

Atlanta



Want to be more organized, better looking, smarter, more confident, healthier, and just plain happier? If not, maybe it's time to look into some counseling. If so, we've got just the feature for you. In the following pages, you'll not only improve yourself in the aforementioned ways, you'll also be able to solve a Rubik's Cube, spend less time in the office, talk about art, finger joust, and more. Go ahead, live and learn.



come back, you can see things a little differently.

- » Try a continuing education program or workshop to get out, do something different, be around new people, and learn a new skill.
- » Eat right, sleep well, and get exercise.
- » Try to be positive. If you're giving off a negative vibe, it can turn people off and start a downward spiral.

get organized in three steps

Need to get your life in order? Daunted by that jam-packed closet or cluttered attic? **Judith Kolberg, Decatur-based professional organizer** and author of *Conquering Chronic Disorganization* and other books, knows how to make it happen:

- » There's never a good time to get organized. If you keep procrastinating, waiting for that three hours you need to get organized, you'll never get it done. Do what you can when you have the time.
- » Break it down. Don't set your sights on, say, cleaning the whole garage in one day. Do half one Saturday and half the next. That's the best way to keep your morale up.
- » Cultivate your inner dictator. Be really, really picky about saving, buying, and making commitments. Saying yes to everything will leave you overwhelmed. This is especially true about keeping stuff; don't be afraid to throw it out!

spot a meth lab

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, last year meth continued a four-year trend as Atlanta's fastest-growing drug problem. Although less and less meth is being made locally these days, says **Dr. Brian Dew, chair of the Atlanta Meth Task Force**, it's still possible your neighbors are cooking up a batch in their basement. Authorities are more likely to find a home-grown lab in the predominantly white northern suburbs than they are in the city. Mom and pop labs are no longer making huge quantities of the drug as they did five or

seven years ago, Dew says, but it's still easy and inexpensive to make. Addicts and dealers simply hit every drugstore in town to buy the restricted two boxes of cold medicine containing pseudoephedrine. Other ingredients are also readily available. (What? You didn't actually think we'd give you the recipe for meth, did you?) "It's hard to know if someone is producing the drug," Dew admits, "because it's easy to hide, especially in small quantities." Still, there are warning signs. If you suspect your neighbor of shady



undertakings, ask yourself if you've noticed any of the following:

- A heavy metallic smell emanating from the

home (the most important sign).

- Large quantities of fertilizer.
- A significant change in the upkeep of the lawn or exterior

of the home.

- Unsupervised children who look unkempt.
- Lots of people coming and going.
- Indications of

domestic violence. If these indicators cause you to have a strong, valid suspicion, Dew urges you to call the police.

work the room

Not only is **Fonzone Bentley** a style maven, Diddy's former umbrella holder, and a hip-hop artist on Kanye West's G.O.O.D. music label, he also **wrote the book on confidence**. Literally. The author of *Advance Your Swagger: How to Use Manners, Confidence, and Style to Get Ahead* told us how it's done:

- » **Maintain eye contact.** If you

don't have good eye contact you're not going to give off the sense that you're confident. If you've got your head down, you're going to look like you don't belong.

- » **Have a good handshake.** Without a doubt when you give someone a dead fish handshake, it says a lot about you, whether it's conscious or not.
- » **Dress the part.** Clothing is a language of its own. Being

