

HOLSTEE

Adventure Guide.



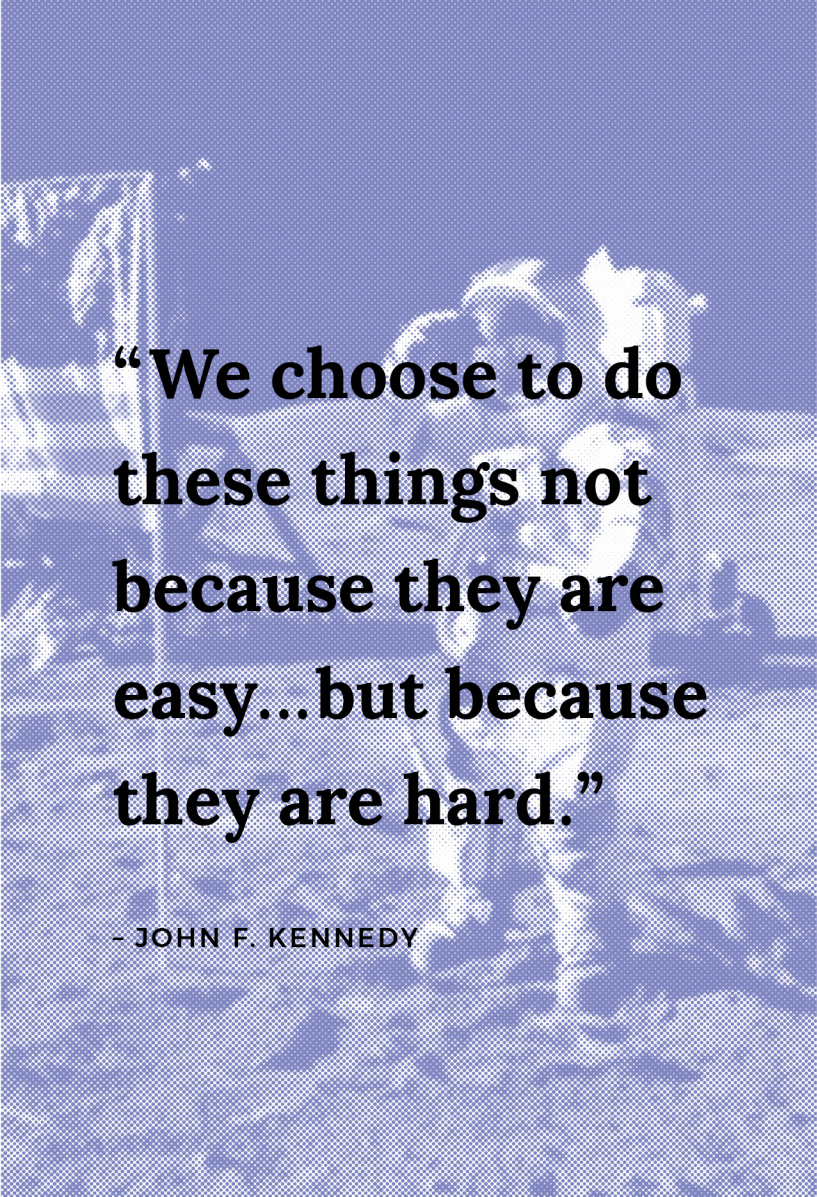
Match curiosity with
courage to take the
first step. The most
memorable part will
always be the journey.
Adventure awaits.

Warm-up

Adventure means something different to each of us.

**1) What words come to mind when you think about adventure?
Write them below.**

2) Circle the ones you'd like to experience more of this year.

A blue-tinted, halftone-style photograph of a person in a military uniform standing in front of a flag. The person is wearing a beret and a jacket, and is looking towards the camera. The flag is partially visible on the left side of the image. The background is a textured, blue surface.

**“We choose to do
these things not
because they are
easy...but because
they are hard.”**

- JOHN F. KENNEDY

Thought Starters

Research from the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA) shows that taking on activities that are both novel and challenging can help to build dense neural networks called **cognitive reserve**. As we age, this reserve is used to stave off brain diseases like Alzheimer's. Researchers who worked on this study share this important finding:

“People who have led more **cognitively stimulating lives** – through formal education, complex paid occupations, and/or cognitively engaging hobbies – have a reduced risk of developing dementia...

