

FS News: Mid-Month Missive

Hello Fair Shake News Subscribers ~

The most recent newsletter was mainly about formal education. While I enjoy and believe in formal education, I believe – even more strongly – that education is not synonymous with ‘school’. Education is about learning, development, and growth as a person-in-the-world. School is about how we demonstrate that we have acquired information (regardless of whether we retain it...which we mostly don’t). Since schooling today is focused on preparing us for employment, we are losing our relationship to the most important things in life. We do not exist to serve the economy; the economy exists to serve people. We only ‘work’ 40 hours per week, we LIVE all 168!

Now for the news:

**FRESH START for Loans in Default (Now with a mailing address!)**

Contact Fresh Start to see if you qualify for benefits such as restoring access to federal student aid. Write to P.O. Box 5609, Greenville, TX 75403. Include your name, social security number, date of birth, and the following: “I would like to use Fresh Start to bring my loans back into good standing.” Link to share: <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/default-fresh-start>

**DETERMINED TEEN**

Did you read the story about the 8th grader who walked 6 miles to his school so he could participate in the graduation ceremony? Xavier Jones walked more than 2 hours on that special day, and when he arrived at the event - held at Harris-Stowe University in St. Louis, MO - he received a four-year full-ride college tuition to that school on the spot. Share this story: [www.cbsnews.com/news/teen-walked-6-miles-8th-grade-graduation-college-scholarship/](http://www.cbsnews.com/news/teen-walked-6-miles-8th-grade-graduation-college-scholarship/)

**BIDEN’S Latest Student Loan Relief Effort**

He is providing ‘Loan Forgiveness’ of 39 billion dollars to 804,000 borrowers that are involved in ‘income-driven repayment plans’ – where the federal government cancels remaining balances for the borrower after they have made their payments for 20 or 25 years. They are not allowing people to apply for this relief; the education department determines who will receive it. Share this link to the Dept. of Ed website [www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/biden-harris-administration-provide-804000-borrowers-39-billion-automatic-loan-forgiveness-result-fixes-income-driven-repayment-plans](http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/biden-harris-administration-provide-804000-borrowers-39-billion-automatic-loan-forgiveness-result-fixes-income-driven-repayment-plans)

**JUVENILES IN PRISON**

The Bureau of Justice Statistics often has depressing news. Finally, here’s good news: The number of juveniles incarcerated in U.S. adult prisons or jails declined from a peak of 10,420 in 2008 to a low of 2,250 in 2021. Local jails had custody of 1,960 young people, while state and federal adult prisons held 290. Still 2,250 too many, but a decrease of 80%. Finally, the government is moving in a better direction...

**“SLAVERY” IS ON THE BALLET IN SEVERAL STATES (AP story)**

A movement that is gaining momentum: “The effort is part of a national push to amend the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that banned enslavement or involuntary servitude except as a form of criminal punishment.” So far, eight states are demanding an end to the exception clause: Oregon, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, Alabama, Tennessee, Vermont, Rhode Island. Share these links with your outside supporters! <https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterms-13th-amendment-slavery-4a0341cf82fa33942bda6a5d17ac4348> and <https://abolishslavery.us/>

PRISON GUARD LOST JOB FOR TAKING IN INMATE'S BABY: "It was the right thing to do." Corrections officer Roberta Bell said she has no regrets. She said she would take care of Katie Bourgeois' newborn for about two months while Bourgeois finished her prison time.

"I knew that God wanted me to follow my heart, and I knew I couldn't allow a baby to go to protective services when Katie really wanted that child," she said. "I sensed that Katie was a good person who made some bad choices." But Bell knew it violated the rules of her employment.

On May 16, when Katie Bourgeois went into labor and was sent to a hospital for the delivery, Bell said she was called into a meeting with administrators at the facility. "The captain said, 'We've learned that your contact information was given to an inmate,' and he told me it was against the rules. He asked if I was still going to go through with [caring for the baby], and I told him that if the hospital called me, I was going to go and get that child." She was terminated on the spot.