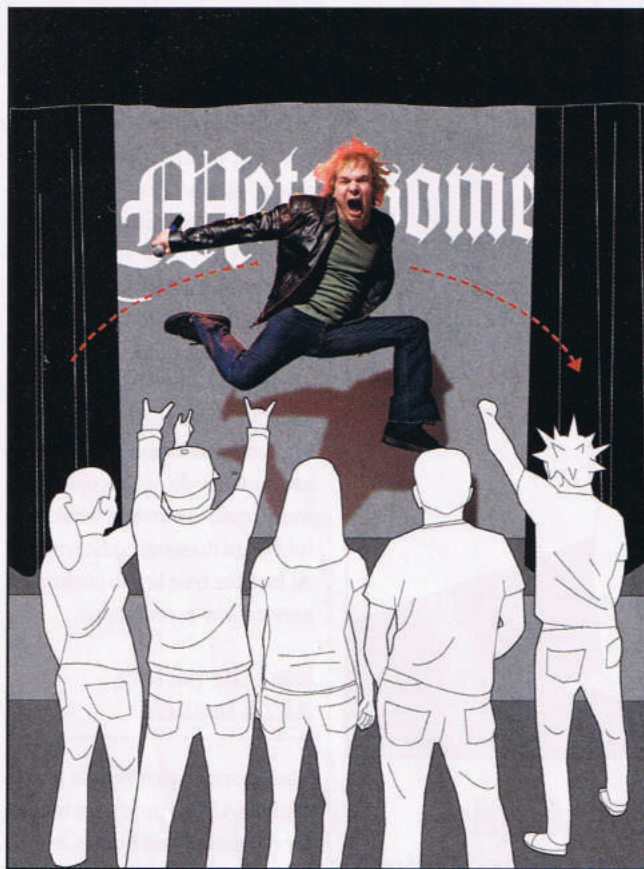
elegantly appointed makes a difference when people meet you. You can wear your button-ups or white tees, but you also need to know how to put on a tuxedo.

- » **Be polite.** Manners plus confidence plus style equals swagger. You can be stylish, but if you're rude no one is going to want to be around you. Conversely, if you're mannerable but not dressed appropriately, you won't even gain entry into an event.

be happier

We asked **Dr. Corey Keyes, Emory University sociology professor and "happiness" expert**, how to turn our frowns upside-down. "Most Americans get stuck in their emotional life, but happiness isn't just about feeling good, it's about finding meaning in life and constantly engaging the question of why we're here," says the editor of *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*. "That's not a one-time deal—you've got to keep answering that question throughout your life. It's a more spiritual outlook. I'm talking about seeing the day and the people around you, and your environment, as something pretty precious that you're trying to connect to while you're here. The things you have and that you're surrounded with aren't to be taken for granted, good or bad."





be a rock star

Four and a half years ago, **English Nick, 99X DJ** and **host of Metalsome Incorporated karaoke**, was there when the first courageous rock-star-wannabe took the stage to belt out Billy Idol's "Rebel Yell" in front of Metalsome's four-man band. Since then, Metalsome live-band karaoke has grown to a three-night-a-week phenomenon at the 10 High Club that draws an eclectic crowd of nerds, hipsters, parents, executives, musicians, and students. It has even been visited by true rock stars from Guns n' Roses, Quiet Riot, and R.E.M. Nick has these tips for aspiring rock stars:

- » **Drink.** Nick suggests Jäger shots but says any social lubricant will take the edge off of stage fright.
- » **But not too much.** "There was a guy who tried to do 360 degree backflips from standing," says Nick. "He did it all the way through the song. The first three or four times, he landed flat on his back, but he was so f'ed up that he just kept trying. He did finally land on his feet after the fourth or fifth attempt."
- » **Stay calm.** "The thing about Metalsome is that we're all so supportive of people. The band will coax you and tell you when it's your turn to come in—they're kind of like your babysitter if you're not sure what's going on. You have nothing to worry about, unless you're just going to stand there and not even try to sing. If you get up there and just stare at the screen, the band will stop."
- » **Don't tuck your shirt in.** "Rock stars don't tuck their shirts in. Country bands do that."

wash your hands



You probably thought you mastered this in kindergarten, but **Anna Bowen, hand-washing specialist** for the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, might make you reconsider. She has traveled the world studying the importance of properly polishing your paws and has this advice:

- » **Use soap.** Although there are conflicting findings, antibacterial soap doesn't appear to have an edge over other soaps when it comes to reducing the spread of germs that cause certain infections or diseases. Alcohol-based sanitizers should only be used when soap is not available.
- » **Thoroughly scrub every part.** Temperature doesn't matter as

much as the rubbing action.

