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Q MAGAZINE



featuring:
E J MANN

coming out through stand-up

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q feature: COMING OUT THROUGH STAND-UP COMEDY

There is nothing quite like the laughter of 250 people in a packed-out comedy club. The energy in the room rushes through you and your vulnerability on stage quickly morphs into the feeling of being on top of the world. This was a kind of vulnerability I'd never shown before, and it forced me to come out of the closet I'd been cowering in for most of my adult life.

After a quiet night at home with my (rather secret) girlfriend of a little over a year, she informed me she'd enrolled me in a stand-up comedy course in November 2022. I protested; the stage was home to her as a professional keynote speaker, but not to me. I was just a 28-year-old public servant from a little council outside of Brisbane and didn't have the confidence or ability to command a room and tell jokes.

My first show took place in December 2022 at Sit Down Comedy Club in Brisbane. Supported by my girlfriend, friends and work colleagues, I wrote and performed a five-minute set, complete with a little guitar song about the quirky posts on my local community Facebook page. I sung about dog parks discriminating the cats, about the argumentative guy with an ankle monitor at the local pub, and my confidence onstage grew with every laugh. I finished to a massive round of applause and the realisation that I had found my niche and the purpose I'd



always searched for. This also marked the beginning of a crazy little journey towards coming out to strangers, family and friends.

I dove straight into writing and performing at comedy open mics around Brisbane. Dad was my biggest (if not most surprised) supporter, listening to my gig highlights over the phone on the late drives home. He'd ask when my next gig was and I'd lie and say I hadn't pencilled in any future shows. My comedy came from my real-life experiences as a woman in her first lesbian relationship, and as far as Dad knew, I was straight as Brisbane's Expo 88 Skynneedle.

I tackled comedy much like I tackled my first lesbian relationship; with all guns blazing. My fourth ever show was the first heat of Melbourne International Comedy Festival's RAW Competition; an Australia-wide search for the best up-and-coming comedy talent. I won a ticket straight to the Queensland semi-finals in front of an audience of 250 people. Dad called and asked if he'd be invited to the semis. I guess it was time.

This wouldn't be the first occasion I'd have to come out in the process of performing comedy. First it was to the strangers that would come along to the shows... but this was easier. They didn't know me and there were no real consequences. My work colleagues came next. Perhaps out of hunger, I had let slip in the lunchroom that I was trying my hand at stand-up, and my sleuthy fellow staff members had found out where I was next performing and booked tickets. I came out to them before the show and they hugged me, telling me they were excited to know the real me.

Armed with the confidence to finally come out, I cornered my family in the kitchen following a weekend BBQ and told them that I had broken up with my ex-boyfriend.

"EJ, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that out," Dad said.



I told Dad I had been dating a girl for over a year and he repeated that "it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure that out" and asked if I wanted tea or coffee. Dad never was much of a talker, and we made coffee to drink in front of the TV in comfortable silence.

My family came along to the Semi-Finals of the Raw Comedy Competition, where I turned my experience of coming out to them into a new song. The song was an instant hit - I strummed my guitar along to lyrics about coming out to a family that favours sport over feelings, with verses like "it's ok to be gay we can overlook the yucky bits... as long as the stereotype fits" and "a lesbian is better than a straight daughter as long as she likes sports... do you like sports?". I won the round and made it through to the State Finals of the competition. My family was beaming with pride.

"Where'd you get those pipes?" Dad said. He was stoked to have made it into a song, even if it was a bit exaggerated.

Though I didn't make it through to the National Finals competition, I was stoked to have made it as a state finalist by finally being my authentic, proud gay self. I set about booking more and more shows over the coming months. I celebrated 2023 World Pride in Sydney and performed my first interstate show the day after the Mardi Gras Parade, with a hangover and unwashable traces of glitter covering my face.

My proudest moment on stage came in June when I won my heat of Good Chat Comedy Club's Brat Pack Competition in June, with a new song about going home with a girl that smells like my grandma. At the grand-final I took home crowd favourite for the night, in front of an amazing, supportive group of friends and family, who now know and love the real me, and are all excited to dance and celebrate at my lesbian wedding next May.

