion, peanut, and white anchovy.

Other crowd favorites included Prospect Bar and Grill, as the buzz about their meltingly tender brisket and oozing mac and cheese seemed to be the icebreaker among guests as they mingled. And the much celebrated, local favorite Stone Park turned heads with a simple, yet brightly flavored grilled octopus soup with preserved lemon.

While stomach space had to be judiciously rationed out, there were no regrets about sacrificing some in the name of thick-sliced smoked salmon and a cream cheese schmear at Beygl's table. And who could resist scarfing a slice of Two Boots' Bayou Beast, having just arrived steaming from the pizza oven?

The beverage world represented just as hard. With the almost overwhelming amount of food tables to hit up over two hours, a breather at Greenhook Ginsmiths' table sipping Old Tom Gin with bitter lemon soda freshened the palate and staved off an impending food coma. The rosé from Rioja poured by Acme Wines & Spirits was a welcomed reminder of the summer wine season just around the corner, and Coco Roco treated guests to a surprising—maybe even scandalous—take on the Peruvian national cocktail, the pisco sour.

Much of the crowd topped off the evening feast with a powerful shot of Gorilla Coffee and a sweet finale with desserts from The Chocolate Room and Le Pain Quotidien.

For more information about upcoming events, check out parkslopefifthavenuebid.org







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#### BENDING TOWARDS BROOKLYN

# Yoga, Children & the Art of Play

BY JESSICA PHILLIPS LORENZ ILLUSTRATION BY AIMEE SICURO

I'm a yoga teacher. But my life at home isn't exactly Zen, because I'm also a mother. Literally, as I am writing this, my husband and daughter are playing catch with her Lovey Bunny. Every couple of seconds a floppy stuffed animal goes whizzing by, three feet from my face. Soon, my infant son will need to nurse...

Once you have children everything is a little, well, tighter. Time, space, money, and my jeans are all tighter these days. My hold on my patience can be too, especially after climbing three flights of stairs with a temperamental, chatty toddler and a baby strapped to me. Man, by 3:30 p.m. most days, everybody around here needs an attitude adjustment.

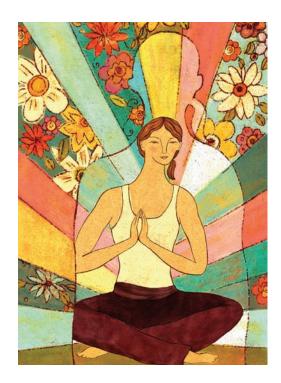
For new parents in particular, stress-reducing physical activity is both necessary and seemingly impossible. What can you do when you're tethered to the apartment?

One playful solution is to create a family yoga practice (try calling it "yoga play time"). Take the chance to have some exercise time together. Family yoga models self-care, teamwork, practicing new skills, and getting downright silly.

#### Create a Yoga Playspace

You don't need a dedicated studio space, though there are great classes in the neighborhood, like the one I teach at Bend and Bloom. You can create a bit of yogic ambiance in any room with a few steps. Set yourself up for success and remember that nobody can compete with a toy box. Put things away. Lay a blanket on the floor to create a dedicated yoga area. Unplug! Put. The iPhone. Down. While music may be a tempting way to set the scene for a mini-yoga class at home, I recommend holding off when you're first getting started. For most kids music is something to do, not something to be ignored in the background. Music is a key component to a family yoga class, but think of it as a prop or a tool and use it judiciously and with purpose.

One thing I always tell parents when they come to my classes is to keep their expectations loose. This is especially true at home. It's a huge accomplishment if you get to hold a pose or two and your child tries at least one yoga play activity. Managing our expectations is a big part of family yoga. (It's also a big part of parenting). You're not going to get a big work out in, folks. But,



you are going to move your body with your child, learn from each other, and hopefully have fun!

#### Yoga Play for Infants, Toddlers, and Older Kids

Here are a few poses and activities to share with the yoginis in your life of varying ages.

#### Infants:

Babies are often the greatest teachers of being in the moment. They aren't anticipating their next feeding or diaper change, though you might be. Allow them to inspire what it means to truly be. This meditative

state may be something many of the clock-keepers in the family struggle with (like me!).

Take a moment to check in with your infant. Ask them if they are ready to play! If they seem fussy or not up for it, try again another time.

#### Flying Babies!

This partner pose serves as abdominal work for the adult as well as tummy time for the infant.

Start sitting on the floor with your knees bent, feet on the floor in front of you. Bring the baby to your shins,

facing you. Hold the baby close to your shins draw your belly muscles in and slowly roll down onto your back. Try to keep your shins level and parallel to the floor. Hold on to your baby! Draw your knees close to your face and make a silly sound for

Playing yoga together regularly allows a new language to develop, where our bodies can say what our words can't. your baby. Then extend your legs away from you a few inches, draw your knees in again. Repeat!