- » **Wash long enough,** at least twenty seconds—about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.

get great skin

Atlanta native **Raven-Symoné** is best known for her roles on *The Cosby Show* and *That's So Raven*. But she's not just an actress (her film, *College Road Trip* with Martin Lawrence, is out this month), R&B songstress (her new album is also on the way), dancer, and producer; she's also a how-to guru. Her website,

ravensymonepresents.com, features projects for teens and tweens. "There are a lot of adult shows for how-to tips and crafts and decorating," she says, "but nothing for young adults. I wanted to be that voice."

Aware of her target demographic's concerns, Symoné devotes space to the pursuit of clear skin. "To wash my face, I use baby wipes. They're very mild, and I hate to be nasty but if they're good for there, they must be good for there, too. I mean, come on, right? I pride myself on my baby-soft skin."

"Another tip," says Symoné, "is to,

before you go to sleep, put on some shea butter. I love shea butter, the hard kind that kind of melts in your hands. It makes you so soft."

On her how-to site, Symoné helps viewers make homemade face masks. But she admits she doesn't have as much time for DIY skincare these days. "I did it a lot more when I was younger. I used to be a concoction person. I used to take face masks and doctor them up with fruits and vegetables and things like that. Now I'm kind of on a mission to find that perfect already-made one. I have traveled all over and found this wonderful skincare line in Spain called Alqvimia. I love it, and I hoard it because I can't get any more. I refuse to fly to Spain to get it—I'm not that fabulous."



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK HEAGNEY AND ERIC CAPOSELLA; RAVEN SYMONÉ: ANDREW MACPHERSON



walk the red carpet

Rapper Chris "Ludacris" Bridges has hung with hip-hop royalty at the BET awards, been in the company of stuffy journalists at the White House Correspondents Association dinner, and cavorted with Meryl Streep at the Oscars. The Grammy and Screen Actors Guild Award winner shared his red-carpet secrets:

- » **Wear sunshades.** If you wear sunglasses everyone thinks you're looking at them.
- » **Act like you belong.** When

you hit that carpet you have got to *look* confident. It'll be what people remember.

» **Make sure your look is together.** You've got to coordinate. I'm such a pro at it now it's second nature. I just go to my closet and find something fly.

throw like a girl

"Throw a ball like you're throwing a pie. That's how most girls throw," says **Jennifer Yee, Georgia Tech softball team second baseman** and member of Canada's 2008 Olympic softball

avoid identity theft



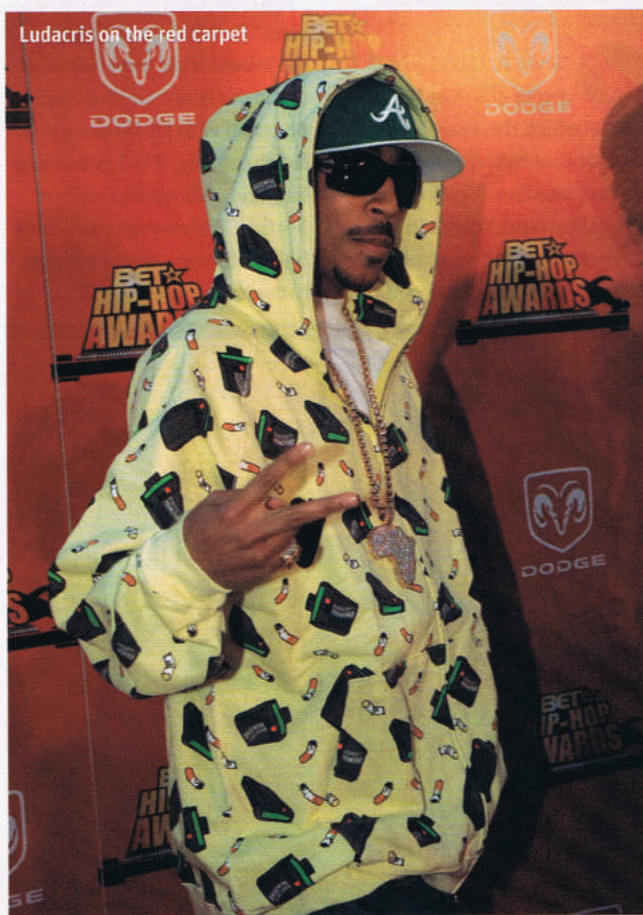
A few years ago, I received a notice in the mail from the state of Georgia telling me my driver's license had been suspended thanks to a DUI conviction in

Sarasota. The problem was, I had never been to Sarasota. Over the next few weeks of frantic phone calls and faxed police records, I found out what had happened: My driver's license, which I thought I had lost some months before, had actually been stolen by one of the ugliest men alive, who went on a drunken tear in Florida one night and gave the myopic cop who arrested him my driver's license. Thus, in the eyes of Florida and Georgia, I was a criminal (and ugly).

