

LIFE & Style

VIRGIN ISLANDS

OUR LIFE - OUR STYLE

MAGAZINE

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Beauty & Brains
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THE COVER

Anika M.
Christopher
MISS BVI 2023

Photo by Jerome Morton



THE BIG PICTURE

MISS BRITISH
VIRGIN
ISLANDS 2023

ANIKA
CHRISTOPHER





National Bank
The Virgin Islands

THE
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”

*I'm no beauty queen,
I'm just beautiful me.*
Selena Gomez



Beauty & Brain Under the Crown

“There will be moments in your life that seem surreal, like a dream. There will be experiences that you can never truly put into words. That was the experience I had when I was crowned.” Miss Anika M Christopher reflects on being crowned Miss BVI 2023 on Sunday, 6th August 2023 in front of a packed Multi-Purpose Sports Complex and thousands more watching live and on radio.

BeYond BeauTi sat down with Anika post pageant to learn about her journey to the crown, lessons learnt and how she intends to impact the Territory during her reign and beyond. A look into the sensitive side of pageantry, through the lenses of a beauty queen.

BB: Getting to the crown is quite a journey, share with our readers how you prepared.

MBVI: The road to the crown is indeed a journey. From modeling practice to etiquette classes, the preparation involved numerous training sessions and many long hours. There were even many times where I practiced during the day and straight into

the night.

BB: As you look back over your life, what would you say helped you gain the confidence to enter pageantry?

MBVI: I would definitely say it's my general love for the stage and performance, which requires a great amount of confidence, that pushed me in this direction. My confidence also grew from the first pageant I ever competed in when I was 13.

BB: Is this your first pageant? If no, what other pageants did you participate in and how has the experience shape you?

MBVI: Miss BVI was my third pageant.

I previously competed in Miss World BVI in 2018 and Mr. & Miss BFEC in 2015. The experiences I've had with those competitions taught me the value of losing and how losing is just as important as winning. I learned that losing provides an opportunity for personal growth and progress. It allows you to assess your weaknesses, improve and come back even stronger. To have lost something and tried again is a true testament to someone's resilience and strength.

BB: What have you learned most about yourself from the Miss BVI pageant experience?

MBVI: I learned that I am much more resilient than I give myself credit for. Despite all the challenges, I was able to overcome them all.

BB: Miss BVI is the most respected pageant in the Territory, what was your overall experience throughout the entire process?

MBVI: My experience was both exciting and challenging. As you rightfully said, it is the most prestigious pageant title one can win in the territory and so that comes with a tremendous amount of pressure. However, I embraced the challenge of competing because I knew it would be worthwhile. With

Beyond Beauti

by Claudia Hodge

Photos by Jerome Morton



Miss BVI 2023 - Anika M. Christopher
Photo by Jerome Morton



Photo by Jerome Morton

this experience, I was able to meet many incredible people, forge new relationships and build my network.

BB: Tell us about your platform, why is it important to you and how do you intend to use your title to ensure your message is heard throughout the territory?

MBVI: My platform is climate change education. After witnessing the devastating impact of the storms of 2017, I became increasingly passionate about climate action because I recognised the very real threat that climate change has on our natural environment. With the title of Miss BVI, I intend to use this platform to engage both our young children in the school system and the general public.

BB: Dispel the myths of pageantry and tell our readers what, according to you, is the most important part of a beauty pageant?

MBVI: For me, the most important part of any beauty pageant is you. That's it, you. As simple as it seems, I find that too many times people enter pageants and allow the negative opinions of others to shape them. Pageantry is meant to be a tool for personal development and an opportunity to utilise one's own ideas, talents, and abilities to make a positive difference. If we give too much credence to negativity, we will abandon our true selves as a result.

BB: Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

MBVI: I see myself continuing to be an advocate for climate change and making both a measurable and meaningful contribution to shaping a more sustainable future for our beautiful Virgin Islands

Wearing the prestigious crown, Miss BVI Anika Christopher plans to engage the public, residents and visitors in her ongoing 5 part mini documentary series called, "We Sea Change" that documents the impact of climate change on our communities. She looks forward to engaging with primary and secondary school students during her visitations, as she share and educate them on climate change.



Photo by Jerome Morton



Photo by John Black



Photo by John Black

Miss BVI Anika Christopher offers these parting words to aspiring future Miss BVI contestants, "Often times, we allow fear and self-doubt to deter us from realising our dreams. To the young ladies who will one day consider competing for Miss BVI, my simple advice is to push past that fear and go for it. You will be surprised by what you can accomplish."

Don't miss the opportunity to participate, support and follow her journey. Follow the Miss BVI social media pages (FB, Instagram and Tic Tok) for updates and events, including fundraising initiatives to raise funds for a climate action project.

To be featured email us at beyondbeautivi@gmail.com



Photo by Jerome Morton



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Beauty & Wellness

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ONE PAGEANT, THREE POWERFUL PLATFORMS

Purpose filled Women in Pageantry Making a Difference

By: Anika M. Christopher

When someone hears the word “pageant”, typically images of women up on stage with glistening gowns, beautifully made faces, hair perfectly styled and of course the famous crown comes to mind. However, the true beauty behind beauty pageants is that they provide a platform for women to utilize their talents to advocate for important societal causes and inspire others to take action and live their best lives. The Mrs. British Virgin Islands pageant is one notable example. It has been one of the territory’s most recognizable names involved in charitable and community service endeavors that has transformed the lives of thousands of women. The Mrs. British Virgin Islands is an annual themed event and the major fundraiser for the WINBVI organization to help women in need. “WINBVI provide resources for women who need empowerment and reform from traumatic and abusive situations... it’s aim is to preserve the well being of women and children,” Alicia Green, Director and Founder of WINBVI told us.

The cohort of Queens represents three categories of women. There is Mrs. British Virgin Islands for women aged 27-45, Mrs. British Virgin Islands Curve’ for women size 12 to 18 and Mrs. British Virgin Islands Classique for women aged 45 and older. These women are afforded the opportunity to represent the organization and the territory on the international stage; an experienced a lifetime in a celebration of beauty, culture and charity for women globally. “We all believe that

empowered women, empower nations and empower the globe,” Alicia added. This year, three women have been using the Mrs. British Virgin Islands platform to make a significant difference in the lives of women by bringing a variety of passions to center stage. We sat down with these powerful women to find out exactly how they are using their crowns to advance women’s empowerment.



Alicia Green, Director and Founder of WINBVI

Know, Fix, Win and Live – Mrs. British Virgin Islands

Dr. Arlene Penn

Spurred by her own cervical cancer survival story, Dr. Arlene Penn has been using her reign to educate, motivate, and actively support women to protect their health. Through cervical cancer public awareness programmes, speaking engagements along with several fundraising campaigns, Dr. Penn was privileged to raise financial resources to provide more than 200 women in the Virgin Islands with the opportunity to receive pap smear screenings and diagnostic testing. Dr. Penn's story and commitment to cervical cancer awareness has been so inspiring and far reaching. Her interaction on the world stage attracted an international donor to sponsor one deserving woman in need, from the Virgin Islands, the opportunity to attend the W.I.N Foundation's Discover the Divine Conference in Greece this September. The "Discover the Divine Conference" is a women's seminar founded by Dr. Tracy Kemble where women discover how to be their best selves.

In June of this year, Dr. Penn took her advocacy to greater heights by competing in the Mrs. Globe pageant in California. Not only did she place first runner-up for the People's Choice Award but Dr. Penn also won the Voice of WIN award for her dedication to her platform and strong advocacy for women to reclaim themselves. While there, Dr. Penn shared her platform with every candidate present at the pageant, and where English was not the first language, there was an interpreter. She even turned to the power of music to help engage others with her message and wrote an original song called "Self Love". Through her musical talent, the international stage became her platform for change. When she burst into song, women at the feminine BOSS Luncheon rose to their feet, cheered and circled her as she performed. She demonstrated true commitment to the cause and represented women in the BVI and across the globe, with her strong message to know, fix, live and WIN.



See it, Speak it, Stop it – Mrs. British Virgin Islands

Classique Roslyn Gilbert

Mrs. Roslyn Gilbert's child abuse prevention platform, See It, Speak It, Stop it, stemmed from the challenges faced in her childhood. "My personal experience as a child, growing up as an angry young adult, and now seeing how prevalent this is affecting our young generation, has prompted me to come forward," Roslyn shared. From her own experience and that of others, she realized that many children in abusive situations often find it difficult to communicate or express their emotions. They are often threatened with frightening consequences if they tell anyone. "Sometimes you don't know how to express yourself or you may be afraid to because you are a child," Roslyn added. She knew that she needed to find a way to support children in a way that would give them the confidence to speak up. With that, Roslyn started planning ways to create community outreach events that centered on educating children in ways that were fun and engaging. On Saturday February 11, 2023, Roslyn hosted her first edition of "Sip & Paint Breakfast Morning" which saw 30 children ages 5-12 years old in attendance. The children participated in presentations by Mr. Kendell Bobb of the Royal Virgin Islands Police on the different types of abuse and the role the police department plays in assisting families. Dr. Albert Thompkins also presented information related to child abuse. Through this event, Roslyn was able to provide children of the Virgin Islands with a safe space where they can express their feelings creatively, without having to use words.

She participated in the Mrs. Classique Globe pageant in California in 2022 and was another strong advocate among the women speaking about her platform, and represented women traumatized from this type of situation.



Being a Single Mother – Mrs. British Virgin Islands

Curve, Kimberly Richards

An influential mother to Kmoyah age 18, Kymoi age 16, and Klah age 10 going on 25 years old, Kimberly Richards has been using her platform to support single mothers. “I’ve experienced it firsthand. I am seeing other women go through what I went through,” Kimberly explained as she gave her reason for choosing this platform. During her reign, Kimberly shared her own journey of single motherhood with other women, provided encouragement and shared useful tips on how to support single mothers in the territory. Kimberly also firmly believes in the saying that “it takes a village to raise a child” and with that, continuously encourages people to donate any used items to charity to help families in need. “I don’t like to throw away anything,” Kimberly shared. Instead, she puts them aside and finds someone in need. She has worked along with organizations like Red Cross and the Family Support Network who help to provide the needed essentials and equipment to mothers and families who are unable to provide these items for themselves. She has been a strong advocate through WINBVI and has assisted with identifying resources for single mothers which includes the single parenting programme of WINBVI.

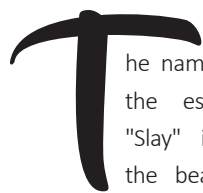
Kimberly was 1st runner up at the Mrs. Curve’ Globe pageant in Palm Springs California.





Discover the transformative power of makeup with *Slay by Kay Glam Artistry*

Makeup artistry has become an indispensable part of the beauty industry, with skilled professionals creating transformative looks. One such talented artist is Kaywanna Pope, the founder of Slay by Kay Glam Artistry. VI Life&Style magazine got a chance to explore various aspects of her career and business, including marketing strategies, creative inspiration, work specialization, rewards and challenges, and advice for aspiring makeup artists.



he name "Slay by Kay" captures the essence of Kay's work. "Slay" is a common term in the beauty industry, connoting impeccable expertise, while "Kay" represents Kay's personal touch. Combined, the name embodies her commitment to delivering exceptional results, fostering a sense of empowerment and confidence in her clients. This catchy name also enables effective brand recognition and establishes a strong presence in the competitive market.

Kay's journey as a professional makeup artist is still relatively new, spanning close to 3 years. Her experience has been pivotal in honing her skills, understanding diverse beauty needs, and adapting to changing trends within the industry. This extensive expertise allows Kay to offer tailored services and adapt to the unique requirements of each client.

Kay's passion for makeup artistry was fueled by her fascination with colours, textures, and the limitless possibilities for self-expression. She saw makeup as an empowering medium, capable of highlighting individuality and inner beauty. This realization inspired her to pursue a career where she could combine her artistic talents with the desire to enhance people's self-confidence.

What sets Slay by Kay Glam Artistry apart from other makeup artists is the ability to create flawless looks tailored to everyone's individual features and personality. Kay understands that makeup should amplify one's natural beauty, rather than mask it. Her attention to detail, creativity, and adeptness at accommodating various styles makes her work truly exceptional.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of this career is witnessing the positive impact that my work has on each and every one of my clients. I experience genuine joy when I witness the exude of newfound confidence, embracing their unique features with pride. Additionally, the ability to be a part of special

events in clients' lives, such as weddings or celebrations, adds an element of fulfillment to my work." Kay explained.

As with any profession, makeup artistry also presents its own set of challenges. Staying up to date with emerging trends, continuously improving techniques, and managing a demanding schedule can be challenging. Additionally, the pressure to meet clients' expectations and deliver flawless results requires constant dedication, adaptability, and resilience.

Kay is well-versed in working with all skin types and values inclusivity. By accommodating diverse skin tones and textures, she ensures that all her clients feel represented and catered to. This versatility allows her to provide services to a wider range of individuals, celebrating beauty in all its forms.

Even though Slay by Kay is Kay's Part-time venture, Kay's passion for makeup artistry and commitment to building her brand as an entrepreneur has led to dedicated focus and constant innovation. "I try my best to dedicate most of my time and effort into my craft in order to provide the highest quality service and establish myself as a reputable professional in the industry." She explained.

Kay recognizes that the most important aspect of being a successful makeup artist lies in the ability to listen to clients and understand their unique preferences. Building strong relationships and trust is crucial in creating a comfortable environment that fosters creativity and ultimately ensures the clients' satisfaction with the final result. Additionally, keeping up with industry trends and continuing education plays a vital role in continuously offering fresh and innovative solutions.

"I believe in providing transparent and competitive pricing for my clients. The pricing structure considers factors such as the complexity of the desired look, the occasion, and any additional services required. By offering fair and flexible options, I aim to make my services accessible to a wide range of

individuals." Kay said.

As a makeup artist, Kay provides a comprehensive range of services, including bridal and special event makeup, editorial and fashion shoots, makeup lessons, and personalized consultations. By catering to a diverse clientele and offering tailored services, she remains versatile and ensures that her artistic talent can flourish in various domains.

Kay emphasises that being a successful makeup artist requires continuous learning, both in technique and in business skills. Building a strong network, investing in high-quality products, and maintaining professionalism are keys to creating a reputable brand. Additionally, a positive attitude, adaptability, and a strong work ethic are vital in overcoming challenges and achieving long-term success.

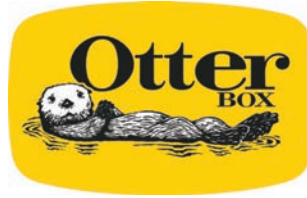
When asked what advice she has for young entrepreneurs venturing into the BVI makeup industry, Kay said, "Sticking to your passion and continuously refining your craft. Embrace opportunities for mentorship, attend industry events, and network with fellow professionals. By staying dedicated, patient, and focused on personal growth, aspiring makeup artists can carve their own path to success."

