

# spot it

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

## Learn New Tricks

We've got some tips about fitness and food and relaxing for you to tackle. If we can do it, you can too!



*This rookie edits our business section.*

CHANGE  
IT'S GOOD.



# LEARN NEW TRICKS

IT'S JANUARY, THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN MAGAZINE EDITORS IMPORE PERFECTLY LOVELY READERS TO MAKE CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES. BUT WHO ARE WE TO DISH OUT ADVICE WITHOUT STEPPING UP TO SOME CHALLENGES OURSELVES? SO DO AS WE DO—IF YOU'RE STRESSED, IF YOUR DREAMS ARE UNFULFILLED, IF FISH MAKES YOU GO 'YUCK'...

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RANDAL FORD

# AS A KID, I WAS ALWAYS PICKED LAST THE GOAL? SCORE ONE FOR MY CONFIDENCE.

BY NOAH BUNN ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**L**IKE MOST little boys, my athletic career began at age 5. I stood on a shaded spot in our backyard, placed a tethered t-ball atop its stand, gripped my new bat, and swung with all my might. I made contact—with the tee, not the ball.

The day my athletic career began is also the day it ended, and with it went a piece of my pride.

So, 25 years later, I'm giving sports a second chance. On the far corner of Southern Methodist University's dew-soaked practice field, I watch a sea of football players cycle through fast-paced morning drills.

A week earlier I'd called Frank Gansz Jr., SMU's special-teams coach, to ask a favor. To reverse decades of self-doubt, I told him, "I need to learn to kick a field goal."

The veteran coach didn't blink. "We'll teach you in 20 minutes," he declared. "If you don't put it through the goal post, we'll move you in a little closer. If you still don't make it—well, that's what you'll have to write about."

When the whistle blows at 8:30, practice is over for most of the guys. But it's just starting for this rookie. Gansz leads me inside the school's 32,000-seat stadium. He and I have different ideas of what *lesson* means. I'm ready for a demonstration, a step-by-step guide. But Gansz insists there's not much to it: Place the ball, with its laces out, under a metal holder; take two paces back and two to the left; in one sweeping motion, wallop the thing with the top of your foot.

That's just what I do, and I kick the stuffing out of the metal. The ball wobbles away. My foot throbs.

"Well, it's your first time," says Gansz. So I give it another go. Two

steps back, two to the side, *whomp*. The ball takes flight this time, but I've hooked it far left and nowhere near my target.

"Well, you aren't wearing cleats," Gansz consoles.

Another kick, another dud. By now, the once confident coach has blamed my shoes, my blue jeans, and the wind. (For the record, I don't sense even the slightest breeze.) We both know this exercise isn't about unlocking the secrets of field-goal kicking so much as it is finding the confidence to put what I've learned to use. By attempt No. 6, I just want to spare Gansz the trouble of coming up with another generous excuse for my failure.

Two steps back, two to the side, kick. It's good! My mentor cheers as years of self-doubt sail through the uprights.

Gansz gave me more than a football lesson that day. Like every good coach, he taught me to quit living life on the sidelines and to start living it on the field.

## FITNESS TRICKS FOR YOU

Shape your future with these expert tips.

**1** "If lack of time is your excuse for not working out, try high-intensity interval training, or HIIT. Run, bike, or swim intensely for one minute, then go easy for one minute. Studies show that in 20 minutes, you can gain the same health, fitness, and weight-loss benefits as 90 minutes of less intense exercise."

—Gretchen Reynolds, *The New York Times* "Phys Ed" columnist and author of *The First 20 Minutes: Surprising Science Reveals How We Can Exercise Better, Train Smarter, Live Longer*

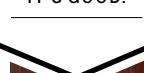
**2** "Fitness is not about how fabulous you look in a swimsuit for one week of the year; it's about your average health over a lifetime. So take a break! Going into a workout regimen knowing that you're going to take it easy for two weeks after three months of hard work is much better than getting so burned out that you walk away from it for two years."

—Andrew Wolf, exercise physiologist, Miraval Resort & Spa in Tucson, Arizona

**3** "People are obsessed with protein bars, but oftentimes they're heavily processed with sugar and mystery ingredients. For a healthier, equally portable option, pack your own snack. Try a low-carb tortilla wrap with veggies and hummus or turkey, or 30 pistachios and a Mini Babybel Light. These are great on the go, have fewer than 150 calories, and will give you a quick energy boost."

—Rachel Belller, registered dietitian and author of *Eat to Lose, Eat to Win*





BY STEFANIE PEPPING ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

## I'M HAVING A BABY GIRL! THE GOAL? LEARN TO SEW.

**T**HINK OF the perks! The savings on clothing. The ability to tailor any garment like a pro. The freedom to design my own wardrobe. I'm expecting my first bambina in March, and the urge to learn how to sew has suddenly gained even greater significance.

