

A4TD's Nugget of Knowledge

August 4, 2020

Greetings Everyone ~



When it rains it pours and boy is it pouring now – figuratively and literally. Most of us are being impacted this week by Tropical Storm Isaias. Just one more thing in the basket of woes that is 2020.

There is good news, however. The year 2020 is more than half way over!! And as with all storms, there will be sunlight when it's over. It's hard to imagine what that will look like, but most assuredly, some silver linings will emerge from the medical, cultural, political and economic turmoil we are all experiencing. Some of these positives - such as a cleaner environment and a greater commitment to address social injustices - may be felt around the world. Others are more personal – my silver linings are likely different than yours. I believe that sometimes the universe arranges things to meet our individual needs in the moment. It's not always easy to recognize this when we are in the midst of our daily struggles, but I always appreciate looking back and seeing how things worked out.

For me, one silver lining has been the development of new friendships and a greater sense of community – and not just with the critters in my backyard. Before COVID, I had a 45 minute commute each way to and from the A4TD home office. This made for very long days. I really didn't interact with my neighbors other than a quick wave when driving by. However now, five months into the pandemic and working from home, I have new friends that I see regularly, even for socially distant, outdoor visits with wine glasses in hand. I am relishing this sense of community that I had been missing – especially since my work community is so different now. Like so many others, my family has had a few challenges of late, and so I am especially and perversely grateful to the pandemic for bringing me new friends and a sense of community when I needed them the most.

So how about you? Do you have a silver lining to share? Let me know and I will share in the next Nugget (anonymously if you wish); you never know how it might be of encouragement to others. Positivity sows positivity!

Oooh, the rain is stopping – I'm going to go look for a rainbow!

Read on and enjoy.

An Amazing Learning Resource . . .



Have you ever wondered how sound becomes music? Or pondered the existential question of when to use an exclamation mark? Or do you love learning about our planet in all its glory?

I'm so excited about the resource I came upon today! Netflix has a YouTube channel where you can watch a large number of its educational documentaries for free! You don't even need to have a Netflix subscription.

Check it out here:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvahqwMqN4M0GRkZY8WkLZMb6Z-W7qbLA>

And if you are really curious, here are the specific links:

- How sound becomes music:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xb33zXpEgCc&list=PLvahqwMqN4M0GRkZY8WkLZMb6Z-W7qbLA&index=15>
- !!!!! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-9vb-gzaQ&list=PLvahqwMqN4M0GRkZY8WkLZMb6Z-W7qbLA&index=21&t=0s>

A Training Tidbit . . .

What Does the Coronavirus Pandemic Mean for Your Job Search?



As companies move to remote work to fight the coronavirus pandemic and some layoffs and furloughs are occurring, it makes sense to wonder if you should continue to send out resumes or just assume instead that no one is hiring for the foreseeable future.

Career experts say it's best to keep networking and applying, and on behalf of A4TD I will add that we can confirm that there are jobs out there that our participants are getting.

Here are some tips for conducting an active job search during the pandemic and accompanying economic slowdown. Doing these things will allow you to focus on things you can control as well as lay the groundwork, open doors and rekindle relationships so that you will be fully prepared to ramp up your job search once this crisis eases.

Build relationships

It may be that you had been in an interview process when the position suddenly was put on hold or disappeared. That doesn't mean the position won't open up again in a few months. While some companies may postpone hiring while they figure out how to operate virtually, they will be hiring nonetheless. If you focus on building relationships with organizations of interest – including those where you may have been interviewing - you will be in a better position when the companies start hiring. This can include writing occasional letters of interest introducing yourself and your skills.

Get Comfortable Networking Online

Events will be cancelled for a while, so you'll need to find a new networking strategy. Look for virtual job fairs and other online events. Join professional groups on Facebook or LinkedIn and make yourself visible by joining conversations and making comments. Chime in on topics that allow you to demonstrate your knowledge.

Practice having a Virtual Informational Interview or Networking Conversation

Ask a friend, family member or professional colleague to help you by asking questions and giving feedback on your delivery. This person can also give you feedback on your technology set up – lighting, camera angle, etc. Once you feel comfortable, seek out some professional contacts to meet with you over a virtual cup of coffee.

Stay In Touch

Maybe you recently had a promising interview and a job offer seemed to be on the horizon, but now the company has moved to remote work and/or you haven't heard from the hiring manager. What should you do? Start by sending an email to the hiring manager. Acknowledge

they may be scrambling to adjust to pandemic-related workplace requirements. You might write something like, *“I’m looking forward to learning more when it makes sense for your organization.”* This shows that appreciate that the hiring manager is dealing with extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

You can also demonstrate thoughtfulness by asking if there is any way you can be of assistance. Connect with the organization on a human level. Maybe you’re contacting someone you’ve networked with in the past. Your email can simply say, “I wanted to reach out to see if there’s anything I can do for you. You’ve been so generous with your time, I want to return the favor if I can.”