To book with Slay by Kay, interested individuals can contact her through various platforms, including social media accounts such as Facebook at "Slaybykay", Instagram at "Slay by Kay 2020" or by reaching out directly through phone or Whatsapp at (284)345-5386. Kay ensures a responsive and personalised approach, allowing potential clients to discuss their requirements and book their services efficiently.

In closing Kay is successfully building her brand, Slay by Kay, through artistic talent, commitment to customer satisfaction, and entrepreneurial vision. Her career as a makeup artist continues to thrive, inspiring others to embrace their uniqueness and discover the transformative power of makeup artistry.

TRÈFLE

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS



The evolution of a brand and its accessories

Within the Caribbean lies many mountains of talent seen and unseen and our creative diaspora spans far and wide from the Southern tip of Guyana to the Northern tip of The Bahamas. From Art to Music, Photography to Culinary, Dance and even Fashion, the evolution of Caribbean brands continues to grow in numbers that have spilled over into international waters and beyond.



Trèfle is one of many highly recognized Caribbean businesses as a swim, resortwear, home furnishings and accessory brand that caters to a worldwide audience. Founder and designer Kristin Frazer is now in her 15th year as an entrepreneur and has acquired a unique list of credits within her portfolio. From influencers to celebrity placements, music videos, magazine and store placements, runway shows and more, Kristin has been able to diversify her talents through her print concept designs in all areas of her brand and also the world of accessories.

"Having multiple labels under the Trèfle brand isn't by default for me. I created my

business plan in 2008 and have only pivoted when needed to ensure that my core values of "transparency, accountability, inclusivity, quality, and impact" remain at the top of my overall goals. Fashion and the multiple layers of opportunity that it presents can really have a positive or skewed impact on your life. I graduated from college in 2006 and the world and how things were done are no longer what is needed in terms of what I was taught... so staying abreast of what's happening and aligning yourself and your core values to be able to remain consistent is key", says Kristin.

In painting a picture of what the evolution of Trèfle looks like, we've seen the introduction to swimwear for women, men, and children- all of which were implemented at different timelines within the brand. This followed

with the introduction to accessories and its final addition of a home collection in 2016. With these labels under her belt, Kristin has navigated her path by adjusting the needle of life to cater to the areas that allow for her to continue to grow the business.

Highlighting some of the key areas for the brand, accessories, and the role that they play for Trèfle has been both impressive and rewarding. Trèfle began including accessories for the wholesale and retail market in 2012 and slowly built a following of pieces to include key chains, leather passport covers and luggage tags, hand-bags, wristlets, journals and our favorite, cell phone cases.

"In my line of business and in almost any business, there are two key factors that contribute and more-so are of importance



Kristin Frazer

within my industry. These are “introductions” and “impact”. These two words assist in the growth of your business and are also some of the ingredients needed along with your business plan model. My accessories have been classic staples for my business and my most successful accessory to date are my Otterbox X Trèfle phone cases. My story of getting such an opportunity started with introduction and impact in 2016. I’ve been honoured to have had a great experience with a US company that is recognized worldwide for the work and products that they produce. I express my Otterbox story to others that may want to know or ask because of the organic way in which my partnership with them came about and I want others to know that sometimes, you don’t have to do the work alone. There are and will be people that see your work or may have heard your story and sometimes, that is enough,” says Kristin.

OtterBox was founded in 1998 by Curt Richardson where he created the first OtterBox waterproof case in his garage in the early '90s. This waterproof box case was similar to an Otter’s fur and that product’s benefit and feature inspired Curt’s wife, Nancy Richardson, to create the name OtterBox. Otterbox is a label under Otter Products that enables human connection in our increasingly mobile world and some of their core values include being dedicated to quality, durability, and purposeful innovation.

“From small moments to life-changing ones, OtterBox keeps you in sync with every moment, every day, so you can stay connected to what gives those days meaning. After all, connections are more

than things we make, they make us who we are. Connection matters more than ever — across miles, among generations and around the globe.” (otterbox.com)

In April of 2017, Kristin officially launched two phone cases with Otterbox named Caribbean Hues and Beach Lines for the iPhone 7/8 and 7+/8+ under this mega US brand. Within the first few weeks, Frazer had the #1 selling cases on otterbox.com and her print gained traction and attention from various talk shows like *The Real*, *The View* and *the Chew*, Verizon Stores and many consumers that shopped the cases online from around the world. Otterbox is known to have partnerships with various artists and companies and Kristin became the first Caribbean designer to partner with and launch these beautiful cases from 2017 to 2019.

In the summer of 2018, Kristin created a third print with the company for release called Anegada for the iPhone X as well as the Samsung 9 and 9+. This case came shortly after the category 5 hurricanes Irma and Maria and would assist Kristin in her start to rebuild the brand.

“If you had to ask me what word I would

use to describe my relationship and overall experience with Otterbox and the entire team, that word would be phenomenal. I learned so much and experienced things that I have been able to not only cherish but incorporate in my business model because this is all a part of my story. Phone cases and accessories in general generate billions of dollars and having a great strategy and story for marketing and sales can carry you a long way”, says Kristin.

Now in her 15th year, Kristin is once again working with Otterbox with two new cases called Paradise and Cruller. These cases are available for iPhone styles only starting from the iPhone 12 and above. Otterbox is also celebrating their 25th anniversary and continues to promote great products, great partnerships, and great give-backs through their NPO OtterCares. “We believe one young and inspired mind can change the world. The OtterCares Foundation inspires students to become entrepreneurs and philanthropists who create lasting and impactful change in their communities.”(Ottercares.org)

These cases are available at Clover’s and Latitude 18 located in Road Town, Tortola and are also available online at www.trefledesigns.com and www.otterbox.com.

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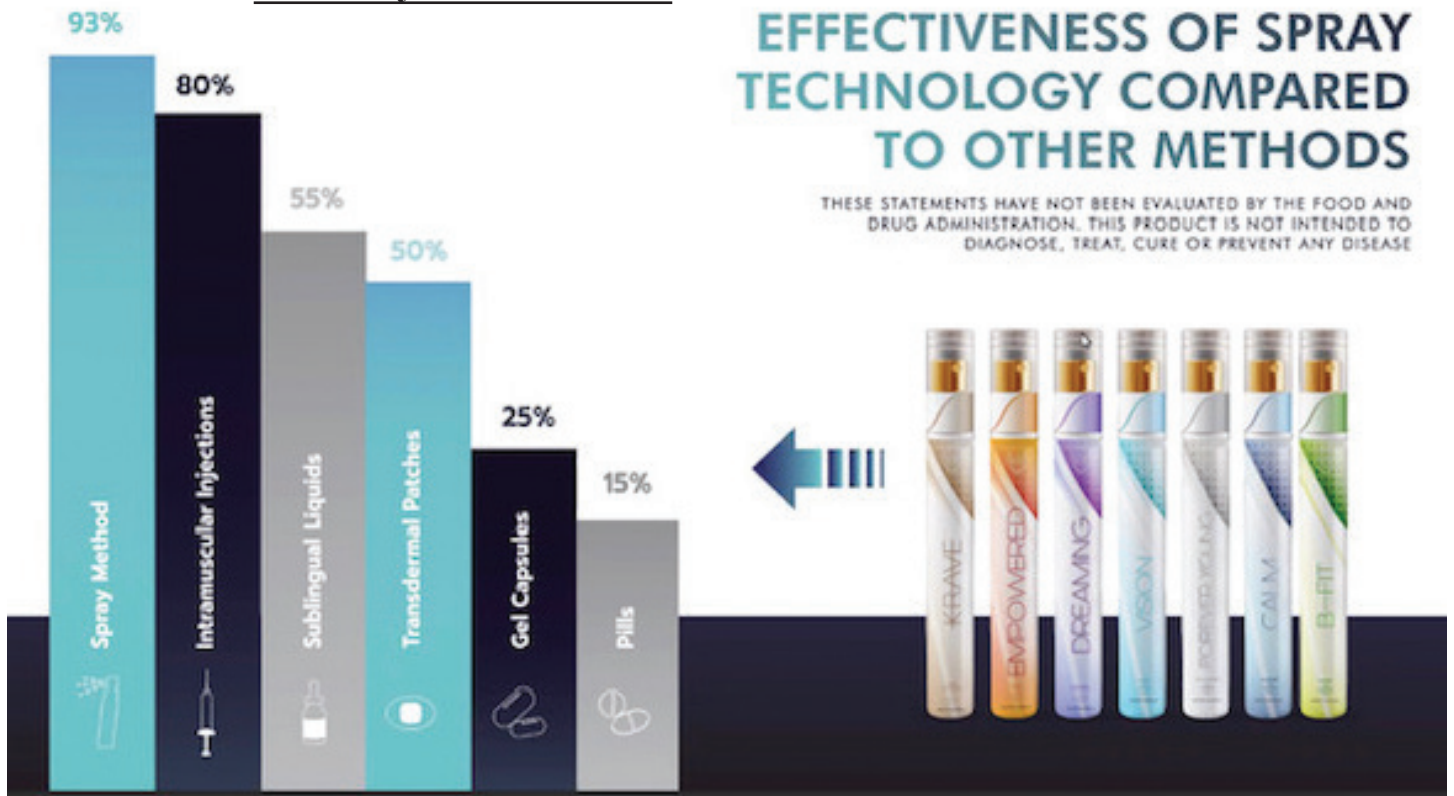
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Dr. Robin Tattersall, a true pioneer in the field, established the Bougainvillea clinic in the British Virgin Islands. With an illustrious career spanning over four decades, Dr. Tattersall kept the Bougainvillea Clinic at the forefront of plastic surgery in the islands. As a skilled plastic surgeon, he helped countless individuals enhance their appearance, rebuild their self-esteem, and regain their quality of life.

Dr. Tattersall's expertise in Plastic and Reconstructive surgery was not only

recognized locally but also on an international scale. Patients from all corners of the world sought his unparalleled skills, trusting in his commitment to excellence and patient-centric approach. His meticulous attention to detail and passion for creating natural-looking results set the standard for the artistry of plastic surgery. Patients have trusted him, knowing they were in the hands of a true master of his craft.

Did you know the British Virgin Islands has hosted International educational symposiums on Plastic Surgery and has welcomed experts to share and discuss their knowledge for

many years? Dr. Harris was a part of these symposiums, and has been coming to the British Virgin Islands ever since. This history sets the BVI apart from all other destinations in the Caribbean for quality, safety and excellence in Plastic Surgery.

While Dr. Tattersall has since retired, his legacy lives on at Bougainvillea Clinic under the new management of Dr. Heskith & Jean Vanterpool and the exceptional team of professionals. Continuing the tradition of excellence, and building upon this prestigious heritage, Dr. Leonard Harris stepped into the role of leading



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L -R: Dr. Robin Tattersall, Dr. Leonard Harris.



Bougainvillea Clinic into the future of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. With a shared vision for delivering exceptional results and an unwavering commitment to patient care, Dr. Harris brings his expertise and innovation to every procedure he performs.

Dr. Harris has been practicing plastic surgery for over 25 years in Canada. He was the former head of Plastic Surgery in Burlington, Ontario and runs his own private surgical facility. He is an esteemed member of various professional organizations, teaches Plastic Surgery to colleagues, consults with licensing and accreditation organizations, and has gained international recognition for his contributions to the field of plastic surgery. He combines his extensive knowledge with the latest advancements in surgical techniques to offer an array of transformative procedures, tailored to meet the unique needs and desires of each patient. With his exceptional skills and passion for transforming lives, Dr. Harris is dedicated to upholding the highest standards set by his predecessor.

At the Bougainvillea Clinic, we understand that each person's journey towards self-

confidence and rejuvenation is unique. That's why we offer a comprehensive range of procedures, from facial rejuvenation to body contouring, breast surgery to tummy tucks. Dr. Harris will work closely with you to develop a personalized treatment plan, ensuring your goals are met and your expectations exceeded. Dr. Harris also performs reconstructive procedures for both skin and breast cancers.

Beyond surgical procedures, the Bougainvillea Clinic also provides a wide range of non-surgical treatments, including injectables and skin rejuvenation procedures. Our experienced team of medical professionals is dedicated to helping you achieve radiant, youthful skin and a refreshed appearance with, and without, the need for surgery.

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the recovery process, our dedicated team of compassionate professionals will be by your side, offering guidance, answering your questions, and ensuring your comfort every step of the way. With us, you can rest assured that you are in the hands of experts who are dedicated to delivering exceptional results with the utmost care and compassion.

When it comes to plastic surgery, experience matters. But don't just take our word for it – our satisfied patients are a testament to the excellence of Bougainvillea Clinic.

With our rich heritage and the expertise of Dr. Leonard Harris, the Bougainvillea Clinic stands at the forefront of the industry in the British Virgin Islands. We invite you to experience the difference for yourself and discover the confidence and radiance that awaits you.

Book your consultation at Bougainvillea Clinic today and embark on a journey towards a more beautiful you. Rediscover your confidence, unleash your inner beauty, and let Bougainvillea Clinic be your trusted partner in your transformative plastic surgery experience.



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Navigating Suicidal Ideation

By Keniel Anderson

Life gets tough sometimes with the global economy on the brink of collapse, an increase in the cost of living, climate change, one catastrophe after another, along with a myriad of issues. Couple all these things with mental health struggles and you have the perfect recipe for suicidal ideation, and in some extreme cases suicidal attempts.

I must say, one cannot blame someone tired of experiencing the same things over and over. However, the impact suicide has on your life and those around you is immense and can leave a gaping hole that may never be fixed. Every year, May is observed as Mental Health Awareness Month, a week in June is dedicated to Men's Mental Health Awareness and a week in September is dedicated to Suicide Prevention. Suicide is a very personal thing and feelings of isolation are not so easily dampened. When navigating the dark and dangerous road of suicidal thoughts here are a few suggestions:

Don't decide today!

You don't need to act on your thoughts immediately. Instead, you can try and focus on taking things one step at a time and getting through the day ahead.

Get Professional Support!

In recent years, the stigmatization around mental health is slowly fading and

consequently, there are a lot of therapists, psychologists and psychiatrists that are easily accessible and affordable. If you are not comfortable with a local therapist, there is always the option to do counselling online and anonymously.

Talk to other people.

Sometimes, all you may need is a listening ear and someone to comfort you. It might be helpful to talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling. However, remember to be patient. Your friends and family may want to help but might not know how to at that moment.

Develop a Crisis Plan.

If having suicidal thoughts is something you are constantly struggling with, developing a crisis plan might come in handy. A crisis plan is a list of things that you can do to help when you are having suicidal ideation as well as emergency contacts in case things get out of control.