Step 1: Hit Hobby Lobby, where I pick out a pattern for an adorable onesie, marked (theoretically) "easy." Step 2: Call a dear friend who is a mother and a craft wiz, promise refreshments in return for her help, and hold my breath. Thankfully, she agrees.

When I first dreamed of exploring my inner Martha Stewart, I had no idea how tricky it would be. There are uncommon vocabulary words, secret tricks, odd supplies,

impossibly tiny folds, and curved seams. The notion that I would be able to figure out the pattern? *Fuhgettaboutit.* I was certain I'd emerge from the night with the most beautiful onesie for my little girl, but when we were two hours in and still working on the first seam I accepted the inevitable: wandering stitches and one puckered sleeve. Asymmetry is all the rage, right? She'll pull it off fine.

What I learned from diving into this project applies perfectly to motherhood, I think. I may have lofty expectations of what a divine little lady my baby will be, and how she'll one day end global warming and find a natural cure for cancer. But no matter who she is or how she shapes the fabric of her life, I will love her all the same.



THANKS TO THE LOCATIONS: CEDARS SOCIAL; NYLO HOTEL SOUTH SIDE (OPENER); HIGHLAND PARK HIGH SCHOOL (PREVIOUS PAGE, COVER)

### CHILL-OUT TRICKS FOR YOU

Go ahead, be a Zen zealot. You deserve it.

**1** "When in doubt, smell grapefruit. The scent has been shown to bring renewed confidence, improve memory, and aid concentration."

—Nick McKay, CEO of home fragrance company EnviroScent

**2** "Set an alert on your phone that reminds you to stop what you're doing, breathe deeply, and center yourself. If you rely on a calendar, schedule three-minute meetings with yourself in the morning and afternoon. This is especially helpful when you know you're going to have a busy or stressful day."

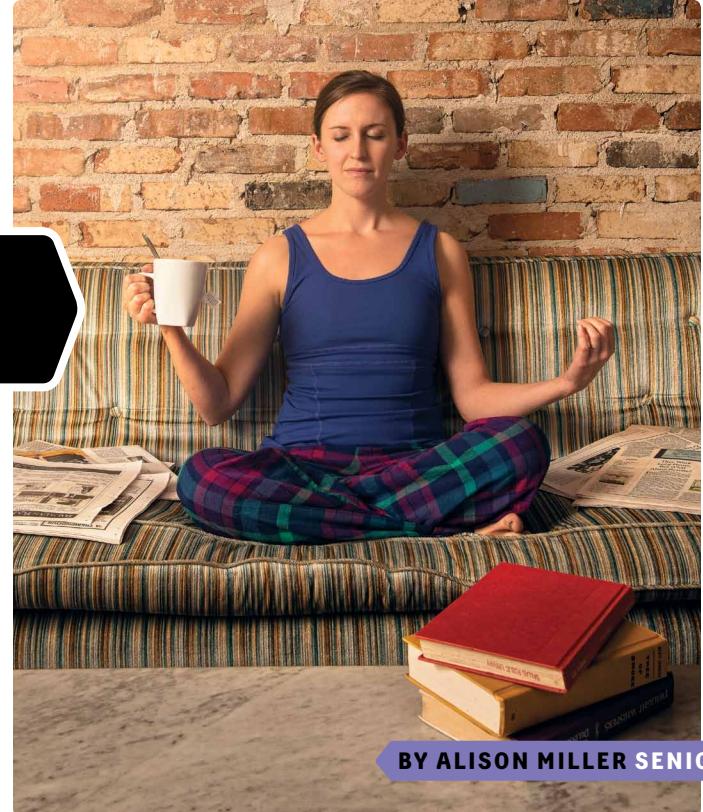
—Nina Smiley, Ph.D., co-author of *The Three Minute Meditator* and leader of mindfulness workshops at Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York

**3** "Rise early and take notes. Sometimes, when my mind is spinning, I get out of bed early and write down everything that is rumbling through my brain. I find it calming to see my so-called worries listed in my notebook."

—Monica Nassif, founder of luxury sleep- and loungewear brand Sophia Graydon

**4** "Gray, white, and lavender are the cleanest, most soothing colors. Our brain relaxes when it's not under stimulation, so muted, washed-out tones keep it from turning into high gear."

—James DeSantis, designer and stylist for HGTV's *Cousins on Call*



BY ALISON MILLER SENIOR EDITOR

## FOR ME, IT'S GO-GO-GO THE GOAL? OMMMMMM

DON'T LOOK forward to Saturdays on the couch. In fact, I fear them. Rare is the weekend (or weekday) that

I don't have a social outing arranged or a to-do list to take on. But fueled by a curiosity about whether I could ever be content in solitude, I found myself in suburban Dallas, in the middle of a work day, at the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Meditation Center, where Sister Ranjan Inamdar guides me through a one-on-one lesson in cloistered inner-tainment.