I've just completed my 40th show and am about to head to Adelaide for my first South Australian gigs. The last people I have left to come out to are my grandparents. They are itching to see my stand-up, but I'm going to have to come out to them as not only queer, but also as a woman who swears and drinks craft beer on stage. And for the latter revelation, I'm not sure that they're ready.



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q concert: CHINA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

AUSFENG Presents
China National Symphony Orchestra
Australia Tour 2023

The China National Symphony Orchestra will make their return to Australia this year after an absence of six years. Over 80 musicians make up this world-class orchestra under the baton of CNSO's conductor Maestro Li Xincao.

They will perform one concert only at Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne on 28 November, 1 & 2 December respectively. The concert also features violinist Lu Siqing, the first Asian prizewinner of the Paganini Competition.



Prestigious conductor Li Xincao has shown his adaptability to different programs and his correct understanding of different styles of works. He was praised especially for his excellent performance in German and Austrian works and in the new works by the Chinese contemporary composers.

Over the years, Li Xincao has spread music to all five continents with worldwide recognition both in the field of symphony and opera. In particular, he has led China National Symphony Orchestra for historic visits around the world, winning enthusiastic responses and high praise from authoritative music critics from all over the world.

Well-recognized as one of the most outstanding Chinese violinists of today, Lu Siqing performs regularly with major national and international orchestras.

As the first asian violinist to win the esteemed International Paganini Violin Competition, Lu's performances have received great acclaim in some of the world's most prestigious concert halls and in more than forty countries and territories, including the Musikverein in Vienna, Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall in New York City, Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles, Sydney Opera House, among others.

The China National Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1956, is the most outstanding Chinese orchestra and has been instrumental in promoting and developing the art of symphonic music in China, introducing Chinese audiences to a large repertoire of classical, romantic, modern and

contemporary orchestral works by both Western and Asian composers. Serving as a cultural ambassador, CNSO have engaged in intercultural dialogues and promoted friendship between China and the world through music during many international tours.

The CNSO has performed with many top artists including Herbert von Karajan, Seiji Ozawa, Charles Dutoit, Krystof Penderecki, David Oistrakh, Yehudi Menuhin, Isaac Stern, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Martha Argerich, Mischa Maisky, Giuseppe Giacomini, Lang Lang, Wang Yuja and Han-Na Chang.

During the past decades, the CNSO has undertaken international tours to the USA, United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Spain, Mexico, Japan, and many other cities. The London Times praised the orchestra "as a sophisticated musical group with vigorous sounds and excellent technique." The Washington Post mentioned the Orchestra "is a solid, energetic and meticulously drilled ensemble."

For the Orchestra's Australian tour 2023, the CNSO will perform a selection of masterpieces including Overture Dance of The Yao People, The Butterfly Lovers composed by He Zhanhao and Chen Gang and Beethoven Symphony No. 7 in A Major op. 92. Overture Dance of the Yao People is one of the best known and most popular Chinese instrumental compositions of the second half of the 20th century that inspired by the long drum dance.

The Butterfly Lovers is one of the most famous Chinese works of orchestral music written for a Western-style orchestra, an adaptation of an ancient legend, the Butterfly Lovers. Beethoven Symphony No. 7 in A Major op. 92 is remarked by Beethoven as one of his best works and the second movement, "Allegretto" is frequently performed separately to this day.

This is a unique opportunity for Australian audiences to experience exquisite music and witness the supreme skill and artistry of the China National Symphony Orchestra.

"A sophisticated musical group with vigorous sounds and excellent technique". - The London Times

"A solid, energetic and meticulously drilled ensemble". - The Washington Post

"a large range of classical, romantic and contemporary orchestral works". – Sydney Morning Herald

Venue: Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House
Date & Time: Tuesday 28 November, 8pm
Tickets: Premium \$189 | A Res \$159 | B \$129 | C \$99 | D \$69
Discounts for groups of 10 or more, concession for senior, student

Booking:sydneyoperahouse.com or 02 9250 7777

Venue: Adelaide Town Hall
Date & Time: Friday 1 December, 6pm
Tickets: Premium \$149 | A Res \$129 | B \$109 | C \$89 | D \$69
Discounts for groups of 10 or more, concession for senior, student