Be around other people.

For some people, being around others helps to reduce anxiety and feelings of loneliness. You can meet friends or family to hang out, even if it is a mundane activity. Being around people can help to keep you safe, even if they don't know how you're feeling.

Be mindful of what triggers you.

Triggers are things that might make you feel worse. Different people have different triggers. If you can understand your trigger, then it can help you to be more in control of your feelings or stress levels. You can also easily avoid things, places or people that may trigger you.

Minimize the use of drugs and alcohol

Alcohol affects the parts of your brain that controls judgement, concentration, behaviour and emotions. If you are feeling low, drinking might cause suicidal thoughts or make them worse.

Drugs affect the way you think and feel. You may be more likely to take your own life if you take illegal drugs.

Go to a safe place/space.

You can go to a place/space where you feel safe. Below is an example of places you could try.

- Your bedroom
- Friend or family member's house
- The religious or spiritual centre
- Library
- Peer support group

Stay away from things you could use to harm yourself, such as razor blades or pills.

Ground yourself.

When you are feeling suicidal, it can be helpful to do some exercises to calm your nervous system. Especially if you are feeling panicked, worried, or overwhelmed by your thoughts and feelings.

Vision. Focus your attention on something beautiful or comforting.

Hearing. Listen to a favourite song, sit in nature, and listen to the sounds, or sing.

Smell. Notice smells around you or find something you like the smell of.

Taste. Find something to taste and do it slowly and mindfully.

Touch. Stroke or feel something comforting.

Distract yourself.

You might feel it is impossible not to focus on your suicidal thoughts or why you feel that way. If you focus on your thoughts, it might make them feel stronger and harder to cope with. So, you can try doing things that distract you. Think about what you enjoy doing.

- Read a book or magazine.
- Watch a film or TV.
- Draw or paint.
- Listen to music.
- Do some gardening.
- Exercise. Walk, run, swim, or whatever you enjoy.
- Play video games or other games or puzzles you enjoy.

Try to reframe your thoughts.

You can make a list of all the positive things about yourself and your life. It might be hard to think of these things right now, but it might help.

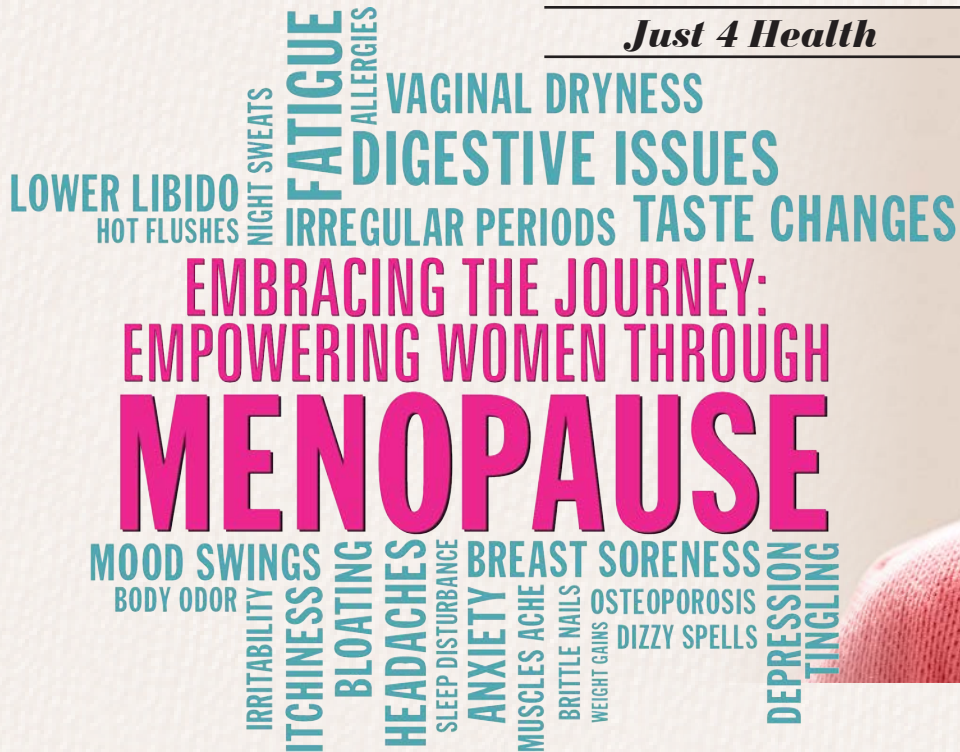
Exercise

Exercise can have a good effect on your mood and thinking. Exercise is thought to release dopamine and serotonin. These are 'feel good' hormones.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a type of meditation. It is when you focus on your mind and body. It is a way of paying attention to the present moment. When you practice mindfulness, you learn to be more aware of your thoughts and feelings. Once you are more aware of your thoughts and feelings, you can learn to deal with them better.

For help during times of crisis persons can contact the BVI Health Services Authority Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services at (284) 852-7500 | (284) 394-3497



Menopause is a significant and natural phase in a woman's life, marking the end of her reproductive years. While it can bring various physical and emotional changes, it is essential to approach this transition with positivity, encouragement, and understanding. This article aims to provide sensitive and reassuring guidance on navigating menopause by focusing on staying fit, active, maintaining cognitive health, finding support through family and groups, and embracing the new chapter of retirement.

Staying Fit and Active:

Physical activity is a cornerstone of maintaining overall health and wellbeing during menopause. Engaging in regular exercises like walking, swimming, yoga, or strength training can help alleviate menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and mood swings. Moreover, it improves bone density, muscle strength, and cardiovascular health, safeguarding against the risk of osteoporosis and heart disease.

Keeping the Brain Active:

Menopause may sometimes lead to cognitive changes, including mild memory lapses or difficulties with focus. Keeping the brain active and challenged can help counter these effects. Engaging in mentally stimulating activities like reading, puzzles, or learning new skills not only keeps the mind sharp but also boosts confidence and self-esteem during this transition.

The Role of Family and Support Groups:

Navigating menopause can be an emotional journey, and the support of loved ones is invaluable. Family members can play a significant role in providing empathy, understanding, and encouragement. Open communication about menopause and its effects can foster deeper connections and allow for mutual support. In addition to family support, joining menopause support groups can be highly beneficial. Sharing experiences with other women going through similar changes can create a sense of solidarity, reduce feelings of loneliness, and provide a platform to exchange coping strategies and valuable insights.

Dealing with Retirement:

For some women, menopause may coincide with retirement from a long and fulfilling

career. While retirement can be daunting, it also presents an opportunity for a new chapter of growth and exploration. Engaging in hobbies, volunteering, or pursuing lifelong passions can bring fulfillment and purpose during this phase of life.

Seeking Professional Guidance:

During menopause, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional who specializes in women's health. A knowledgeable healthcare provider can provide personalized advice, address concerns, and offer appropriate treatments or therapies to manage menopausal symptoms effectively.

Exploring Intimacy During Menopause:

As women transition through menopause, they may experience changes in their sexual health and desire. Fluctuations in hormone levels, such as decreased estrogen and testosterone, can lead to vaginal dryness, thinning of vaginal tissues, and reduced blood flow to the genital area. While these changes are normal, they can impact sexual intercourse and intimate relationships.

It's crucial to understand that every woman's experience with menopause is unique, and the impact on sexual health can vary. Open communication with a partner about these changes is essential to maintain intimacy and ensure both parties feel understood and supported.

Addressing Vaginal Dryness and Discomfort:

Vaginal dryness is a common symptom during menopause and can cause discomfort and pain during sexual activity. To address this concern, water-based lubricants or moisturizers can be beneficial. These products can enhance comfort and pleasure, making sexual intercourse more enjoyable.

Embracing Sensuality and Intimacy:

Menopause can be an opportunity to explore new aspects of sensuality and intimacy. Engaging in activities that foster emotional closeness, such as cuddling, kissing, and non-sexual physical touch, can strengthen the bond between partners. This emotional intimacy can contribute to a fulfilling and satisfying sexual relationship.

Seeking Professional Help:

If menopausal symptoms significantly impact sexual health and intimacy, seeking guidance from a healthcare professional is essential. A doctor specializing in menopause and sexual health can offer personalized advice and suggest appropriate treatments, such as hormone therapy or local estrogen treatments.

Understanding the Ebb and Flow of Desire:

It's essential to recognize that sexual desire may ebb and flow during menopause. Fluctuations in hormone levels, stress, and emotional factors can influence libido. Partners should be patient and understanding, and communication is key to navigating these changes together.

Exploring Different Types of Intimacy:

Intimacy is not solely about sexual intercourse. Menopause can be an opportunity to explore various forms of intimacy and connection. Engaging in activities together, such as taking walks, dancing, or sharing hobbies, can foster a deeper bond and strengthen the emotional connection.

Conclusion:

Menopause is a journey that every woman experiences uniquely, but with the right mindset and support, it can be embraced as

an empowering and transformative phase. Staying physically active, keeping the brain engaged, finding support through family and groups, and approaching retirement with a positive outlook can all contribute to a fulfilling menopausal experience. Remember, this chapter of life is an opportunity to discover new facets of oneself, grow stronger, and embrace the wisdom that comes with this remarkable transition.

Menopause can affect many aspects of a woman's life, including sexual health and intimacy. Understanding the changes

that occur during this time is essential to maintaining a healthy and fulfilling intimate relationship. Open communication, patience, and a willingness to explore different forms of intimacy can help partners navigate this phase with compassion and understanding. Remember, menopause is not the end of a woman's sexuality; it is an opportunity to embrace new dimensions of intimacy and connection.

So, let's celebrate the strength and resilience of women as they navigate menopause and thrive in this new chapter of life.



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THOUGHTS ON BIRTHING CLASSES

provided by
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One of the closely kept secrets in the Virgin Islands is how different and significantly improved the birthing experience for women can be. This is due to the Territory's cadre of experienced practitioners offering birthing education that sees the mother's experience as central to delivering healthy babies.

By Sachkia Barnes

While I knew I always wanted to have children, the idea of birthing them myself delayed the process for years. With the images and war stories that commonly go around of women screaming at the top of their lungs in excruciating pain next to aloof partners and husbands, few of us actively seek such an experience. However, some years back, I was browsing the internet and came across the term, positive birth. I had never heard that before and became intrigued. I ventured through videos and articles and felt I finally stumbled on information different from the usual screaming mum we see in the movies.

When my husband and I decided to start our family, I knew I finally had information that assured me of a birthing experience that was closely aligned to my personality. So I set out to find it in the BVI. That's when Mrs. Helen Frett told me I needed to speak with her former colleague Mrs. Norma Benjamin. I quickly got in contact early in my pregnancy, and

Mrs. Benjamin gave me a recommended time later in my pregnancy for us to begin classes. Before that time came, she called me to ask if I was ready. Both my husband and I were indeed ready.

In our weekly classes, we found a comfortable and safe space to talk about birthing alternatively to the experiences shared by family members/friends and the brutal and often gruesome images of labour that are so easily accessible on TV and the movies. I knew the birthing experience would colour the type of parents we would be, even prior to actually giving birth. I wanted to be empowered by the experience. In Mrs. Benjamin's classes, I received a new education that indeed empowered my husband and me.

Her classes were not overwhelming at all. The structure of the information shared immediately gave me the confidence needed to take control of the experience and allow me and my husband to add our family values and what was important to us to start the journey of parenting. In detail, we discussed natural and unmedicated births, birthing positions, medical intervention and exclusive breast-feeding.

One of my biggest concerns was pain management. To this day, I remember Mrs. Benjamin's class and the acronym she uses to help her students understand PAIN - purposeful, anticipated, intermittent and necessary. Using that understanding along with hypnobirthing classes I was taking online, when it was our turn, I calmly walked into the D Orlando Smith Hospital, dilated at 7cm and ready to birth my first child as naturally as I could. While I found the hospital's team extremely helpful and knowledgeable, the education received kept us calm and confident to birth with limited interventions, how we imagined birth to be.

Mrs. Benjamin's history in health services in the Territory is an asset to her students. She is able to put you in direct contact with the staff that will be there to assist with your birth, and she thoroughly understands the processes that are all covered in her classes. This ultimately helps you navigate the journey well informed and with confidence.

While I believe BVIHSA as an institution has some ways to go in seeing the experience of women as central to healthy births, private practitioners like Mrs. Benjamin gives us a chance to manage our experience while still pushing for services and birthing options and policies to be improved at a policy level. The service that Mrs. Benjamin provides is invaluable to helping parents understand birthing and prepare for the lifelong experience of being someone's mother and father. It truly made my birthing experience a positive one. Your journey with Mrs. Benjamin does not end after your classes. She's been keen to follow up during those first few weeks and even months to truly ensure you utilize your newfound education and cheer you on to be empowered to parent as you choose.

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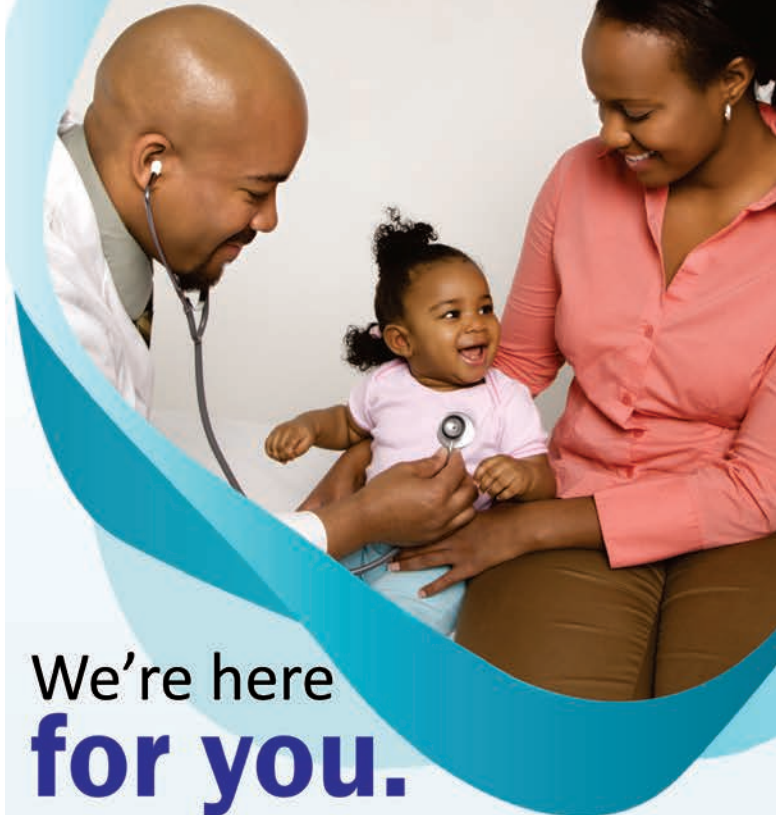
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Women and Depression

The essence of a woman is her virtue; that intangible inner quality that guides her actions and becomes her north star. From that central core, grow the attributes that make her uniquely a woman, nurturer, influencer, and refresher of the human race. This was the definition of a virtuous woman by the wisest man in history, King Solomon.