After her son was born, Bourgeois was sent back to prison to complete the remaining two months of her sentence; she wasn't allowed to see or talk to Bell. Since her release on July 4th, Bourgeois and her son have stayed with Bell, and will continue to until Bourgeois can find employment and save enough to live on her own.

Bell doesn't regret her decision but said "Losing my job has been hard — my kids have been helping me out."

Bell said her dream is to start a group home for women who have recently been released from prison and have no place to go.. (About 2000 babies are born in prison each year.) Share full story: [www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2023/07/15/corrections-officer-baby-fired-louisiana/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2023/07/15/corrections-officer-baby-fired-louisiana/)

### DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,  
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,  
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit,  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is strange with its twist and turns,  
As everyone of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about,  
When we might have won had we stuck it out;  
Don't give up when the pace seems slow,  
We may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out,  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And we can never tell how close we are,  
It may be near when it seems so far;  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,  
It's when things seem worst  
That you must not quit.                      - Unknown Author

"The poem has brought me through a lot of bad times when I could have just quit." - Anthony Herring

### TOM ASACKER: YOUR MIND HAS A MIND

Your mind has a mind.

You're walking down the street, rushing to a meeting. Finally arriving at your destination, you discover that it's located directly across the street. There's no crosswalk, and there's little traffic. You can continue on and cross at the intersection. You can turn around and walk back to the previous intersection. Or you can simply hoof it straight across the street. Of those three alternatives, which will you choose?

The simplest, most comforting and direct one. The one that makes the most "sense" to you, at that moment. And you won't even pause to consider your options. Unless you have a really good reason.

Perhaps you're pushing a baby in a stroller. Or a cop is standing next to you, glaring.

Your mind goes through a similar process when it forms beliefs. It “desires” the easiest, simplest, most comforting and direct path to an answer. Cognitive scientists have analyzed this propensity to death. They’ve even invented an entire lexicon known as cognitive biases.

But all you really need to know is this: Unlike a computer, your “analytical mind” has a mind of its own. One that “desires.” To rapidly generalize and estimate. To see what makes the most sense, based on what it has seen before. To seek comforting patterns and create cause and effect stories.

To find information that confirms its assumptions. And to remember information that’s consistent with its beliefs.

Yes, I know that referring to a “cognitive bias” as a “desire of the mind” is controversial. I don’t care. The human brain is not a computer. Your mind is alive. And it’s motivated.

Once you’ve come to terms with this mad reality, everything in life will suddenly become clear.

## QUOTES

“Where there is love and inspiration, I don’t think you can go wrong.” ~ Ella Fitzgerald

“Let nothing dim the light that shines within you.” - Maya Angelou

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” – Socrates

“The secret to having it all is knowing you already do.” – Unknown

“For those who dream of a return to “normalcy”: Normalcy was standing on the tracks watching an oncoming train & arguing about how fast it was going. Something just banged into us & sent us sprawling. It hurt. A lot. Now let’s get up, but NOT get back on the tracks again.” - David Graeber

“The reality that you experience, depends on what you believe.” - Leonard Mlodinow

“Shame is like fungus; it grows in the dark.” - unknown

“Our brains are not where decisions are made; our brains are where decisions are justified.” ~ Sue K. (me)

“What you focus on grows.” - old adage

“We don’t see things as they are; we see them as we are.” - Anonymous

“Man cannot remake himself without suffering, for he is both the marble and the sculptor.” - Alexis Carrel

“Always remember: your focus determines your reality.” - George Lucas

“Life is too short to be neglecting anything or one!” Clayton JaJuan Coleman

“Whatever you do, you need courage.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Music...began with man, primitive man, trying to duplicate nature’s sounds - winds, birds, animals, water, the crescendo of fire - after which great systems of learning were set up, only to discover that music is limitless.” - Duke Ellington

“Music is the only religion that really delivers the goods.” - Frank Zappa

“No matter how hard the world pushes against me, within me, there’s something stronger – something better, pushing right back.” - Albert Camus

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it.” ~ Charles R. Swindoll

I hope you found something of value in this Mid-Month Missive!

Thank you donors!!! Ubuntu, ~ sue

As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:  
2-1-1    Fairshake.net    HelpYourselfTherapy.com    FindHelp.org

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.