It took several weeks and dozens of hours to clear my name, but in the identity theft business, a victim is forced to prove his innocence. While my guy was eventually caught and put in prison, most identity thieves aren't. Every year, as many as 9 million Americans are victims of some kind of identity theft, according to the Federal Trade Commission. Thieves dig through trash, steal from mailboxes, and take advantage of weak firewalls to mine personal data online. But there are many things you can do to lessen your risk:

- 1 Buy a cross-cut shredder. Tearing up your bank statements or tax returns isn't enough. Thieves can piece them together easily.
- 2 Keep your social security number to yourself. It's amazing how many places ask for your social security number. Your dentist doesn't need to know your SSN. Leave that space blank. For that matter, make sure your employer doesn't use your SSN as an employee ID number.
- 3 Consider freezing your credit reports. This prevents virtually anyone from using
- 4 Put a lock on your mailbox. Stealing from a mailbox may be a federal crime, but when's the last time you heard someone was arrested for that?
- 5 Check your credit report regularly. You can check it once a year for free at annualcreditreport.com.

—Steve Fennessy



Ludacris on the red carpet

LUDACRIS: PHOTO BY CHRIS WEST

pay off your credit cards

There are simple steps you can take to help you pay off debt, says **Suzanne Boas, president of the Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Greater Atlanta**. Start by finding out where your cash is going. Track your expenses for a month. "People are astounded at how much money is going into their mouths, whether it's coffee, vending machines, or the drive-thru window," she says. Next, map out a plan for reducing those expenses. Do you need a cable plan with 250 channels or four cell phone plans for the family? Start paying down the card with the highest interest rate. Always pay more than the minimum payment and pay on time. Overlimit and late fees can reverse progress in a hurry. "It takes a lot of discipline to work yourself out of debt," Boas says. "But in the long run, it's discipline that's going to help you succeed."

team. "I don't know why that is... It's really not that difficult to do it right. Take a long stride, point your elbow at the target, pull your elbow back, bring the ball forward, snap your wrist, follow through."

Speak to a large group

Since joining the WSB-TV news crew in 1975, anchor **Monica Pearson** (formerly Kaufman) has earned dozens of honors, including twenty-eight local and regional Emmy Awards. Atlan-



ta's favorite newscaster not only speaks to a metro area of more than five million people nightly, but also regularly accepts speaking engagements for groups of all sizes. Here's how she handles talking to the masses:

- » I always try to keep it short because people get bored easily. I never speak longer than fifteen minutes.
- » I always tell my audience there's no such thing as a silly, stupid, or embarrassing question, as long as it gets you information you didn't have before.
- » I talk to my computer when I'm writing because then it's conversational and it's also a way to—I don't want to say memorizing, but being familiar with it, which is the very same reason I rewrite my copy on TV, so that it sounds more like me.
- » I usually type on half the page, and I use all caps because I can see it better. If you can read tiny

type, then fine. I do mine in almost 16 point because I need big letters—I'm sixty years old.

» Be simple. This is the phrase I use all the time with my kids: You want to *express*, not *impress*. I say it all the time. Most people don't want to do that. They want to show you how much education they have and what they've learned, and really the best way to give information to people is in simple terms so they'll take away. It's also the way I like to do news copy. I just want to give the information.

grill the perfect steak

 **Kevin Rathbun, chef/owner of Kevin Rathbun Steak** (which this magazine named Best New Steakhouse in 2007 and *Details* called one of the best steakhouses in America), says the perfect steak starts with a premium prod-

uct—prime meat versus choice or select. Only a small percentage of the highest quality cuts are sold in grocery stores, says Rathbun. They're priced 25 to 35 percent higher, but have more marbling—small streaks of fat that give the meat a marbled appearance—which is what gives a steak its flavor. Plus, with prime grade, there's no need to oil or marinate the meat, just add salt and pepper.