He places her worth above the value of rubies. This position was formed not only by his wisdom but also by his vast experience with women. Therefore, a woman of virtue is deemed as priceless. Her influence is profound and her impact continues for generations leaving an indelible imprint on her world.

There is no doubt that a woman is superbly made. She is made to be valued, to be cherished, to be treated with love and respect. She is required to be strong and to be vulnerable. Unfortunately, the balance between being strong and being vulnerable are considered opposites.

The very essence of being a woman, dealing with menstruation every month, sets off hormonal changes in the body which make this cycle unpredictable, and therefore it can affect the entire family. Women are often not sympathetic with each other, and men discount the hormonal fluctuations. There is not a woman alive who has not experienced some kind of premenstrual syndrome: irritability, bitchiness, sadness- it lasts a day or two, maybe a week, and then it's gone.

Medical professionals and even other family

members often do not take women seriously when they do talk about these issues. When the decision is made to become a mother, when she becomes pregnant, even more stress is placed on the woman's body and her hormonal balance. Clifford Smith, Jamaican dancehall musician, better known as Mr. Vegas, in his song "Do You Know", speaks about how the home changes when a woman is suffering from postpartum depression.

When a couple decides to have a child, during the pregnancy, the woman, and especially the man, often doesn't appreciate how much is at stake as regards her physical and emotional health. When challenges arise during childbirth, men sometimes disappear from the delivery scene and the woman is forced to deal with this traumatic event alone. This can be the start of feeling alone, exhausted and unsupported by her partner – and the new mother has not even left the hospital yet.

Post-partum depression occurs in all parts of the world. It is frequently undiagnosed and not addressed. What can be more demoralizing for a new mother, expected and expecting to be joyful, than to admit to not feeling love and joy upon seeing her baby? Not feeling able to bond, to care, to nurture this dependent child.

Accepting that this "rejection of mothering" is a medical condition that requires treatment/therapy is difficult. We need to accept that this condition is at least partly (1) the result of sudden hormonal changes and (2) due to emotional factors such as the realization that her life has now totally changed (resentment), that she is now responsible for a dependent baby (fear that she will be inadequate). Postpartum depression requires medical/therapeutic intervention, not condemnation and contempt for her "lack of mothering".

Society endorses that "a mother's job is 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year for at least 18 years". When we work at paid employment, we get a weekend off and holidays. Our employers know we can't work seven days a week, eight hours a day and be at peak performance! And yet as a mother, we are expected to be in top gear every moment of every day. The responsibility of parenting one or more human beings can be exhausting in itself; forget about the non-stop hours. We do not pay attention to this prolonged stress – the constant responsibility of raising children, taking care of the home, and maintaining a relationship with her husband. Often this is done while holding down a full-time paid

job. It is a wonder that more women do not experience medical issues given the stress they are under.

From a young age, girls in the community are taught by old-school moms how to be a wife, and a mom: how to cook, how to sew/mend, how to wash, how to clean the house. They are not taught that as a woman you should be valued – valued by yourself and valued by others. How do we help girls growing up in the church, whose spiritual education is to be a good wife, to be subservient, to be the nurturer, to be that exceptional mother – with no thought given to the needs of the woman herself?

As a mother you are forever under pressure - to make sure your children's needs are met, to make sure there is food for them to eat, to make sure the home is child-proofed so they do not hurt themselves, - those are just a few of the realities of a mother's life. How the majority of women cope with that speaks again to the awesomeness of women. Many of these women just breeze through and seem to be okay; others struggle. Possibly the mothers who struggle do not feel they are getting nourishment as a human, as a woman. She gets so wrapped up in the child and in trying to be that perfect mother that she forgets about herself. She doesn't eat right, doesn't exercise, doesn't talk about her fears and exhaustion, she doesn't make herself a priority. And slowly but surely she starts to fade away. It takes real strength to turn your back on your family, even just for a short time, to let your hair down, without feeling guilty. How can we create that balance so that mothers begin to understand that they have to take a break, put themselves first, meditate, to catch their breath?

Guilt becomes a woman's constant companion. Am I doing things right? Is my child going to be ok? Should I have disciplined them? Did I discipline too extreme? Should I have said no? Should I have said yes? These are just some of the millions of critical questions that go through a woman's mind. One of the most debilitating things to our mental and emotional health is the constant barrage of internal negative self-talk/self-questioning. In our society, it is taboo to talk about the hardships of motherhood or relationships.

A woman is going through emotional and/or physical abuse and stays for several reasons, number one being for the children and number two to appease the community based on

biblical standards. As women, we continue to put ourselves second best and as mothers, we become third best. At some point, the woman may start to feel insignificant, and incompetent - sadness, irritability, tiredness, insecurity, They come and go over a day, a couple of days, but when these feelings are pervasive and long-lasting, it is called depression. What is so debilitating about depression is that our self-talk, often subliminal, becomes continually negative. Our brain starts producing only negative thoughts, causing us to live in a world where we are continually berating and/or questioning ourselves.

Depression is a real disease. When something traumatic happens, for example getting a divorce, or the death of a loved one, the extreme sadness, loneliness and grief felt in that first six months, is not depression, it's reality. But if in the next 6 months – 1 ½ years, we still feel as lost, as lonely as confused, then clinical depression has set in. You must seek the right help. Deal with the professionals, do not diagnose yourself. Ask your GP to refer you to a Psychiatrist or a Clinical Psychologist, or refer yourself. Anti-depression medication may be prescribed by the Psychiatrist. One of the main positive consequences of taking an anti-depressant is that it affects the brain so that the woman can more easily stop the negative self-talk and replace it with positive self-talk.

However, we often need help in recognizing how negative our internal thoughts are and further help women to learn to replace the negative with positive talk. Anti-depressants are not a happy pill, they are not a miracle drug which numbs or resolves all pain. However, when talk therapy is not enough to get the woman to a good place emotionally, then it is time to introduce anti-depressants to assist her in reaching a place of peacefulness.

Maybe many women can relate to this story. There was once a woman who was so depressed, that she couldn't do much around the house, and could hardly care for herself. Her plants were dying. And she loved her plants. One day a friend says to her, Just get up and water one plant. She got up and watered that one plant. The next day she watered two plants. Baby steps by baby steps, she came into the light. Once we get into that dark negative place, it takes a lot of little steps and a lot of work to get out of it. Sometimes medication is one of those steps.

How do we educate men, and fathers, in terms of providing the necessary level of support? So many men know how to look after themselves when they are single. As soon as they get into a relationship, all those skills disappear. Two of us are parents and two of us made that child, and yet the responsibility of caring for the home and the child/children falls almost solely on the mother. How do you go about changing that double standard? How do we train up a "new age man", a man who when he is first to leave work, is the one who picks up the children, puts the pot on, assists with homework, and is actively involved in the day-to-day of the child's life? Also, men must understand that family time does not necessarily mean the mother must tag along. She is ever so grateful when she knows the children are taken care of, having time with their father, and she can spend her time gardening, reading, and cooking – the freedom of relaxing, quiet "me" time. A man who recognizes the value of the woman who is the mother of his child values her as an incredible human being and gives thanks that she chose to be with him.

How do we help our mothers as a society? How do we help the mothers who are stay-at-home mothers, and may not have family here to support them? How do we set up activities for mothers, and for their children, where they can have fun, get positive affirmations that they are doing well, and just laugh and enjoy adult company; sharing the responsibility of caring for the children with other carers? How do we encourage mothers to join social clubs – where they gain an identity as a person, not just as a mother? Do we have babysitting available so that our mothers can join clubs, exercise, and take part in adult activities?

Everyone's mental health is important. But today we are focused on women, on mothers. And we want to emphasize that depression is not something to be ashamed of; it is a medical disease and it can be treated. Please, if you or a friend or family member is experiencing emotional distress, experiencing what you think could be depression, reach out for help.

The Mental Health Unit provides counselling, at no charge. If you are not sure how to find a professional, ask your doctor to refer you. Seek help. If you have physical pain, you seek medical help. Please do the same for emotional pain.

Contributors: Sandra Mazurkewich and
Magdalene Rhymer.

Outdoor Adventure

Unite for the Sea - The Greatest Adventure

Written by Enya Douglas, Programme Coordinator

In a world where over 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by water, our connection to marine life holds immense significance. Learning how to swim and fostering a profound relationship with the ocean becomes more than just a skill; it's a transformative journey that opens portals to new adventures.

For people living in the British Virgin Islands, this connection with the ocean is not only natural but also vital to our way of life. In the heart of the islands, an environmental initiative known as Unite for the Sea is making waves of change. Unite BVI is the proud founder and sponsor of Unite for the Sea, a free youth programme that sponsors fun, educational water-based activities such as swimming, snorkeling, and diving lessons, aimed to inspire a love for the ocean. Unite BVI's vision for the programme is to inspire generations of ocean conservationists.

"The Coral Crisis," is the Unite for the Sea 2023 theme and it resonates strongly in the very waters that surround the BVI. As young participants venture into the ocean, they become observers of the intricate coral reef ecosystems. Through their own eyes, they witness the struggles these magnificent marine environments face due to disease, climate change, ghost gear, human pollution,

and overfishing. This firsthand experience, along with Unite for the Sea educational initiatives sparks a passion for protecting these underwater wonders and really drives home the urgency of ocean conservation in our own backyard. Our young participants are not only learning to swim; they are discovering their meaningful role as guardians and advocates for the ocean.

Unite for the Sea opens opportunities to delve into the aquatic lives of parents and their children in the British Virgin Islands. One mother's story of her son's journey reveals one of the many benefits of swimming lessons. As we observed while he actively engaged in his swimming lesson, she shared with me that her 5-year-old son had once been overwhelmed by fear whenever he encountered the ocean. These moments were anxiety-inducing for both child and mother, as he would always cling to her during their beach visits. A shift occurred after less than a year of participating in a



swimming programme. Her son was already exhibiting a newfound confidence in the water. This meant independence and confidence for him and a rejuvenating sense of relief for his mother. The development of his skills is so crucial for a life of ocean adventure and curiosity. On the other side of the spectrum, I've witnessed my own 5-year-old son's uninhibited, sometimes reckless enthusiasm for the ocean. His carefree bellyflops and spirited "excellent dives" showcase the excitement that children bring to the water. Through the Unite for the Sea programme, we seek to combine this natural curiosity with essential swimming skills and educational opportunity to ensure that their journey into the ocean is both safe and exhilarating.

The programme's impact is visible and practical, with over a thousand swim shirts and caps distributed to the BVI community, promoting safe sun practices and environmental consciousness. Unite for the Sea also proudly provides free eco-friendly water bottles to all swim participants, a

small yet meaningful step towards a more sustainable future.

The Unite for the Sea's Ocean Film and Art Festival is a captivating community educational event that was held at Tortola Pier Park, on August 26th, 2023, in the British Virgin Islands. The festival aimed to raise awareness about the current state of coral reefs, their historical significance, and the urgent need for conservation efforts. The festival featured film screenings, art exhibitions, and engaging creative and educational activities.

Unite for the Sea's ultimate goal is to inspire generations of ocean conservation advocates through firsthand experience and passion to protect, nurturing a sense of adventure and curiosity along the way. As Jacques Cousteau once said, "You protect what you love."

In 2024, we will continue to provide ocean conservation education and support for swim, snorkel and dive programmes in the community to encourage positive behavior

change that leads to supporting the next generation of ocean advocates.

Parents and youth interested in knowing more about the Unite for the Sea Programme should contact any of the Unite for the Sea grantees including:

- Sea Turtle Aquatics and Adventures
- BVI Swim School
- Ground Sea Adventures
- Sunchaser Scuba
- KATS
- Go Green VI (Eco Sprouts Eco Club)
- Igwe Swim School of Excellence
- BVI Watersports
- We Be Divin'

A special thanks to our programme partners, Bitter End Yacht Club and Beyond the Reef Foundation for supporting the Unite for the Sea programme since inception. If you might be interested in supporting BVI youth to learn to swim and fall in love with the sea, please contact Kim.Takeuchi@UniteBVI.com







Brandini's
LEMONADE

Brandon Andrew



”

“The nature of being an entrepreneur means that you fully embrace ambiguity and are comfortable with being challenged regularly. Some career paths seem completely irrational because the odds of succeeding are dismal, but most persons succeed because of their unwavering belief, laser focus on delivering and persistence” Forbes.com

There has been a paradigm shift in the presentation of business ideas within a small society such as the British Virgin Islands, and young people feel trapped in a regular office gig or technical field. As social media has taken the world by storm, young people are finding ways to stay relevant whilst doing what they enjoy.



Our next YE is a young man by the name of Brandon Andrew aka ‘Bean or Brandini’ as he prefers. He believes that he has found the mixture for a perfect glass of lemonade.

He can often be found serving various flavors of lemonade such as passionfruit lemonade and blueberry lemonade to customers that patronize his stand on the fringe of the Government’s Central

Administration Complex, on the roadside adjacent the Mill Mall in Central Road Town. We posed a few questions to Brandon to get the full gist of his production and the history of generation of the business.

VIL&S: When was your business founded?

BA: Back in 2013, when the energy was high and every other weekend was vybe, with my attendance to beach parties, movie nights out in the park, basketball and softball going on; I would set up out the

lemonade stand and try out my findings, and from time to time spice them with a hint of vodka for a kick.

VIL&S: Do you have active partners?

BA: I don’t currently have any official partners; but I am hoping to change that in the near future.

VL&S: How did you come up with the name for your business?

BA: A good friend of mine by the name of TJ Henley actually came up with the name on a whim when my other good friend Jahleel Howe started commenting about the experience, saying how it was magical and creating a cross between the Magician Houdini and my first name. I’ve been rocking with it ever since; so the name of the business is Brandini’s.



VIL&S: Why did you choose to operate this business, what was your motivation, what is your story?

BA: I would say public response is the main reason I eventually decided to undertake this venture. It really started out with me mixing these lemonades on the beach for friends on Sundays during the summer and eventually persons around began noticing, inquiring, trying them, then proceeding to suggest I take it seriously. Which I did.

VIL&S: Did you face any challenges in registering the business and with start up?

BA: There wasn't any issues for me personally with registering my business, I had some financial backing in the beginning from a close friend that helped me get the footing I needed to move forward.

VIL&S: Is this business your sole business venture and revenue earner?

BA: I also have a cocktail making business by the name of Team Electric Cocktail Bar.