Try to keep your head and neck relaxed while you engage your lower abdominal muscles. You can cue yourself by drawing your belly button down towards the floor. Your baby will delight in seeing you from above.

Note: keep a burp cloth handy! My son has spit up directly into my mouth while "flying." If your baby just ate, I recommend waiting a bit.

#### **Toddlers**

Toddlers are a notoriously irrational community. Their quirks are part of what makes them amusing to be around and, yet, they can be extremely trying. Parents, it's ok to be a little selfish here. Check in with yourself. What's tight on your own body? What do YOU need? I recommend starting by taking a deep breath.

#### **Tissue Breathing**

This kid friendly pranayama activity requires a box of tissues. Everyone should have one tissue to start. Pinch the tissue at its corners with both hands. Hold the tissue up in front of your face, a couple of inches from your mouth. Take a deep breath in, then blow out through your lips and watch the tissue move. Don't let go of the tissue yet! Try again, this time extend your arms a bit so your tissue is a little further away from your face. The idea is to see how far you can reach your tissue with your breath. When you have extended your arms as far as you can, it's time to let the tissues fly. Take the deepest breath you can and let go of the tissue when you exhale so the tissue goes flying. Blow the tissue at your child. Let them blow a tissue at you. Have fun with it! Breathing is a big part of yoga and an excellent post-tantrum activity!

#### Poses from the Page

A great way to frame family yoga time is to use a beloved picture book. Because many of the traditional yoga postures are inspired by and resemble animals, books with animals will be your best bet. (*Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell and pretty much anything by Sandra Boynton or Eric Carle are great choices).

This literacy building activity is helpful for someone who has a basic familiarity with poses. If you are new to yoga, don't fret. *Yoga Journal*'s website has a terrific search tool for beginner poses. (Yogajournal.com).

Read the book to your child, and every time you see an animal or meet a new animal character, take that shape with your body. Let your animals talk! Bark in downward facing dog! Hiss in your cobra poses! Let your leaves blow in the breeze in tree pose!

#### 5-10 yr olds

Older kids want to be challenged in a playful way. Yoga is inherently non-competitive. There are no points to tally, no winners or losers. But what do you do when siblings start to show their natural competitive spirit? When you hear your child start to say, "I'm doing it better!" Try to find ways to reframe their urge to win by competing against themselves. Offer to set a timer to see how long your child can hold a pose. Write it down in a journal or on the calendar and try again next week or tomorrow to see if they can hold it longer or shorter.

#### **Crow Pose**

This traditional yoga posture is fabulous for building focus, balance, and strength. This arm balance takes practice (I will



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conquer you one day, Crow! I vow it!).

Start out in a squat position with your feet wider than your hips. Place your hands down in front of you about eight inches or so—enough so that when you bend your arms you make a little shelf with your elbows. Squeeze your arms with your legs. Start to tip forward. Pick up one foot and then the other.

Note: This pose is often harder for adults than it is for kids! It's okay if their feet stay on the floor. If you try to correct too much, your child will feel discouraged and lose interest. Let them find their poses in their own time.

#### Turtle on a Rock

In this partner pose, the parent comes into child's pose. The child will stand close to your body with their back towards you. The child will sit on your tush and slowly lie back on you. This should feel very nice for both of you!

#### **Yoga Family Moments**

Playing yoga together regularly allows a new language to develop, where our bodies can say what our words can't. When my daughter wants my attention (usually when I'm nursing the baby) she'll come into camel pose, a posture on your knees where you reach your arms back to touch your feet, allowing your head to lean back. She knows that this is the ultimate way to expose her "tickle spot," under her chin. When I take her up her sweet invitation and she falls apart in giggles, I laugh, too. That might be our family yoga practice for the day, as close to Zen as we're going to get. And as parents, we've got to take our Zen where and when we can.

Jessica teaches Postnatal/Baby Yoga classes to babies and toddlers on Fridays and Family Yoga to 2.5-6 year olds with grown-ups on Saturdays at Bend and Bloom in Park Slope.

#### 718.788.2624 Lois Abramchik, L.C.S.W. Psychotherapist

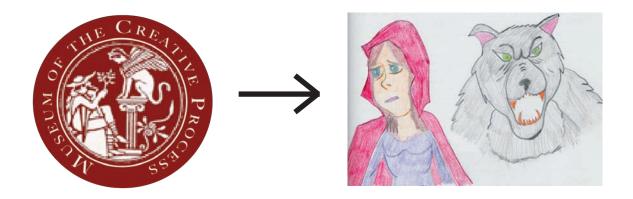
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