Booking:ticketek.com.au

Venue: Hamer Hall, Arts Centre Melbourne
Date & Time: Saturday 2 December, 2pm
Tickets: VIP \$169 | Premium \$149 | A Res \$129 | B \$109 | C \$89 | D \$69
Discounts for groups of 10 or more, concession for senior, student

Booking:artscentremelbourne.com.au or 1300 182 183

q libations: IDEAL BEER TEMPS

The ideal temperature to drink different kinds of beers



No one wants warm beer. I think it's safe to assume we already all agree on this. If you want warm beer, you're a barbarian. But being too cold is also a problem for beer. Aromas are made up of lots of tiny particles in the air, and you want those particles to get into your nose. When a beer's too cold those particles sit still in the glass, huddling up and refusing to budge. And very cold beer numbs your tastebuds, too. This might be fine for bland commercial lagers, but it's not ideal for a flavoursome beer!

Most refrigerators are set between 1°C and 3°C to keep your food fresh. This is fine for storing beer in, but you don't want to drink good beer at that temperature – you want it a bit warmer to show off its aromas and flavours. There are two simple ways to bring your beer up to a better drinking temperature: to warm it up a little/slowly, take it out of the fridge and wait – the room temperature will do the work; to warm it up more/quickly, wrap your hands around it – your body heat will do the work.

Different kinds of beer benefit from different temperatures, depending on what that style is emphasising: pale lagers are less about highlighting aromas and more about cool refreshment, whereas you want your IPA to be highly aromatic and a little refreshing. And a fine imperial stout is all about nuance, and not for chugging to cool you down after mowing the lawn. This isn't a hard and fast rule, but if in doubt: the darker the beer, the higher the ideal serving temperature.

Here's a guide for different styles:

- Bland or bad beer – as cold as possible. Numb those tastebuds.
- Pale lagers and pale ales – 3–7°C. Take it out of the fridge a few minutes before you're ready to open it. Try not to hold it in your hands while you're not drinking it, so it stays colder for longer.
- Ambers and reds, IPAs – 4–10°C. Take it out of the fridge a few minutes early, then don't be afraid to hold it in your hands as you drink.
- Dark beers, strong ales – 7–13°C. Take it out of the fridge several minutes before you're ready to open it, and cup it in your hands while you drink.
- Imperial stouts, barley wines, strong ales, quads – 10–14°C. This is approximately 'cellar temperature'. Take it out of the fridge several minutes before you're ready to open it, and nurse that beer between your hands like it's a baby bird. If you're weird like me, you might even clamp it between your thighs for a bit. (Never do this to a baby bird, though.) Hold it in your hands while you drink.
- Sour beers – dealer's choice. Want to dial down the acid? Drink it cooler. Want to dial up the fruity nuances? Warm it up a bit.

Remember, the temperature of your beer will keep changing after you open it. It's an opportunity to appreciate how the aromas and nuances of flavour keep opening up as you drink.

Edited extract from *Beer Drinker's Toolkit* by Mick Wüst (Gelding Street Press \$32.99), available at all leading retailers and www.geldingstreetpress.com



beer drinker's toolkit



— EQUIP YOURSELF TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD OF BEER —

Mick Wüst

q music: STEWART TAYLOR

In his latest single release, "Favorite Ex," out artist Stewart Taylor sings about an old flame he regretfully had to extinguish. "We ended things when I left New York to pursue my career in Los Angeles," he explains. "We both knew life would eventually take me out West and that our time together was limited, but I often wonder what would've been had I stayed." The song merges eighties vibes with today's pop and R&B and is the second ballad Stewart Taylor has written about his former lover. His debut single, "Mess Your Hair Up," released in 2019, is about him too. Stewart says that years later, on a phone call, he thanked his ex for being so wonderful and told him that he was in fact, his favorite ex. "I look back and smile about what we had." Produced by Romanian hitmaker MADS (David Guetta, Imagine Dragons), Stewart Taylor's "Favorite Ex" is being distributed independently and is available on Apple Music, Spotify, and all digital platforms. Its video is available on Youtube.



The video for "Favorite Ex" is a captivating reflection of the song. Its' gorgeous ocean vistas (filmed in Malibu) and sweeping desert scenes (filmed in the Mojave Desert) whisk viewers through the tumultuousness of an unwelcome breakup. "Walking through the desert for hours on end had me in awe and also brought up some very heavy feelings," Stewart recalls. "It really captured the sadness I felt when leaving the relationship."