VIL&S: Where do you see the business 5-10 years down the line?

BA: In the next 5-10 years I'm hoping to honestly increase my brand visibility not just locally and find ways to infuse my business

into the already existing tourism product in the BVI.

VIL&S: Are there any obstacles that you believe you will encounter as you grow your business?

BA: Breaking the barriers to increase my brand visibility won't be a walk in the park, I can't say for certain what I think those issues might be but I do expect some form of challenge on my way there.

VIL&S: How can your story influence the youth to start their own business ventures?

BA: My message to the youths or any person thinking about becoming a business owner is fear is not inherently a bad emotion when thinking about a venture but just don't let the fear consume you. Channel it differently and use it as fuel. At first, although friends would suggest I take this seriously I had a crippling fear that I wouldn't be successful because to me at that time I would think to myself "It's just lemonade". I had to understand that what I was doing was unique, creating an experience for customers to enjoy, it's just something about seeing your lemonade being freshly made for you and I think that's the reasons people love it to this day. It also led me to find my love for mixology. If I had allowed my fears to get the best of me I would've probably been somewhere doing something I don't love.

VIL&S: Where is your business located?

BA: I don't have any physical locations, we do pop ups at events and throughout town.

VIL&S: How can customer access your business?

BA: Team Electric Cocktail Bar on Facebook and team_electricvi on Instagram for all things Brandini's Lemonade related.

VIL&S: How do you obtain and maintain customers?

BA: There's no other business at the moment quite like this; so maintaining isn't the hardest part, I would say I have a core following and they help with spreading awareness via social media posts and that's how we gain new customers.

VIL&S: What other vast skills sets do you have that you utilize or can utilize to enhance your business offering?

BA: I have a love for customer service so I honestly use it to enhance my customers' experience. I'm also very meticulous with everything I do which is what led me to creating an actual recipe for each cup of lemonade so that I could ensure consistency with every cup I sell.

Navigating nudity and sex in the music industry: **A Talk With Sistah Joyce**

Sex Sells!

No matter how we try to spin the story, nudity and sex attract attention and people are hardwired to notice sexually relevant information. Therefore, sex and nudity, since the dawn of Pop Music, have always been used as tools to leverage sales in the music industry. Although this phenomenon is not limited to gender, it is overwhelmingly present among women in the industry. These days, whichever side of the pendulum you swing on, seeing sexual content in music videos or the lyrics or songs can either be perceived as liberating or objectifying. And producers, musicians and managers are aware of the selling power of nudity and sexuality.

In the Caribbean, sex and nudity are embedded in our culture. We see it in the music, the dance and even in major events such as carnival. These days two of the Caribbean's most popular genre dancehall and soca is built on the backs of nudity and sexual content. So, this begs the question, how does one navigate nudity and sex in an industry that tells young artistes, especially women, that sex sells? Virgin Islands Life and Style Magazine talked with Sistah Joyce, a local calypsonian and reggae artist, about how she stays true to herself and navigate an industry and culture that thrives and hinges success heavily on sexual and nude content.

Sistah Joyce was born Joycelyn Merica Searles in Tortola, British Virgin Islands. At the age of four, she moved to St. Kitts and Nevis with her mom where she attended school until age fourteen when she returned to the BVI. She then went on to live in St. Thomas and



Sistah Joyce

St. Croix in the US Virgin Islands. During her formative years, Sistah Joyce said her role models were Eugenia Charles, former Prime Minister of Dominica and Rita Marley. Sistah Joyce said Charles' boldness and hunger for the betterment of Dominicans and Marley's unique way of singing pushed her toward these two great Caribbean women. Nevertheless, Sistah Joyce noted she was a leader from a young age and always refused to engage with anyone or anything that compromised her energy or self-worth.

Sistah Joyce grew up in a Christian household and like most people in the Caribbean, she started her singing journey in the church choir.

It was while living in Virgin Gorda, during her second stint in the BVI that she started her professional career. She remembers fondly her debut in 1989, on the softball field in Long Bush, Tortola, where she was privileged to be one of the opening acts for Buju Banton. Since then, she has been performing throughout the United States and the Caribbean, opening for world-renowned reggae artistes such as Burning Spear, Bunny Wailer, Toots & the Maytals, Sizzla, Luciano, Marcia Griffith, Midnite and others. In 2003, she released her first single "Haile Africa" which was then followed by "Give Jah Praises". Shortly afterwards, she released her first full-length studio album titled "H.Y.P.O.C.R.I.C.Y.". In 2005, she released her second album "New Dae" which was followed the next year by her third album "Freedom Sitee".

In recent years, many reggae artists have moved from the smooth, family-friendly styled genre of reggae music and the teachings of Rastafari to become more commercially successful. As such, sex and nudity have weevilled their way into reggae music and have become undistinguishable from its raunchy and more secular younger counterpart dancehall. However, with all her vocal power, Sistah Joyce continues to minister to the masses that are drawn to the positive and serious social comments present in Roots Reggae with enlightening and uplifting words and melodious rhythms.

She admits that it is tough to make it in the music industry in today's environment but Sistah Joyce believes that having a firm mindset and staying true to who you are as a person and the message you are sending out is a solid foundation to begin building on. She highlighted that similar to oil and water not mixing, she cannot become somebody who she is not when on stage. To her, Sistah Joyce is not a persona or a character she plays on stage; it is an extension of who she is as a person. Hence, she said she must be royal and fully covered at all times especially while performing because of her queenly values. Sistah Joyce added that her body is her temple and she believes it should be reserved for her and her partner in a private setting. Therefore, the nudity and vulgarity that she said is being displayed in the music industry and by extension spaces where this music is played and performed, are reserved for her husband at their private place.

While some see Rastafari as just another sub-section of pop culture, to Sistah Joyce it is her way of life. Being a Rasta, allows her to embrace her naturalness and according to her, it brings out her realness. "Being a Rasta is to love self and people. I have been asked and approached many times to change my code of dressing and singing to advance musically but that will never happen. Before I do such I continue to record music and feed it to the masses for free," Sistah Joyce said.

Back in 2015, Sistah Joyce released a new single for Virgin Gorda Festival 2015 entitled "Victim". Here she utilized her conscious and powerful lyrics to tackle a real issue; child molestation. Sistah Joyce said the inspiration behind the song is from a personal experience of a close friend. She added that with Caribbean culture, the issue of rape and molestation is hardly ever addressed, and this prevents

many women from speaking out. However, Sistah Joyce felt that was a time to finally break free and speak out on a topic often swept under the rug.

Sistah Joyce lives by one of her favourite quotes "Who Jah bless, no man curse". She continues to burn her sage and ancient oils to keep in tune with her ancestors. Sistah Joyce wishes to tell the younger generation of women that 'unity and self-confidence is the foundation for survival'. "To that sister, please look in the mirror and tell yourself I am beautiful; there is only one me. If I don't look out for myself nobody will. Always remember to put it all to the most high and never give up. Speak out when need be".

Since she entered the music industry, Sistah Joyce remained true to who she is as a Rasta and person. Despite the constant pressure to reform her style and lyrics to become more commercial, she has remained faithful to what she believed in and continues to live in her truth and navigate an industry that pressurizes women to sell nudity and sex as a means to gain profit and status.



Sistah Joyce

Beaches

TORTOLA

- 1 Trellis Bay, Beef Island
- 2 Long Bay, Beef Island
- 3 Little Bay
- 4 Josiah's Bay
- 5 Lambert Bay
- 6 Trunk Bay
- 7 Rouges Bay
- 8 Brewers Bay
- 9 Cane Garden Bay
- 10 Apple Bay
- 11 Long Bay, West End
- 12 Smuggler's Cove
- 13 Brandywine Bay

VIRGIN GORDA

- 14 St. Thomas Bay
- 15 The Baths, National Park
- 16 Devil's Bay, National Park
- 17 Spring Bay, National Park
- 18 Mahoe Bay
- 19 Trunk Bay
- 20 Little Dix Bay
- 21 Savannah Bay
- 22 Pond Bay

JOST VAN DYKE

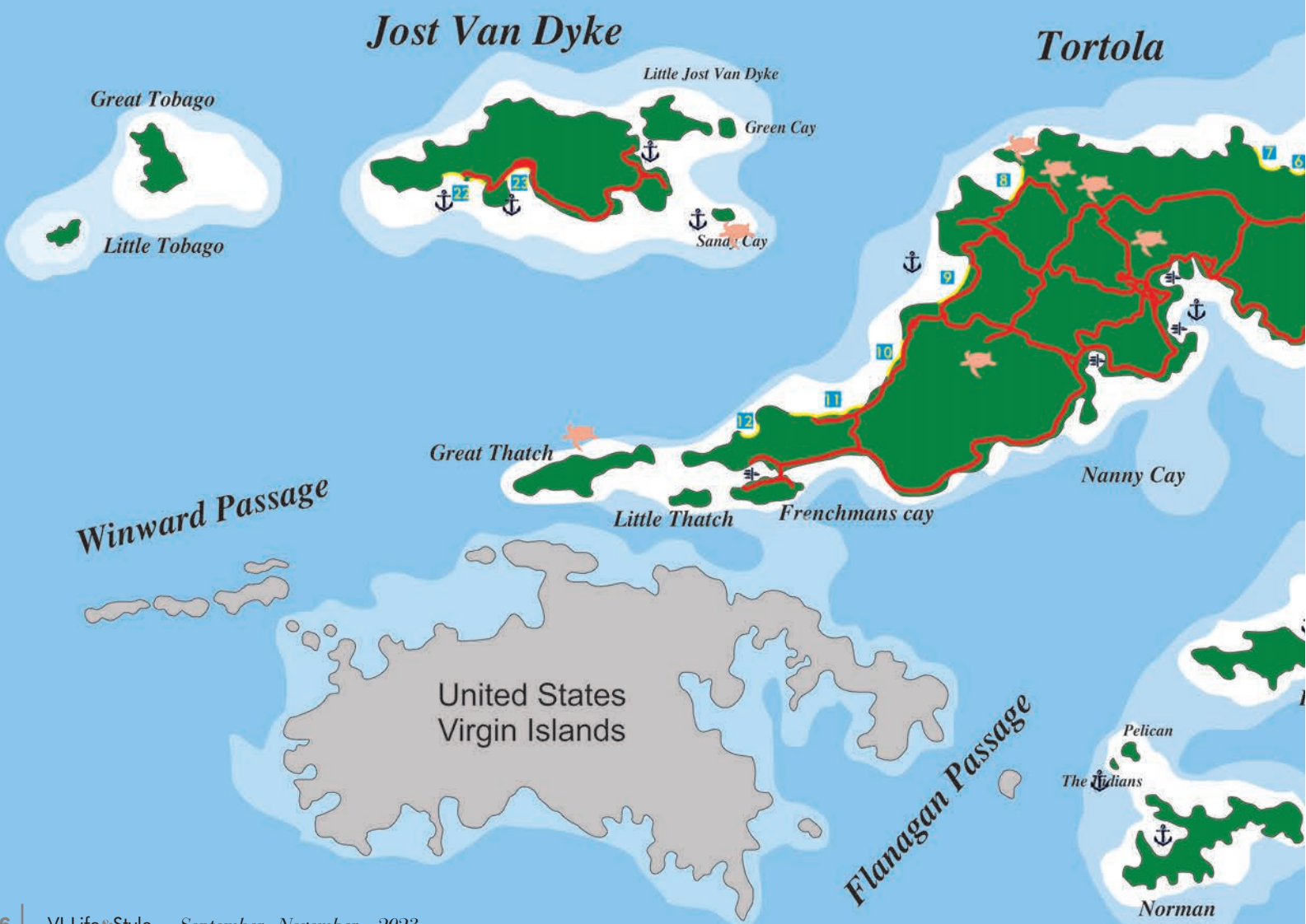
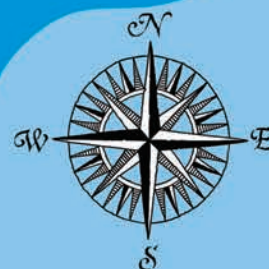
- 22 White Bay
- 23 Great Harbour

ANEGADA

- 24 Cow Wreck Beach
- 25 Loblolly Bay
- 26 Jack Bay

SISTER ISLANDS

- Norman Island
- Peter Island
- Cooper Island
- Prickly Pear
- Sandy Cay
- Sandy Spit





BANKING SERVICES

There are several major banks in the British Virgin Islands: Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, FirstBank Puerto Rico, CIBC-First Caribbean International Bank (Cayman) Limited, National Bank of the Virgin Islands (formerly Development Bank), Republic Bank (British Virgin Islands) Limited and VP Bank (BVI) Limited. Hours vary, but most are open Monday through Thursday, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. They all have extended hours on Fridays. Banco Popular opens a teller drive-through window from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays. FirstBank is open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

BUSINESS HOURS

Most businesses open at 8:30 a.m. and close at 5 p.m. Many merchant stores, including pharmacies, are closed after 1 p.m. on Saturday and all day on Sunday; but a few open if cruise ships are in port. Supermarkets open earlier and close later, and most are open on weekends and holidays. Bobby's Supermarket in Road Town is open from 7 a.m. until midnight every day. Call a specific business for its hours of operation.

CLIMATE

The islands benefit from the trade winds that keep humidity low, but temperatures rarely go above 95 F or below 75 F. The wettest months are between September and November, coinciding with the height of the hurricane season.

CREDIT CARDS

Many BVI establishments accept credit cards, generally MasterCard or Visa; some, but not all, take American Express. There is an American Express office at Romney Associates in Road Town. There are several ATM machines on Tortola located in Road Town, Cane Garden Bay, West End and at the Terrance B. Lettsome

International Airport on Beef Island. There are no banks or ATM machines on Virgin Gorda, Anegada, Jost Van Dyke or Peter Island. Please note that there is a 10-cent stamp duty charged on all cheques, including traveller's cheques.

CURRENCY

U.S. dollar is the only legal tender in the BVI. Major credit cards are accepted in many, but not all, establishments. It's advisable to travel with U.S. traveller's cheques.

MONEY TRANSFERS

MoneyGram and Western Union provide services to receive and send money worldwide.

VISITOR REQUIREMENT

Passports are required by all. Return tickets are required for visitors and those coming on work permits.

DEPARTURE TAX

After you have checked in at the airport or at any sea-port, look for the departure tax window. Every air travel passenger must pay a \$20 departure tax in cash or by Visa or MasterCard (cheques are not accepted). For those leaving by sea, during the second half of 2013 departure tax from sea ports increased to \$20 for visitors and \$15 for residents. Cruise ship passengers pay \$7.

DIVING AND SAILING

Many diving and yachting companies specialise in helping you take advantage of BVI's excellent diving sites and the fact that it's the Sailing Capital of the World.