Gather Information on Companies of Interest

The COVID-19 crisis can provide a unique glimpse into a company’s culture. If you follow a company on social media or by looking on their website, you may get a sense of how its leaders are dealing with the emergency and how they are treating their employees. For instance, is it letting employees work from home? Are they supporting workers in other creative ways? Did they lay off staff?

Use the Time to Reflect

Take advantage of your time at home to gain clarity about where you want to work and the type of role and title you're seeking. Make a list of your target industry, companies in that industry, corresponding job titles, and anything in particular you’re looking for. (O’Net online – www.onetonline.org - is a good resource for this task.) Apply to every posting you see that matches some or all of your criteria. Beyond job openings, you can also focus on the companies you want to work for and the individuals you can reach out to at those companies. The company might not have an open role yet but you can use your network to help you start making connections now.

Boost Your Skills

Now is a great time to work on bolstering your qualifications. Analyze job descriptions that are interesting to you and list the skills and experience required. Then consider whether: a) you have that exact skill, or b) if you have the skill but haven’t used it in a few years, or c) if you’re lacking the skill entirely. Are there skills you need to brush up on to make yourself an even better candidate when the job market picks up? One upside to the pandemic is that many free online courses are being offered right now that focus on skill development.

(The above was adapted from an article by Lisa Rabasca Roepe, from The Muse, <https://www.themuse.com/advice/job-search-coronavirus>)

Work that Brain! . . .



Brain Teasers

This issue's challenge:

1. **A red house is made from red bricks. A blue house is made from blue bricks. A yellow house is made from yellow bricks. What is a green house made from?**
2. **I went into the woods and got it. I sat down to seek it. I brought it home with me because I couldn't find it.**

Here are the answers to our previous challenge:

- 1) *I am taken from a mine, and shut up in a wooden case, from which I am never released, and yet I am used by almost everybody. What am I?*
The answer is pencil lead. (Kudos to David N.)
- 2) *What are the next three letters in the sequence WATNTL?*
The answer is "I T S", as in "In The Sequence". (Kudos to David N.)

* * * * *

Brain Games

Here's another fun brain game – it's a bit of a challenge but I know you can do it!!

<https://www.braingymmer.com/en/brain-games/post/play/>

A Bit about A4TD & SCSEP . . .

Online Orientation Session to A4TD & SCSEP

Welcome to the
Senior Community
Service Employment
Program (SCSEP)
And to Associates for Training and
Development (A4TD)

Do you know individuals who would like to learn more about A4TD and SCSEP? Last time we told you that we are still enrolling individuals into the SCSEP program. So if you know folks who would like to learn more about it, please tell them about our upcoming Online Orientation Session. Here are the details:

What: An opportunity to learn about SCSEP, a federally funded jobs training program specifically designed for older job seekers. Learn about eligibility requirements, meet A4TD staff, and apply for services.

When: Tuesday, August 18, at 1:00 p.m. EST

How: To join us on a video call on your computer or smartphone using Zoom, go to <https://zoom.us/j/97265781418>.

To join by telephone, call 1-646-876-9923.

The meeting ID is: 972 6578 1418

Fun facts . . .



Did you know that between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Americans will eat about **7 billion** hot dogs? On July 4 alone, Americans likely ate 150 million hot dogs. That's enough to stretch from D.C. to L.A. more than five times!

Do you remember “Hands across America”, the charity event that took place in May of 1986? I’m thinking maybe we could do “Hot Dogs across America”! I think a hot dog hand off would be an approved, socially distanced event! *(Hmmm, did I*

use the exclamation mark appropriately here?)

Here is a little quiz for you:

“What is the only letter that doesn’t appear in a US state name?”

Stay tuned for the answer next time. (Or, feel free to respond back with the answer and you will get a shout out in the next Nugget!)

Even better – feel free to submit your own fun fact or quiz for inclusion in the Nugget!

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Last time I asked you **“How many times per day does the heart beat?”**



The Answer? Anywhere between 100,000 and 115,000 beats per day!! So over the life of an average 70 year old, that is over 2.5 **billion** beats!

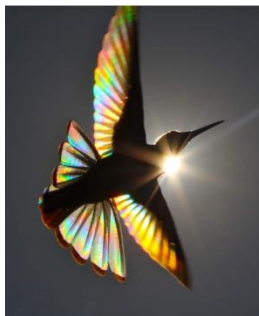
Okay – math quiz! Using 100,000 beats per day – if you were given a penny for every heart beat, how much money would that be in a year?

And the extra credit question, **“How many hearts does an octopus have?”**



The Answer? Three! (Kudos to David N.)

In case you need a break . . .



A friend recently sent me this link to several absolutely gorgeous images of hummingbirds. Enjoy!

<https://mymodernmet.com/christian-spencer-rainbow-hummingbird/>

Or in case you need a hug . . .