The video draws inspiration from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and its theme that every party eventually has to end. As they do in the novel, beautiful things fall apart. The chandelier on the desert floor represents the end of opulence in the relationship, while the white roses represent the end of the romance.

Benjamin Farren directed the video. Julie Vegliante, who has worked with Lady Gaga, choreographed, and German designer Joseph Auren designed and styled Stewart's looks in the video. "The beautiful outfits are among my favorite parts of the 'Favorite Ex' video," Stewart says. "While filming, I imagined myself as a lonely prince, dressed to the nines and surrounded by all of this beauty with no one to share it with."

He admits that, in real life, learning his former lover had found someone new was especially difficult for Stewart to come to terms with. "In the song, I fantasize about getting back with my ex and stealing him from his new man, but I would never actually do something like that," he laughs. "I definitely took some poetic license for that one!"

Stewart Taylor is an LA-based singer, songwriter, dancer, and MMG actor/model. He grew up in a small town outside of New York City, where he began writing songs and performing in local talent shows and Lower East Side clubs. Since graduating from Berklee College of Music in Boston, he's collaborated with Grammy-nominated songwriters and producers including Charlie Puth and Kara DioGuardi and has penned songs for Romanian pop star Antonia, American Idol's David

Hernandez, and RuPaul's Drag Race's JuJu Bee, Mo Heart, and Manila Luzon.

He has also released several singles including his funk and R&B inspired debut single "Mess Your Hair Up" and 2022's "Maybe We Shouldn't Talk".

Stewart Taylor is an active voice in the LGBTQ+ community and his coming out story was featured in the New York Times bestselling book, *It Gets Better: Coming Out, Overcoming Bullying, and Creating a Life Worth Living*.

The Hector Fonseca and Thiago Ducky remix of "Favorite Ex" will drop on Friday, September 8th, followed by the DJ Mentol and Scott Storch remix later in the month.

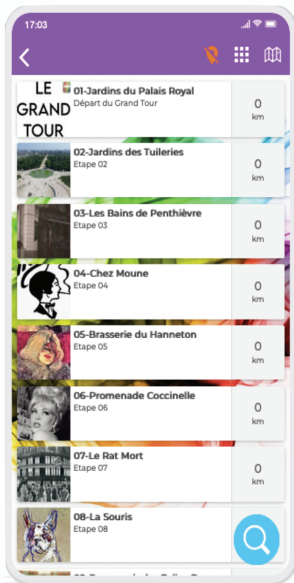
Stewart Taylor's "Favorite Ex" is being distributed independently and is available on Apple Music, Spotify, and all digital platforms. Its video is available on YouTube. Follow on IG @imstewarttaylor and [stewarttaylorofficial.com](https://www.stewarttaylorofficial.com)







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q advice: BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY

5 science-backed ways to boost your productivity

Do you want to enhance your productivity and make the most of your day? By incorporating science-backed strategies into your daily routine, you can boost your productivity, accomplish more, and lead a more fulfilling life.

Here are 5 science-backed strategies that leading CEOs use to achieve goals more efficiently and anyone can adopt.

1. Wake up your circadian clock.

Starting your day right can have a profound impact on your productivity, health, and overall satisfaction with life. Dr. Andrew Huberman, a Professor of Neurobiology and Ophthalmology at Stanford University School of Medicine, suggests that managing cortisol levels is crucial for optimising productivity. To synchronise your body's internal clock and enhance alertness, aim to expose yourself to bright sunlight within 30-60 minutes of waking up. This helps regulate cortisol levels, which play a role in your immune system, metabolism, and focus throughout the day. Additionally, waiting 90 minutes before consuming your morning coffee allows cortisol and caffeine to have maximum effect, preserving your natural cortisol pattern and reducing the chances of caffeine dependency.

2. Plan your day.

Productivity requires planning. When you write down your goals, tasks, and their specific timings, you significantly increase your chances of accomplishing them. Laura Mae Martin, Google's executive productivity advisor, recommends prioritising your top three tasks and focusing on them until they are completed. By planning your day at a micro-level and including smaller tasks that can be done between meetings, you can maintain a sense of progress and avoid distractions.