DRUGS

Recreational drugs are strictly forbidden. Their possession, sale, use or distribution is a criminal offence punishable by law. Conviction can lead

to heavy fines and jail sentences.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is supplied by the BVI Electricity Corporation. The standard electrical current is 110 volts on all the islands.

FISHING

Non-British Virgin Islanders need a recreational fishing permit to remove any marine organism from BVI waters. There are closed seasons for harvesting certain species of fish and other seafood. Call the Conservation and Fisheries Division at 494-5681 for information. Recreational fishing permits will be issued at all ports of entry for \$45. A licence is required for every adult on board who will be fishing.

2023 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day	- Jan 2nd in lieu Sun. 1st
H. Lavity Stoutt's Birthday	Mon. March 6
In lieu of Tuesday 7 th March	
Good Friday	Fri., April 7
Easter Monday	Mon., April 10
Whit Monday	Mon., June 6
Sovereign's Birthday	Fri., June 9
Virgin Islands Day	Mon., July 7
Festival Monday	Mon., August 7
Festival Tuesday	Tues., August 8
Festival Wednesday	Wed., August 9
Heroes' & Forefathers Day	Mon., October 16
Commemoration of 1949 March	Mon., Nov. 27
Christmas Day	Mon., Dec 25
Boxing Day	Tues., Dec 26

PETS

Pets are allowed into the Territory only after an import permit is obtained from the Department of Agriculture. For regulations concerning animal importation, contact the Department of Agriculture, Paraquita Bay, Tortola; tel. 495-2532 and fax 495-1269.

INTERNET

There are several places throughout the islands that offer Internet access. Most have free Wi-Fi and can be found at the following locations: Saba Rock, North Sound, Virgin Gorda; Trellis Bay Market, Beef Island; Lambert Beach Resort, Tortola; Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola; Village Cay Marina, Road Town; Myett's Garden Inn and Grille, Cane Garden Bay; Foxy's, Jost Van Dyke; The Watersports Centre, Jost Van Dyke; Anegada Reef Hotel, Anegada; Big Bamboo, Anegada.

ISLAND INFORMATION ONLINE

The BVI Tourist Board's website (bvitourism.com) offers printable online information about each island, useful schedules and much more. The BVI Chamber of Commerce & Hotel Association (BVICCHA; bvihotels.org, BVI Government, VI Life&Style magazine, Property and Yacht magazine, two local newspapers also host helpful links to other web-sites belonging to various individual hotels and organisations. You may also want to visit experiencethebvi.com for useful information about the islands.

MEDICAL

Dr. D. Orlando Hospital is the main general hospital in Road Town, Tortola; but health clinics are available at villages on Tortola, Virgin Gorda and other sister islands. There's also a government dental clinic in the hospital in Road Town. Dr. Adamson, Smile Dental, Premier Dental, Dr. Rhymer and B&F Medical Complex, VI Medical – Manual Reef, pro-vide experienced general dental services, whilst Vision Center offers advanced eye care.

POST OFFICES

The main post office on Blackburne Highway also has a philatelic counter. There are sub post offices on Beef Island (Airport), and West End on Tortola, and on the larger sister islands. Most hotels and resorts offer daily mail pickups. Virgin Islands' stamps are worldwide collectors' items. The BVI Philatelic Society (494-7789) organises an annual stamp exhibition, usually held in the spring, that attracts a wide range of enthusiasts.

RADIO AND TELEVISION

Local radio stations, most of which are available on-line, include ZBVI (780 AM), ZKING (100.9 FM), ZROD (103.7 FM), ZCCR (94.1 FM), 100.5 Tola Radio and ZVCR (106.9 FM). Local cable channels include 1, 51, 52 and 55. Public service channels include 12 (VVCJX, St. Thomas, USVI) and 25 (BBC World). A few channels broadcast in Spanish, including Channel 4 (Azteca). News and entertainment are also available on cable channels beamed from numerous U.S. cities and satellites.

SMOKING

Smoking in public places such as restaurants, bars, shopping malls, recreational facilities, offices, public transportation terminals, etc.

is forbidden, in accordance with the Tobacco Products Control Act of the BVI. It's also forbidden to smoke within 50 feet of these public spaces. A person found smoking tobacco in a public place will be subject to a fine. In the BVI, it's illegal to sell cigarettes to persons who are under 18 years old.

TIPPING

A 7 percent government tax is usually added to your hotel bill, as well as a 10 percent hotel service charge. Additional tipping is optional. It's customary to include a 15 percent tip when dining out. Most restaurants automatically include this on the bill as a service charge.

TRANSPORTATION

Air: Regional airlines connect Beef Island with international hubs (e.g., San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Antigua) and other Caribbean islands. Small planes fly between Beef Island and Virgin Gorda and St. Thomas, USVI. Charter planes are also available to the outer islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands from the airport on Beef Island.

Land: The British Virgin Islands have 150 roads, of which 118 are paved. The two main roads on Tortola are Blackburne Road, which runs along the seashore from the eastern to the western end of the island, and Ridge Road, which runs centrally over the hills. Both offer spectacular scenic views of the islands.

Buses: Mini and safari bus outings are usually arranged by the hotels and are also available for other extended group trips and scenic sightseeing.

Car Rentals: Renting a car is both economical and convenient. There are several agencies offering reasonable rates, unlimited mileage, emergency services and additional insurance. If visiting for more than a month, a temporary licence must be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles in Pockwood Pond. The cost is \$10. Bring your passport and a valid driver's licence from country of origin. Driving is on the left-hand side of the road.

Ferry Services: The main ferry docks on Tortola are in Road Town and at West End. Inter-island boat services operate several times per day between Tortola and several other islands in the BVI (including Marina Cay, Scrub Island, Virgin Gorda, Peter Island and Jost Van Dyke) and the USVI (St. Thomas and St. John). Ferry services to Anegada are available daily except on Saturday. Departure and arrival information can be obtained at the front desk of your hotel.

Taxis: Taxis are available at the airport, hotels, taxi stands and other venues throughout the islands. Some hotels have a franchised taxi arrangement for guests or will quickly order a taxi from the front desk. Taxi drivers usually provide running commentaries on local history and other useful information. New government rates are now in effect. It's a good idea to check the fare with your driver in advance.

TAXI CONTACTS

West End Taxi Association – 284-543-4241
Nanny Cay Taxi Association – 284-394-2512
Waterfront Taxi Association – 284-494-4959
Road Town Taxi Association – 284-494-8755
Quality Taxi Association – 284-422-0353
BVI Taxi Association – 284-494-2322
Moorings Taxi Association – 284-393-2331
Beef Island Taxi Association – 284-495-1982
Valley, Virgin Gorda Taxi Association – 284-540-6482

Taxi Rates Tortola: A fare for one person from the airport to Slaney is US\$30. A chartered taxi from Road Town to any of the villages can range from \$15 to \$27 for one person depending on the distance, and the regular fare around town is \$5. Farther out to the suburbs is \$6, and the fare from Road Town to West End is \$27. From the cruise ship dock to most beaches, the range is from \$24 to \$27 for one person, but for three or more people the fare ranges from \$8 to \$12 each. Virgin Gorda: From The Valley to The Baths is \$6, and from Gun Creek to the Yacht Harbour is \$30.

Anegada: From the airport to Loblolly Bay is \$7, whilst to Setting Point is \$14.

Jost Van Dyke: One person going from Great Harbour to White Bay pays \$10, and to Bubbly Pool, \$20. Three or more people going to Bubbly Pool pay \$10 each.

Tours: A one-hour tour for up to two people is \$55 (fixed rate), whilst for up to three people the cost rises to \$70. A group of five persons is \$100 (each additional person over the five pays \$15). A two-hour tour starts at \$110 for up to two people. Waiting charges: First 15 minutes are free, but every subsequent block of 15 minutes is \$10. Tour costs are the same for all islands.

Children three years or younger travel at no cost, children ages 4-10 pay half fare, and children 11 and over pay the full fare. Between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. there is a sur-charge of 30 percent on all fares. Always discuss the rates with your driver in advance. There is limited bus service running from Road Town to East End. The fare is \$3.

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Ambulance 311
Fire or Police 311
Hospital 494-3497
VISAR 494-4357 (Virgin Island or 767 (SOS) Search & Rescue)
Airlines
Air Sunshine 495-8900 Cape Air, Ltd. 495-2100, Fly BVI 495-1747, Island Birds 495-2002
Seaborne Airlines 340-773-6442

Other Useful Telephone

BVICCHA - (284) 345-3513
BVI Red Cross 494-6349
BVI Tourist Board (284) 494-3134
CADA (Drug Information)
Family Support Network (FSN) (284) 540-2085
Humane Society of Tortola (284) 494-2284
BVI General Post Office (284) 468-5160
Medical HOTLINE (284) 852-7650

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A CULINARY SAMPLE OF THE
VI'S BEST SIPS, SUPS & SNACKS

Vegetarianism

The average BVI islander has grown up on a diet rich with many variety of beef, pork, chicken etc. Every farmer in the villages across the territory even had ducks, goats, cows, pigs and chicken to name a few. The elder people fed their animals remains from cooked products and refuse from the garden, outside of store-bought mash most of which was sourced locally. The amount of chemicals in meat products we are currently eating has inevitably led to a country plagued with numerous chronic diseases.

The health conscious within the society and have been making drastic life style changes in an effort to let food be their medicine. VI Life and Style Magazine, reached out to Ms. Rohanie Itwaru, who has been a vegetarian all her life as both her parents were vegetarians. She was brought up to eat only home cooked food and followed the principle of simple living and high thinking. From a very young age, apart from her academic studies, she has attended classes on health and wellness, yoga and meditation and understood how much these make up the very fabric of our existence. In addition, cognizant of the fact

that other beings whether animals, birds, aquatics or insects eat, sleep, mate and defend just as human beings do, she shares with us her perspective on all the various reasons why vegetarianism is a viable choice and invites us on a similar journey. A simple recipe is attached to stimulate the palette.

VEGETARIAN FOOD – THE HIGHER TASTE

The act of the butcher begins with the desire of the consumer.

Man's appetite for meat inflicts devastating harm on the earth itself, stripping its precious forests to make way for pastures. How can one who eats meat practice true compassion by eating the flesh of an animal to fatten his own flesh?

Indirectly, in acts of cruelty and violence against the animal kingdom a subtle sense of guilt persists among people who eat meat.

If children are raised as vegetarians, every day they are exposed to nonviolence as a principle of peace and compassion. Every day they are growing up they are remembering and being reminded to not kill. They won't even kill another creature to eat, to feed themselves. And if they won't kill another creature to feed themselves, they will be much less likely to do acts of violence against people.

The greatness of a civilization and its moral progress can be measured by the way in which its animals are treated.

REASONS TO BE VEGETARIAN

Millions of omnivores have made the personal decision to stop eating the flesh of other creatures. Here are some major motivations for such a decision.

The Spiritual Consciousness Reason

Food is the source of the body's chemistry, and what we ingest affects our consciousness, emotions and experiential patterns. If one wants to live in higher consciousness, in peace and happiness and love for all creatures, then he cannot eat meat, fish or even eggs. Cow's milk is a personal choice since you do not have to kill the cow in order to benefit from the nutritional value it provides. By ingesting the grosser chemistries of animal foods,

one introduces into the body and mind anger, jealousy, fear, anxiety, suspicion and a terrible fear of death, all of which are locked into the flesh of butchered creatures.

The Health Reason

Medical studies prove that a vegetarian diet is easier to digest, provides a wider range of nutrients and imposes fewer burdens and impurities on the body. Vegetarians are less susceptible to all the major diseases that afflict contemporary humanity, and thus live longer, healthier, more productive lives. They have fewer physical complaints, less frequent visits to the doctor, fewer dental problems. Their immune system is stronger, their bodies are purer, more refined and skin more beautiful. Those who eat flesh are far more likely to contract cancer than those following a vegetarian diet are. Omnivores ingest excessive amounts of cholesterol, making them dangerously susceptible to heart attacks. Many scientific studies have concluded that eating meat can seriously damage your health.

The Ecological Reason

Planet earth is suffering. In large measure, the escalating loss of species, destruction of ancient rain forests to create pasturelands for livestock, loss of topsoil and the consequent increase of water impurities and air pollution have all been traced to the single fact of meat in the human diet. No single decision that we can make as individuals or as a race can have such a dramatic effect on the improvement of our planetary ecology as the decision to not eat meat. Many seeking to save the planet for future generations have made this decision for this reason.

The Economic Reason

The simple fact is that to produce one pound of meat, it requires over sixteen pounds of grain and many gallons of water. Millions of animals are bred for meat production if they were not breed and the vegetation was used to feed people there would be no poverty in the world.

Which would you choose? One pound of meat, which involves killing and maybe disease (cancer, heart or mad cow) Or sixteen pounds of grain, many gallons of water with no killing and good health?

IS MEAT GOOD FOR US?

It's a scientific fact that vegetarians are healthier than omnivores. Scientific studies show that vegetarians have a much lower risk of suffering from diseases like cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure and other health disorders compared to non-vegetarians.

There is overwhelming scientific evidence to prove that a vegetarian diet is much healthier than a meat based diet. Eating meat can seriously damage your health.

What about Protein?

Most people are brainwashed into thinking that meat is the only source of protein. The simple fact is that there is plenty of protein in a vegetarian diet too. For instance, just to name a few all beans, lentils, peas, tofu, soy, whole grains, nuts, and seeds are high in protein.

As long as you eat a variety of plant-based proteins you can get sufficient amounts of all the essential amino acids your body needs.

The reason why somewhere in the world a child dies of starvation every two seconds is because of slaughterhouse mentality as described above. If the millions of acres of land, which is used to grow food for animals, were used to grow food for humans directly then there would be at least ten times more food than currently. Hence, there would be no poverty in the world.

By killing for a living (meat eating), the human mind develops a taste for killing, which leads to a mentality of violence. The mentality of killing animals spreads to killing humans too. People who kill animals are much more likely to kill people too. This is a fact as the terrorists, and the most violent criminals are animal killers (meat eaters).

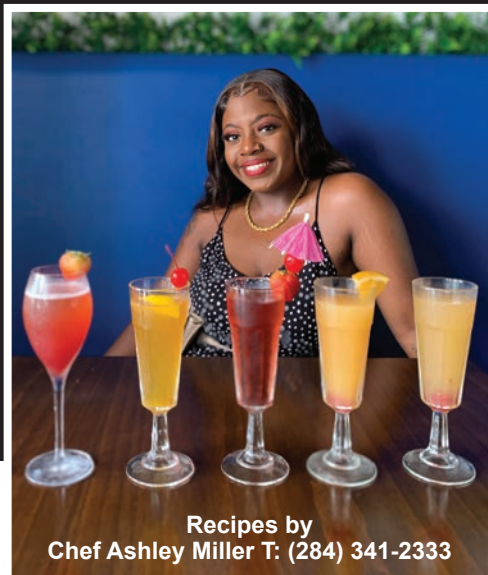
The vegetarians don't kill for a living (no meat) and so their mind develops a taste for non-violence, thus a mentality of non-violence. The mentality of a vegetarian is that killing is totally wrong, hence, the killing or even injuring of humans is totally unthinkable.