My husband recently had surgery and it was pretty scary and stressful. While he was in the ICU, an incredibly caring resident asked me how I was and what I needed. I laughed and said, *“I need a hug”*, expecting he would appreciate the humor in my answer since COVID-19 has pretty much nixed hugs. To my extreme surprise and complete gratitude, he came over and gave me a hug. I cannot tell you how wonderful that made me feel. Maybe not wonderful enough to have my husband go through surgery again, but great enough to remind me

how important hugs are to me.

Not everyone is a hugger, but the absence of hugs only adds to the feeling of loneliness so many are experiencing during this pandemic. So, if you need the comfort of a hug, here are some alternative choices that might make you feel better.

- **Give yourself a hug.** Giving yourself a hug has serious benefits. It can relieve pain by releasing oxytocin in your brain. It can promote relaxation and reduce stress by lowering the levels of the cortisol hormone. It can help you feel safe and secure. It can also increase self-compassion.

Self-hugging 101

- Fold your arms around your body, positioning them in a way that feels natural and comfortable.
- Rest your hands on your shoulders or upper arm, or curve them around your sides or shoulders. Again, go with what feels natural.
- Imagine the type of hug you want. A strong, intense hug? Or a softer, soothing hug? Squeeze yourself with just enough pressure to create the sensation you’re looking for.
- Hold the hug for as long as you like.
- Talk to yourself if you want. A few words of encouragement can help you get even more benefits out of self-hugging.

- **Go for a walk.** Whenever you're feeling down, just go outside for a walk, get some fresh air, and observe your surroundings. It will help lift your spirits, and you will feel like new.
- **Exercise.** Any kind of exercise or movement can increase your levels of endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin (the happy chemicals in our blood) which instantly boost mood.
- **Talk to someone.** Talking is one of the best mood-boosters out there. When you talk to someone, you share your experiences, emotions, and you create a cloud of positive atmosphere.
- **Watch a funny movie or funny videos.** Don't ever underestimate the benefits of a good comedy because they are invented to make you laugh and feel better.
- **Listen to your favorite songs.** Music is one of the best mood-boosters, and you can never 'overdose' on it. And if you add in singing, you will replenish yourself with positive energy. Singing helps convert your emotions into music and is a great source of fun.
- **Write something.** Sometimes, all we need is a 'friend' in the shape of a diary. Write your feelings and thoughts on a piece of paper. Seeing these in written form will help you understand what you're going through, and it will have the same effect as if you have talked to someone.
- **Draw something.** Drawing is another great way to express yourself, and you don't have to be good at it for it to have an effect. Simply drawing abstract lines, shapes and being creative with colors will do it. Drawing will help you forget about everything else and help you feel rejuvenated.
- **Look into the mirror and smile.** It sounds odd but it works. Just look into the mirror and smile at yourself. As our bodies and minds tend to mirror behaviors from other people, you are likely to mirror your own smile back and feel better!
- **Re-read your favorite book.** If you have your favorite book, start re-reading it again, and you'll feel awesome like you did the first time you read it.
- **Do something nice for someone else.** You know that feeling that comes when you help someone with something and you see how happy and grateful they are for it? Remember,

while to you your efforts might mean nothing, to someone else they probably mean the world.

- **Cuddle with your pet.** If you have a pet, take your pet into your lap, and spend some time cuddling. You will instantly feel a close connection with them that will make you smile. If you have cats, you should especially do this more often because there's scientific proof that cats are healers.
- **Think back to the good times.** There's a saying that 'You are what you think'. Well, your thoughts are the most powerful thing you have in your possession. Rewind some of your past happy moments and imagine that you're experiencing them again. Thinking about how you felt when something good happened will bring this feeling to the present.
- **Daydream.** Daydream about your favorite place on Earth, what your future could look like, or about anything that might make you happy. Daydreaming boosts your imagination and causes you to focus on other, interesting things. The adrenaline generated by daydreaming will make you feel as if you've actually experienced these daydreams for real.

A Final Thought . . .

“The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers & cities; but to know someone who thinks & feels with us, & who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.”

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German writer and statesman who lived from 1749 to 1832.

We have heard that many of you are missing the contact and connection with others that happens at your host agency or at the Network to Work meetings. How about you – do you need community? I'd like to offer up the Nugget as a place for you to find connection with other SCSEP participants as well as the professional staff in the A4TD community. If you have a question, want to say or share something, or have a training-related topic you would like covered, please let me know. With some degree of editorial control, I will share your thoughts in a way that I hope provides you with a sense of community and invites the participation of others.

Ask A4TD . . .

Finally, remember that if you have a comment or a question for A4TD, “reply” to this message and share your thoughts or questions.

Until next time, be safe, be well and remember that A4TD remains right here for you. Let's be here for each other.

Sincerely,

All of us here at A4TD

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