3. Align work with your chronotype.

Understanding your body's energy patterns, known as your chronotype, can help you structure your tasks for maximum productivity. Some people are naturally more energetic in the morning (larks), while others are at their peak in the evening (owls). Most individuals fall somewhere in between. To optimise your productivity, Dan Pink, author of "When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing," suggests scheduling your most important tasks during your energy peaks and less demanding tasks during energy troughs³. Taking regular breaks throughout the day can also help you stay focused and avoid burnout.

4. Batch tasks for efficiency.

Batching tasks can create a sense of momentum and improve efficiency. It's not just about batching emails; you can also batch meetings, calls, or virtual events. Research shows that having a meeting scheduled within the next hour or two decreases productivity by 22%. To avoid distractions and maintain focus, try to schedule meetings within a specific time frame, leaving buffers between them to catch up on other tasks. This way, you can allocate dedicated periods for deep work and accomplish more in less time.

5. Implement the Better Week method

The Better Week method is a proven productivity process that helps you go from knowing what needs to be done to actually achieving it. By externalising your memory, restoring control in your life, stimulating action, and creating a vision of a great week, you can free up an average of half a day each week⁵. Here are 5 steps to take control of your week and make it a Better Week:

1. Start with a blank slate and plot 3 non-work-related activities into your week. These activities energise and stimulate you. Eg. Time with loved ones, physical activity, hobbies, etc.
2. Colour code your diary. Categorise your activities by colour so you can easily assess your week with a glance. Eg. Physical activity is blue, travel is yellow, hobbies are purple, deep work is pink, internal work meeting grey, external work meeting orange, etc.
3. Plot your work-related activities and remember to colour code.
4. Add a daily warm-up and daily warm-down to the start and end of every day. 15 minutes is sufficient. This time allows you to plan what you need to achieve in the day and to assess what you did in the day and to carry onto tomorrow.
5. Prune your calendar. Your life is every changing. Continuously assess how to make your week "better" by assessing where you can batch colours, cut down meeting times, and plug in more non-work-related activities to give you energy.

Andrew May is recognised as one of the world's leading Mental Skills Coaches, with clients including elite athletes, CEOs, and organisations. He is the host of the Performance Intelligence Podcast, and founder and CEO of StriveStronger.com, a digital physical and psychological wellbeing consultancy and is on a mission to wake people up to a better way of living, working, and leading. Find out more at www.andrewmay.com



q health: SPRING SWEET SWAPS

Ten Sweetest Low Carb Swaps for Spring

Atkins Nutritionals shares its top swaps to get you back on track for Spring

Spring is the season of renewal and rejuvenation - the perfect time to spring clean not only your physical space but also your lifestyle and health habits. Embracing healthier choices and incorporating low carb swaps can have a transformative impact on your energy levels and overall wellbeing.

Spring is a fantastic time to experiment with fresh, seasonal produce and try new low carb recipes. Look for dishes that include colourful vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats. With a wide range of recipes on the Atkins website, you can find inspiration for delicious and nutritious meals that not only the whole family will love, but will also align with your low carb goals.



For between-meal cravings, Atkins' range of low carb, low sugar products can help you to make conscious decisions to continue prioritising your health, helping you to create positive changes that will resonate with your health and wellness goals.

Atkins' top ten swaps are a fantastic source of inspiration to kickstart your low carb lifestyle. These swaps will not only help reduce your carbohydrate intake, but also offer delicious alternatives that can keep you satisfied and energised.