Cognitive engagement provides cognitive reserve that delays the onset of cognitive impairment, despite the fact that Alzheimer's disease pathology may be accumulating in the brain.”

– CCNA RESEARCHERS NICOLE D. ANDERSON, PHD, ANGELA K. TROYER, PHD, AND KELLY MURPHY, PHD

The bottom line: There are things we can do to actually change our cognitive response as we age. So, take on challenges (and adventures) now!

Here are some ways these researchers suggest we build cognitive reserve. Don't be afraid to get creative — the goal is to make this work for you and get that cognitive reserve rockin' and rollin'.

1) Bring creative thought and expression into your life. How might you nurture your inner artist?

2) Explore cultural activities. What museums, festivals, conferences, or other activities could you prioritize this year?

3) Do old activities in new ways. How might you be able to shake up your routine a little this month?

4) Learn something new. This could be absolutely anything! What's one skill you've always wanted to learn?

**“I have found adventure
in flying, in world travel, in
business, and even close at
hand...Adventure is a state
of mind — and spirit.”**

- JACQUELINE COCHRAN, a Pioneer in American Aviation

Stepping Out of Comfort

When it comes to adventure, [Seth Godin](#) (best-selling author, speaker, and business guru) reminds us of an important distinction between our comfort and safety zones:

Being outside our comfort zone means we are beyond our current experience level and there may be an opportunity for personal growth.

Being outside our safety zone is dangerous and may put us at risk of physical, emotional, or financial damage.

“We don’t have time to reevaluate the safety zone every time we make a decision, so over time, we begin to forget about the safety zone and merely pay attention to its twin sister, the comfort zone. We assume that what makes us comfortable also makes us safe.” – Seth Godin, *The Icarus Deception*

Long, long ago, when our ancient ancestors felt uncomfortable, it was likely that their safety was actually being threatened (like by a saber-tooth tiger). And our brains are still hardwired in this way. Rather than running the risk of flying too high, as Icarus did in Greek mythology, Seth writes that many of us have “built our comfort zone around being obedient and invisible, and as a result, we’re far too close to the waves.” So, it may be time to be a little more adventurous, for our own safety.

Get out of...

Expand...

Respect...

COMFORT
ZONE

GROWTH
ZONE

SAFETY
ZONE

What's one aspect of your life you'd like to grow in?

Stumped? Answer this first: What do you really want to change?

What has been holding you back from doing so?

What would this growth look like? How might you feel different if you made this change?

“This is what we all must learn to do, for this is how maps get charted – by taking wrong turns that lead to surprising passageways that open into spectacularly unexpected new worlds.”

- ELIZABETH GILBERT

Discussion

Use these questions as a starting point for dialogue with friends and family about seeking adventure. We know it's not always easy to dive right into the hard questions, so we created a few different question levels. We challenge you to try out whatever levels feel comfortable.

LEVEL ONE: GET STARTED

Who is the most adventurous person you know?

How do you define adventure?

LEVEL TWO: GET HONEST

What was your favorite adventure as a child?

If you could learn any new skill, what would it be?

LEVEL THREE: GET DEEP

Looking back, what has been your greatest adventure so far?

What's the hardest thing about stepping out of your comfort zone?

Review

To help you keep these ideas and reflection questions at the front of your mind this month, here's a short recap:

1 Choose your own. Adventure isn't limited to traveling and climbing mountains. Our everyday lives are filled with adventures. Take time to reflect on what adventure means to you and how you hope to prioritize more of it this year.

2 Brain power. Research shows that when we engage in new or challenging activities, we build dense neural networks called cognitive reserve. As we age our cognitive reserve is used to stave off brain diseases and reduce the risk of developing dementia.

3 Get active. There are many things we can do to build cognitive reserve: take up new hobbies, do new things, engage in creative expression, and enjoy stimulating cultural activities like visiting museums.

4 Comfort vs safety. The goal is to be within our safety zone and stretch our comfort zone as much as we can to let growth happen, while not risking our wellbeing and safety.

This kit is inspired by our readings from the researchers at the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, Seth Godin, Jacqueline Cochran, and Elizabeth Gilbert. For further reading and curated resources from them and on this topic, check out holstee.com/adventure.

Every adventure starts with yes.