The following morning, a Saturday, I settle into the lounge chair on my back porch, close my eyes, and repeat those words to myself: *I am a light, I am a peaceful soul.* More often than not, my 75-pound mutt, Scout, plops onto my lap. He's happy for my undivided attention. And I've finally found the thing to keep me grounded.

as Sister Ranjan had instructed. When they come out, they are to the tune of the Simon & Garfunkel lyric "I am a rock, I am an island." I know this is not what she had intended, but it is a start, and it makes me smile. While my husband busily runs the errands I typically tend to, I shift my quiet focus and read 100 pages of a new novel. As the hours pass and I stick to doing next to nothing, my restlessness—usually so inescapable—begins to wear off. By the end of the day, I have come to deeply appreciate my kingdom of quietude.

I'm still the busybody I always was. But on some mornings, when I remind myself that it's good for me, I sit in the lotus position and repeat those words to myself: *I am a light, I am a peaceful soul.* More often than not, my 75-pound mutt, Scout, plops onto my lap. He's happy for my undivided attention. And I've finally found the thing to keep me grounded.



# I HAVE A RIDICULOUSLY PICKY PALATE

## THE GOAL? FEAST ON SOMETHING FISHY.

BY AUSTIN W. G. MORTON ASSISTANT EDITOR

I'D LOVE TO tell you that, at the age of 26, I have overcome the food phobias of my youth, but I have not. My adult diet is made up of two food groups: chicken and tacos. Vegetables? Blech. Pork? Meh. Despite growing up on the East Coast, I loathe seafood, with the exception of shrimp—if it's peeled. I tried my first steak at 19; my first piece of bacon at 22. I don't take risks. I don't branch out. And I've been fine with that.

My boyfriend and exasperated dinner companion, Thomas, is not so fine with that. In an effort to step into the role of omnivorous adult—and allow Thomas the pleasure of eating at a seafood place more than once a year—I promised to look my fears in the mouth and open wide. I was terrified.

It doesn't take long to determine which fishy delicacy would test my will and prove the hardest to

swallow. The mere thought of a raw oyster's slimy consistency causes me to flush and my stomach to turn. Still, I make a date for Thomas and myself at Boulevardier, a newly opened French bistro in Dallas' Oak Cliff neighborhood that is winning acclaim for its well-appointed raw bar.

Chris Rubel, the restaurant's chief shucker and our host for the evening, flashes a knowing smile as we pull up barstools in front of him. He is expecting us, and after brief introductions he goes to work, skillfully prying and popping each specimen to create an artful array of about a dozen half shells. Dinner is served.

Cautiously, I raise the first oyster, a Gulf varietal, to my lips and proceed to stare it down. *You can do this*, I tell myself. *Don't embarrass yourself*. Perhaps I already have by burying that first mollusk between a saltine and a mountain of cocktail sauce. Chris offers encouragement: "Give it a couple

chews to get the texture, then let it ride on back."

And ride on back it does. To my astonishment, I don't gag. Then again, all I really taste is the salty cracker and the cocktail sauce.

Hello, false confidence! Feeling like a pro, I grab another and throw it back, sans accoutrements, per Chris' suggestion. The texture is as expected—firm yet gooey—but the taste is an unwelcome surprise. Have I just ingested a mouthful of seawater and the grit of the ocean floor with it?

Only afterward am I informed of a few simple truths:

1. Oysters taste like where they come from. So that hint of high tide? Totally legit.

2. They're alive up to the very moment that you eat them. Funny, I didn't hear any screaming.

3. No one eats Gulf oysters straight. No one.

As we polish off the plate, I look at Thomas, and a Cheshire grin crosses his face. Half proud, half nauseated, but entirely on my way to a brave new world, I smile back—and drain my champagne.

## KITCHEN TRICKS FOR YOU Who's the next Top Chef? You are.

**1** "To avoid eye irritation, chop onions near an open flame. The heat will burn off the gaseous sulfur compounds that onions release into the air. A gas burner works best. If you don't have one, light a candle near your chopping board instead."

—Martha Stewart,  
homemaker extraordinaire

**2** "Make your own butter spread by using a blender to combine two sticks of softened salted butter with ½ cup of canola or extra-light olive oil. This all-natural blend tastes like butter but is lower in saturated fats and higher in heart-healthy monounsaturated fats. And, best of all, it's spreadable straight out of the fridge."

—Monica Reinagel, host of the Nutrition Diva podcast on QuickandDirtyTips.com

**3** "When using a charcoal grill, bank two-thirds of the hot coals in a thick layer on one side and rake the rest evenly on the other side. This creates two heat zones. You can adjust the cooking temperature by moving the food around on the grate."

—Charles Phan, chef/owner of The Slanted Door in San Francisco and author of Vietnamese Home Cooking