What about killing the plants?

There is a big difference between cutting grass and cutting the necks of chickens. Killing plants and animals is not the same.

Remember we are what we eat.

Choose wisely especially for your moral, religious or health reasons.



Recipes by
Chef Ashley Miller T: (284) 341-2333

Taste of the VI!

Cooking with Chef Ashley Miller



Quick homemade Pumpkin Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 2.4 lb pumpkin (any type) OR butternut squash
- 1 onion , sliced (white, brown, yellow)
- 2 garlic cloves , peeled whole
- 3 cups vegetable or chicken broth/stock , low sodium
- 1 cup water
- Salt and pepper
- 1/2 – 3/4 cup cream, half and half or milk

INSTRUCTIONS

- Cut the pumpkin into slices. Cut the skin off and scrape seeds out.
- Cut into cubes
- Place the pumpkin, onion, garlic, broth and water in a pot – liquid won't quite cover all the pumpkin. Bring to a boil, uncovered, then reduce heat and let simmer rapidly until pumpkin is tender (check with butter knife) – about 10 minutes.
- Remove from heat and use a stick blender to blend until smooth (Note 3 for blender).
- Season to taste with salt and pepper, stir through cream (never boil soup after adding cream, cream will split).
- Ladle soup into bowls, drizzle over a bit of cream, sprinkle with pepper and parsley if desired. Serve with crusty bread!

Banana Bread Muffins

INGREDIENTS

- 1 and 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 and 1/2 cups mashed bananas (about 4 medium or 3 large ripe bananas)
- 6 Tablespoons unsalted butter, melted (or melted coconut oil)
- 2/3 cup packed light or dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 Tablespoons (30ml) milk*

optional: 1 cup chopped walnuts, pecans, or chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 425°F
- Spray a 12 count muffin pan with nonstick spray or use cupcake liners
- Whisk the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg together in a medium bowl. Set aside. In a large bowl or in the bowl of your stand mixer, mash the bananas. On medium speed, beat or whisk in the melted butter, brown sugar, egg, vanilla extract, and milk. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients, then beat or whisk until combined. If adding nuts or chocolate chips, fold them in now. Batter will be thick.
- Spoon the batter into liners, filling them all the way to the top. Bake for 5 minutes at 425°F, then, keeping the muffins in the oven, reduce the oven temperature to 350°F Bake for an additional 16–18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
- Allow the muffins to cool for 5 minutes in the muffin pan, then transfer to a wire rack to continue cooling.

Egg Muffins



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup lightly packed baby spinach chopped
- 3/4 cup finely diced red bell pepper about 1 small pepper
- 3/4 cup finely diced green bell pepper about 1 small pepper
- 3/4 cup quartered cherry tomatoes or grape tomatoes, about 1 cup whole tomatoes
- 6 large eggs
- 4 large egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon oregano
- Pinch cayenne pepper if you like a little kick!
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese plus additional to sprinkle on top

Optional toppings: avocado salsa, hot sauce, freshly chopped parsley

INSTRUCTIONS

- Place a rack in the center of your oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a standard 12-cup muffin tin with nonstick spray. Divide the spinach, red bell pepper, green bell pepper, and tomatoes among the cups (they will be about two-thirds of the way full).
- In a large bowl or large measuring cup with a spout (my favorite because it makes the mixture easy to pour), briskly whisk together the eggs, egg whites, salt, basil, oregano, and pepper until well combined. Carefully fill each muffin cup three-quarters of the way to the top with the egg mixture. Sprinkle the feta evenly over the tops of the cups.
- Bake for 24 to 28 minutes, until the egg muffins are set. Let cool for a few minutes, and then run a butter knife around the edges of each muffin to loosen it. Remove them from the pan and enjoy immediately,



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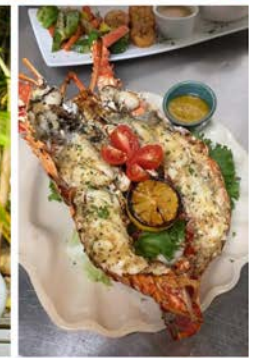


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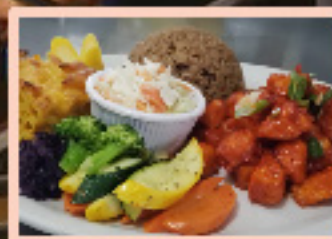
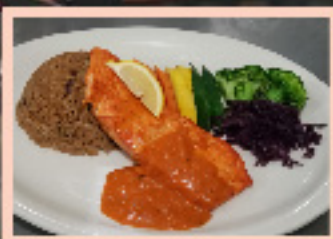


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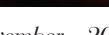
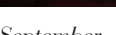
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Decency, a character dat newer goes ole.

Buoy I hawe tuh seh deh talk in deh community hot bout festiwal en how deh young guel dem wuh dressing; Oiy don't guh to dem ting anymore, but oiy here j'vert was loike pornography and deh parade custume dem was so hot, ewery body feel deh heat. The sad ting is dat tis dem man dem talking. Dem saying they were embarace to see young gurls dem nuh from churh family dressed loike strippers. Deh amn dem saying deh would never date gurls with such character, meanwhile deh guel dem thinking that'w wah man loik. Well ha!

Meh fren Mildred say we caaan seem to foin deh roight balance between modern day methud and celebraten the way we use to. As far as she could remember, the BWEI has been a Christian society as far back as any of us liwing can remember. 60 years ago, when we all wuh studying church, we were on our p's and q's. Boy I remember VLB (victory leader's band) that's weh deh young people dem would head every Friday night, around 7 pm for guidance and advice. All the guel dem was wearing maxi frocks, and long sleeve shirts, not a bare patch in sight. Now dem TT dem push up, dem body markup wit tattoos, dem eye lash them long yard broom, dem hair all kinda color, dem dress up under dem bottom and deh pants dem tight tight, nuf to give yeast infection and dem full ah hole in places where they should be covered. And that's modern-day beautification. Since when carelessness becomes hip and modesty decome ole fashion. I nuh I ole and I hawe seen deh good, deh bad and en deh indefferant, but this is teking deh ting too far. This is why deh Laud cause a flood, en bun down Sodom.

Oiy loik to guh to Carrot Bay every year and I pray deh committee maintain deh culture. Dem ole people in Carrot Bay must be proud

to see deh culture still in tack. Even if electricity is gone, I am sure most of deh people in Carrot Bay still hawe a coal pot and a bag a coal chuck aweh so dem could cook dem ground provision- really liwing off de lan. Bouy dem really liwing de weh it use to be. You don't hear no fus about festiwal in Carrot Bay. Dis year deh only had local bands and dat wuz noice. So why Town can't get their act together. Ewery year it getting worse and worsen.

Deh problem dem is, plenty nationality come liv wid we, we liwing more American dan anything else, church aint leading no more and young people, especially deh female dem getting more careless by deh day. How dem expect to find a good man? Wah mek it worse, deh young people who travel foreign to study, and tourism holding up deh economy, we getting all kind of outside pressure to be accommodating. We must accept LGBTQ, or be insulted if we don't, calling us homophobes. Really? Duh it en funny oiy hawe to laugh at they hypocrisy of deh whole ting. Dem could choose what dem want to be, but I can't choose to not loik it and if I don't loik it, ah must keep it tuh meh self and leh deh wulgarity continue. Huh! That's why deh Christian Council dem aint know dem head from dem foot. But wah I nuh is as long as there is a God, there will be consequences for the choices we mek. So I beg aiyo to seek God and mek good choices if yo want to mek it into He kingdom.

Old Granny Dena use to say "not even culture, chuch aint teaching". She say wen it aint had no set of tv to watch de youn people were more sociable. Parental screening button aint working cause parents on de street and chiren raising demselves. And de movie maker dem so sly, even cartoon ain fit for we to watch. Teacher Cutie teach me that culture is the social heritage of every person which



with **Pepe Bucky**

includes the knowledge they have acquired from years of being together in one particular society. She use to feel intelligent, saying da. She tell story say how wen Margaret down de bay marry de island bouy from Grenada, she stop putting milk and sugar in she peasoup, but she ain able to put on two pot. Teacher Cutie had like melieu bouy. Now ewen she gah go buy from Mrs. Martin if she want real peasoup. She ewen talking Grenadian now and de chiren can't cook one BWEI dish. Her poor mudder who wuz a real culture bearer, would turn in she grawe to nuh that her family prize winning peasoup is no more. I remember her peppermint candy and cassava bread dem she used to do feh festival, harwest en commonwealth day.

Now let's not put all deh responsibility on deh church dem. Wah in deh worle deh politician dem doing about this slackness? Now I nuh half ah dem en nuh christian, but common decency shouldn't be a cultural ting but a character thing, which should be innate in all ah we. From that premise alone deh politician should find every reason to disallow such lude conduct, dressing and behavior from our streets especially during deh rise and shine tramp and deh parade dem. Let deh other countries do dem thin in their county and BWEI do BWEI in the BWEI. Who don't loike it, too bad feh dem. But decency, modesty and pride should not be considered ole fashion because they are not a style, but a character that newer goes ole.

TAMING DISTRACTIONS: Mastering Focus for a More Balanced Life

By Marva Titley-Smith

Distractions are everywhere. They are part and parcel of the fast-paced world we live in, and frankly, it's challenging to avoid distractions altogether. Whether you're at work, home, or trying to enjoy some leisure time, the constant barrage of distractions can take a toll. Learning how to effectively tame distractions is not only beneficial but essential for maintaining wellbeing and achieving more balance in your life. Below, we will explore some common distractions and consider practical ways to overcome them

First, you might be wondering, 'what's the problem with distractions anyway'. Since distractions are so commonplace, isn't it okay to just go with the flow? While not all distractions are 'bad', there are several negative consequences to be aware of. Pay attention and see if any of these impacts are negatively affecting you.

THE DOWNSIDE OF DISTRACTIONS

1. Reduced Productivity:

One of the most common downsides of distraction is the way it diverts your attention away from the task at hand, making it

challenging to complete a task efficiently. This leads to wasted time and decreased productivity. If you ever found yourself at the end of the workday wondering where the time went then you know what I mean.

2. Increased Stress:

Constant interruptions and distractions can lead to heightened levels of stress. When your brain has to switch between tasks rapidly, this can lead to cognitive overload and increased anxiety.

3. Decreased Quality of Work:

When you're distracted, the quality of your work tends to suffer. You're more likely



Marva Titley-Smith,
CMgr FCMI CCM
Strategic Planner, Certified
Life Coach & Author

Marva is a work and life strategist with a passion for helping women thrive in all areas of life. She's the BVI's first local female architect and former Chief Planner. In 2012, after 26 years in the Public Service, she successfully transitioned careers and founded the management consulting firm, MatrixSpark specializing in strategic management, training and coaching. Following her calling, she became certified as a life breakthrough coach to address the growing work-life balance challenges facing women.

Marva is the author of the best-selling book, *Time to Thrive: A Busy Woman's Devotional Journal*. You can find her writing about work-life synergy and intentional living on her website www.MarvaSmith.com.

to make mistakes or produce subpar results when you're not fully focused.

4. Impaired Memory:

Believe it or not, distractions can disrupt your ability to retain information. This can lead to forgetfulness and difficulty recalling important details.

5. Strained Relationships:

This isn't talked about much, but distractions can also affect your relationships. When you're not fully present during interactions with your loved ones, it can lead to misunderstandings and a lack of meaningful connection. As much as you try to hide it, it's usually pretty obvious that you're not paying attention to your loved ones when you're distracted.

6. Procrastination:

Distractions often lead to procrastination. Instead of addressing important tasks, you may find yourself repeatedly distracted by less important activities.

7. Health Implications:

Chronic distractions can have health implications. High levels of stress, a decreased ability to focus, and poor sleep patterns are all associated with prolonged exposure to distractions.

8. Reduced Creativity:

Creativity often requires deep focus and immersion in a task. Distractions disrupt this flow and hinder creative thinking.

9. Missed Opportunities:

Distractions can cause us to miss out on opportunities. Whether it's a career opportunity or a chance to connect with someone on a deeper level, distractions can prevent us from seizing these moments.

10. Reduced Satisfaction:

Accomplishing tasks and achieving goals is satisfying, but distractions can prevent us from experiencing that sense of accomplishment. This can lead to decreased overall life satisfaction.

COMMON DISTRACTIONS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Now that we've discussed the negative impacts of distractions, let's look at some common distractions and how you can keep them at bay. The goal is not to avoid distractions altogether, but rather manage them well. Try these tips and see how they work for you.

Smartphones and Social Media:

Many of us have become highly dependent on our smartphones. They are incredibly convenient but can also be the source of much of our distraction. Notifications from

various apps, social media platforms, and text messages can disrupt your focus and balance.

Try this: Establish specific times to check your phone and social media accounts. Turn off non-essential notifications and utilize apps like "Focus Mode" to temporarily block distracting apps during crucial work hours. Also put your phone on silent (or away from sight) when you're interacting with loved ones.

Multitasking:

Juggling multiple tasks at once might seem efficient, but it often leads to decreased overall productivity and increased stress.

Try this: Prioritize tasks and concentrate on completing one at a time. This approach not only reduces stress but also enhances the quality of your work.

Cluttered Workspace:

A cluttered desk or workspace can overwhelm your senses and hinder your ability to focus. The same could be said about a cluttered space in your home as well.

Try this: Dedicate time each day to declutter your space. An organized environment fosters mental clarity, improves your sense of peace and contributes to a more balanced life.

Interruptions:

Frequent interruptions from colleagues, family members, or incessant email notifications disrupt your workflow and balance.

Try this: Establish boundaries by setting specific work hours and communicating your need for uninterrupted time. Utilize "Do Not Disturb" settings on your devices during critical tasks.

Lack of Clear Goals:

Starting the day without clear objectives can lead to aimless wandering and distractions, leaving you wondering where the time went.

Try this: Begin each day with a well-defined plan and prioritize your tasks. Having a

roadmap for the day helps you maintain balance, stay on track, and feel more in control of your day.

Procrastination:

Delaying tasks often results in increased stress and anxiety as deadlines approach.

Try this: Break tasks into smaller, manageable steps, and tackle them one by one. Allocate dedicated time for tasks you tend to procrastinate on.