Before firing up the grill, leave the beef out at room temperature for an hour. When the charcoal is white hot, start searing. "You're looking for that perfect char," Rathbun says. To keep the juices inside, move the meat to a lower heat—another flame or a shelf with the lid closed—to finish cooking. The key is a combination of direct and indirect heating. The average one-and-a-half-inch steak should take ten to twelve minutes to grill.

whip yourself into shape

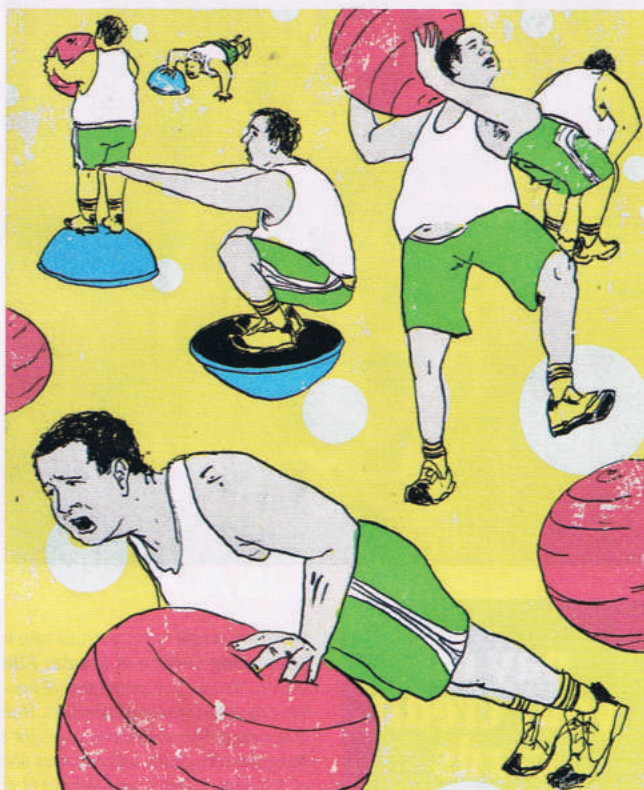
Rod Johnson, personal trainer for H.E.A.T. (High Energy Alternative Training) Personal Training Studio has a client list that includes WSB-TV anchor Jovita Moore and 107.5 FM radio personality/Georgia Lottery announcer Rene Miller. Johnson is a pro at whipping bodies into shape—even if it incites some tears. Try some of his toughest tasks... if you can take the pain.

» **Exercise:** As if a traditional push-up weren't challenging enough, Johnson recommends doing push-ups with your hands on a stability ball, shoulder width apart. **Payoff:** Great shoulders and pecs, no under-arm jiggle. **Reaction:** It's more challenging because you've got to stabilize the core [of the body]," explains Johnson. "The first thing they say is, 'I can't do

this,' or, 'This is too hard.' I correct them and say, 'No, it's just challenging.'" **Exercise:** Squats on top of a bosu [ball]. Start off standing straight with the ball, which looks like a stability ball cut in half, beneath you. Lower the body, then stand up. Repeat. **Payoff:** Great thighs. **Reaction:** "They tend to stumble trying to stay on top of the ball. I've had

some people so terrible at it I'll have to intervene and say, 'Okay, we're not going to do that right now.'" **Exercise:** Single-leg wood chop. Stand on your right foot with your left foot raised while holding a medicine ball over your left shoulder. Bring the ball to the outside of the right leg. **Payoff:** A stronger lower back, which helps prevent

back injuries, plus toned legs and thighs. **Reaction:** You're balancing on one foot and trying to control your movements at the same time, so "a lot of people literally just fall to the floor," says Johnson. "I've had people get to the point that they're about to cry. Some people get to the point that they're yelling at me saying, 'I am not going to do that again!'"



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