The Benefits of Reduced Distractions

Being intentional about addressing common distractions will take some time and effort, but the benefits are worth it. Just from a mental health perspective there are several benefits of mastering focus and reducing distractions, including:

- less anxiety and stress;
- increased attention span;
- enhanced memory and intelligence;
- stronger relationships;
- heightened focus;
- faster project completion;
- precision in task completion;
- boost in creativity; and
- improved overall health.

Finding support

If you find it challenging to implement these tips and continue to struggle with focus, don't hesitate to seek support. Consulting a primary care physician is a great first step if you have any concerns.

In conclusion, mastering focus and taming distractions are essential skills for enhancing your mental health and achieving a more balanced life. By identifying common distractions and implementing strategies to combat them, you can unlock the numerous benefits that come with enhanced concentration. Remember, your mental health matters, and taking steps to reduce distractions is a powerful way to prioritize it and lead a more balanced life.



Our Life, Our Witness



Rev. Michael U. Anthony
is the Eastern Caribbean District
Superintendent of Apostolic Faith Churches
Author and Business Owner

Our life is our witness to the world. Our witness is the opinion formed by others based upon the way we conduct ourselves. The way we conduct our selves is an outward manifestation (actions/words) of our thoughts. Our thoughts are the reasoning we make based on the information we receive and accept as truth and deemed worthy of our endorsement by making it an integral part of our life, our witness.

Therefore, when an opinion is sought about our character, those making the judgment do so based on the witness we have portrayed.

While there are some (debased) persons who don't mind having a poor witness and subsequently a poor character description, most persons care very much about their character witness to the world. This often times is the defining line between the receipt of trust, favour, opportunities, friendships and many other positive aspects of life.

People are drawn to those whose reputation is honorable, noteworthy, tried and proven true. There is an intangible quality that others want to get acquainted with and perhaps learn the intricacies of such a character. These are good desires. With the same fervor, people tend to repulse those whose reputation is dishonorable with equal distaste for acquaintance.

The Apostle Paul in Second Corinthians chapter three, verses two and three, made the distinction that letters of commendation cannot achieve the same value of character description as a well-demonstrated lifestyle from a Christ and Spirit infused heart.

2 Corinthians 3:2-2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in table of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

This scriptural truth applies to the individual, group, and by extension national activities. What is actually practiced is counted far more than what is claimed in theory. Therefore, we are rewarded or punished for our practices.

The Bible is replete with examples of individual, group and national triumphs and failures.

John 4:23-24 But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Authenticity in our relationship with God is a Must! Any pretense will surely result in not receiving the Blessing of God. The fact remains that it is quite dubious to claim to worship God in spirit and truth in an atmosphere where the expressed purpose does not meet the standard for true worship. For example, one cannot move from fighting, disagreements, verbal accusations, character assassinations etc. into true worship without first going through forgiveness, restitution, reconciliation and repentance (a turning away from the wrong). At the very least, those with knowledge will see the hypocrisy. Remember that our life is our greatest witness.

True worship precedes and leads to honour, reverence, a closer relationship with and acknowledgment of the true nature of God and fosters a better relationship with our fellowman. While he is a loving and forgiving God, he also said some worship is from the lips and not the heart. It has been the misguided notion for millennia that lip service is true worship. God wants our hearts not our words.

Isaiah 29:13. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near

me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Matthew 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

Our life, our witness, is what shapes the future generations. They emulate what is presented, trusting that the correct foundations would have produced what they see. They will handle the issues of life in the same manner they see them being addressed. This is the really sad reality for every wayward adolescent and the positive reality for every progressive adolescent. We are a product of our environment. Be the positive role model in all your endeavors. We may have great plans, but the best is when it is God centered and directed.

In a moment of reflection on your lifestyle ask:

- What would I want for my children?
- What would I want for others? What excuse can I make to God?
- Do I desire the best or worst for my community?
- What explanation can I offer to my grandchildren?
- Does it add value to my life and truly give honor to God?

Home & Garden

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EMBRACING THE WARMTH OF FALL: Interior Design Ideas for the Autumn Season

As the summer sun begins to fade, a new season ushers in with its rich palette of warm hues and cozy vibes. Fall, with its crisp air and vibrant foliage, inspires a fresh approach to interior design that celebrates comfort and nature. Let's explore creative ways to infuse your living spaces with the essence of fall, creating a welcoming and inviting atmosphere that echoes the beauty of the season.

Words by Kézia Allen

1. Warm Color Palette

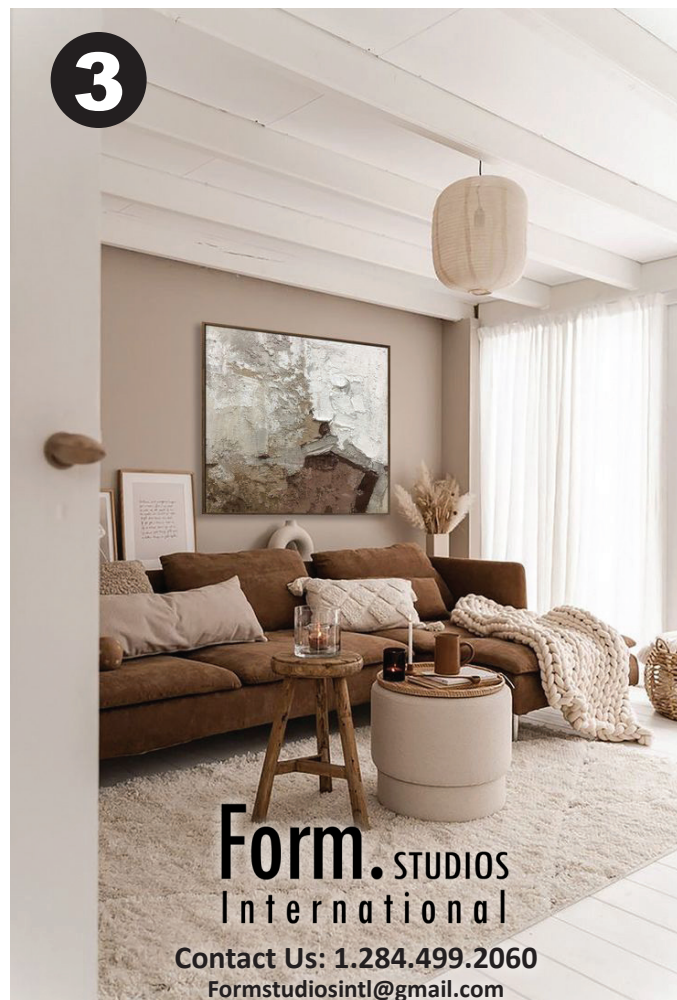
Embrace the colors of autumn by incorporating warm tones into your interior design. Rich browns, burnt oranges, deep reds, and golden yellows can be used on walls,

upholstery, and accents to create a cozy and inviting ambiance. Consider adding throw pillows, rugs, and curtains in these shades to infuse your space with the essence of fall.

2. Natural Elements

Bringing the outdoors in is a quintessential

aspect of fall design. Incorporate natural elements such as dried branches, pinecones, and leaves to your décor. Consider creating a centerpiece using a wooden bowl filled with acorns and colorful leaves, or arranging branches in a tall vase for an elegant touch.



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3. Layered Textures

Fall is all about tactile experiences. Layering textures can add depth and visual interest to your interiors. Think about incorporating soft blankets, plush rugs, and chunky knit cushions to your furniture. Mix and match different textures to create a visually appealing and inviting space.

4. Seasonal Accents

Swap out your summer décor for fall-inspired accents. Consider replacing lightweight summer curtains with heavier drapes in warm colors. Update your table settings with autumn-themed placemats, napkin rings, and dishes. A bowl of seasonal fruits like apples and pears can also serve as a charming and edible decoration.

5. Fireplace Focus

If you're fortunate enough to have a fireplace, fall is the perfect time to make it the focal point of your living room. Arrange seating around it to create a cozy gathering spot. Enhance the atmosphere by adorning the mantel with fall foliage, candles, and other decorative items. If you don't have a fireplace, consider styling your entertainment stand.

6. Candlelit Glow

As the days get shorter, lighting becomes essential for setting the mood. Candles are an excellent choice for fall, providing a warm and intimate





glow. Consider using scented candles with fragrances like cinnamon, vanilla, or pumpkin spice to evoke the scents of the season.

7. Harvest-Inspired Dining

Extend your fall design theme to your dining area by incorporating harvest-inspired elements. A rustic wooden dining table paired with woven chairs can create a charming and welcoming ambiance. Use earthy tones for tablecloths and napkins and decorate with seasonal centerpieces.

8. Autumn Artistry

Hang fall-themed artwork on your walls to further enhance the seasonal atmosphere. Consider paintings or prints depicting autumn landscapes, foliage, or cozy scenes. These pieces can add visual interest and tie your design concept together.

Designing your interior spaces for the fall season is an opportunity to embrace the beauty of nature and create a warm and inviting haven for you and your loved ones. By incorporating warm colors, natural elements, layered textures, and seasonal accents, you can transform your home into a cozy retreat that celebrates the essence of autumn. Embrace the changing season and let its charm resonate throughout your living spaces.



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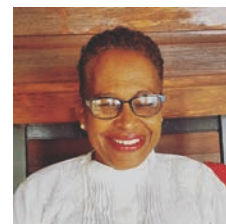
“The Doctor Of The Future Will No Longer Treat The Human Frame With Drugs, But Rather Will Cure And Prevent Disease With Nutrition.”

Thomas Edison, Inventor and Businessman

Eat like our Ancestors- Eat Local! Eat Healthy!

More than two-thirds of the world’s biodiversity exist in tropical ecosystems such as rainforests, dry forests, savannas and deserts. The high temperatures of the tropics generate and maintain a high diversity of plant and animal life.

As past generations of Virgin Islander farmers have known, the climatic conditions of our islands have always been ideal for growing tropical fruits, vegetables and root crops. So let us go back to our roots and grow our own food.



**The Reverend
Esther Georges**

is an Episcopal Priest and
Retired Deputy Director of
the National Parks Trust of
the Virgin Islands

It is estimated that if our appetite for meat and dairy products continue to increase, over twenty five percent of the world’s tropical land could disappear by the end of this century. Researchers at the University of Edinburgh and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology studied the impact of meat and dairy consumption on tropical forests. They concluded that these forests, with their wealth of unique mammals, birds, amphibians and plant life would be replaced by pastures for meat and dairy cattle. Such a transformation would cause a catastrophic irreplaceable loss of plant and animal diversity.

Living on a tropical island we have the opportunity to enjoy nature's bounty grown locally, reducing our reliance on the importation of vegetables and fruits from temperate climates.

The main advantage of gardening in the tropics is the possibility of growing vegetables all year, ensuring that fresh vegetables can be on your table every day.

Some of the health benefits of growing your own fruits and vegetables or buying from the local farmers if you are short of space and time include:

- The assurance of daily fresh vegetables from farm to table;
- Eating healthier, lighter, fresher and unprocessed food;
- Regular exercise if you grow your own;
- Reduced stress levels;
- An increase in your Vitamin D levels.

On the global level, it is predicted that food production will need to increase by 70 to 100% to adequately feed the predicted nine billion people in the world by 2050. This will require new approaches to soil management, land cultivation, and the production of animals and crops, while reducing activities that worsen climate change.

Eating locally grown food is already in our future as the cost for the transportation and storage of fruits and vegetables are reflected in soaring prices in the supermarkets. Moving large quantities of fruits and vegetables either in refrigerated containers or by air around the planet results not only in high prices but increases pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

These issues present the case for growing local, buying local, and eating locally produced food. We should become familiar with foods that are grown or produced locally and what time of the year they are available. Shop at the local farmers' market for items that you cannot produce.

Choose to replace junk food with fresh fruit, nuts and vegetables.

Cook your meals using fresh locally grown ingredients and reduce the purchasing of ready-made meals.

Take the time to find vendors selling local fruits and vegetables.

When you need to purchase packaged vegetables in the supermarket, read the labels carefully and check for the sell by date.

If you grow your own fruits and vegetables and keep chickens in your backyard, you are contributing to the reduction of the carbon footprint.

Join your voice to support the demand for more locally and sustainably produced food.

Let your voice be heard on the benefits of healthy eating.

The future health of our nation is in your hands.

We can be the change we wish for.

Information for this article was sourced from information by Researchers at the University of Edinburgh and Karlsruhe Institute of Technology; the British Ecological Society Internet publication : Better Health for People and the Planet Grows on Trees and the author's own farming experience in these islands.



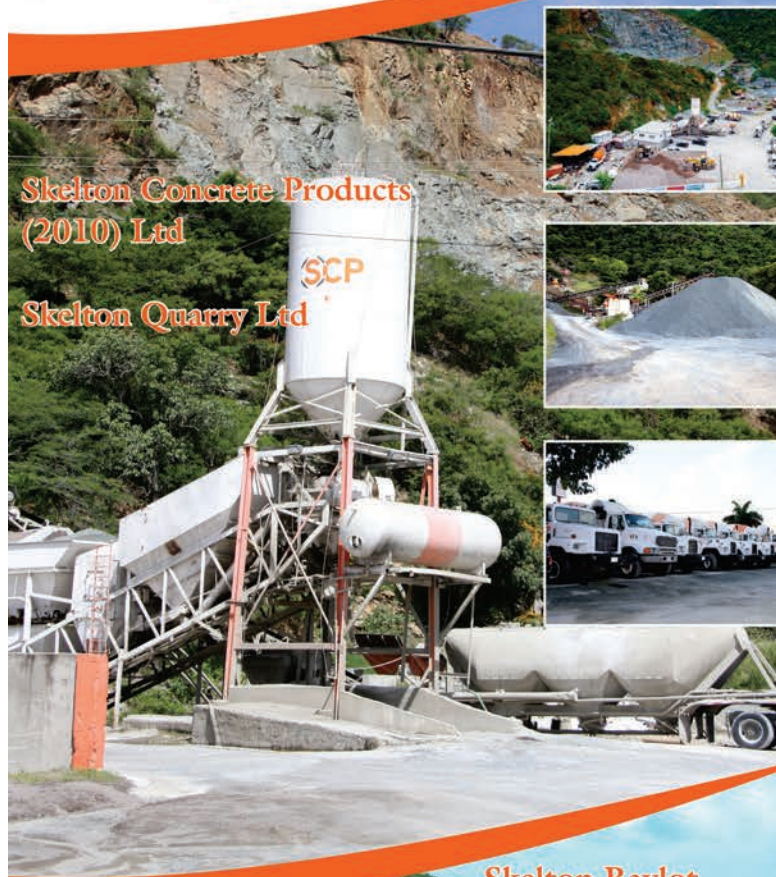
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