1. Swap iced coffee for Atkins Creamy Vanilla Protein Shake Coffee: Instead of reaching for high sugar ice coffees, opt for Atkins' Creamy Vanilla Protein Shake with an espresso shot added for your caffeine hit. It provides a creamy and satisfying coffee flavour while offering a good source of protein to keep you feeling full for longer.
2. Swap wraps for lettuce cups: Replace high carb wraps with lettuce cups. Lettuce cups are a refreshing and low carb alternative for enjoying your favourite fillings, such as tacos or sandwich ingredients.
3. Swap standard peanut butter cups for the new Atkins Peanut Butter Cups: Satisfy your sweet tooth with Atkins' new Peanut Butter Cups instead of high sugar and carb loaded peanut butter cups. These new low carb treats offer a delicious combination of chocolate and peanut butter without the excessive sugar or carbs.
4. Swap spaghetti for zoodles: Replace traditional high carb spaghetti with zoodles - spiralised zucchini noodles. Zoodles are a nutritious and low carb, low calorie alternative that can be paired with your favorite sauces and toppings.
5. Swap open sandwiches for Atkins Crispbread Stacks: Instead of an open sandwich on bread, use Atkins Crispbread as a base for your stack. These low carb crispbreads provide a crunchy and satisfying alternative for creating flavourful and low carb stacks.
6. Swap fizzy drinks for fruit infused water: Cut down on sugary fizzy drinks and opt for refreshing fruit-infused water. Infuse your water with slices of fruits like citrus, berries, or herbs for a flavourful and low carb alternative.
7. Swap cult-favourite caramelised white chocolate for Atkins Caramelised White Chocolate: Indulge in the taste of caramelised white chocolate with Atkins' low-carb alternative. This delicious

chocolate bar allows you to enjoy the sweet caramel flavour you love while staying on track with your low carb lifestyle.

8. Swap rice for cauliflower rice: Replace high carb rice with cauliflower rice. Cauliflower rice is a versatile and low carb option that can be used in various dishes, from stir fries to grain free sushi.

9. Swap sweet sponge cakes for Milk Chocolate Swiss Rolls: Enjoy the taste of a sweet 3pm treat with Atkins' new low-carb Milk Chocolate Swiss Rolls. These indulgent bars inspired by spongy swiss rolls provide a satisfying dessert option without excessive carbs and sugar.

10. Swap sugary cereal for Greek yoghurt and berries: Instead of starting your day with high sugar cereals, choose a low carb option with Greek yoghurt topped with fresh or frozen berries. This combination provides protein, healthy fats, and natural sweetness to kickstart your morning.

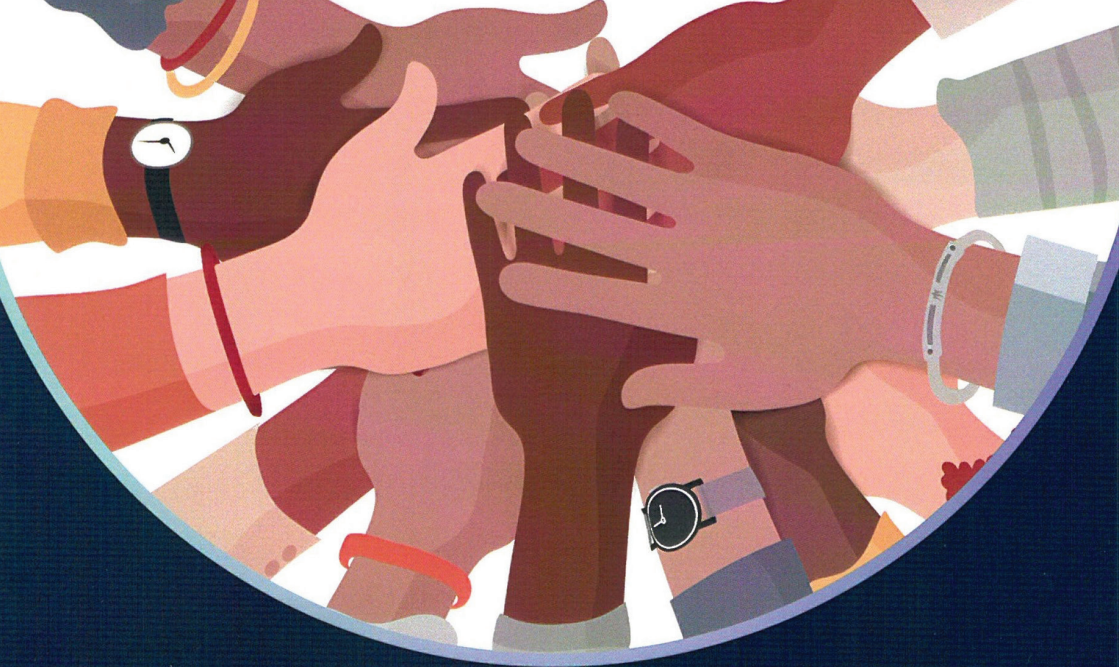
Spring is a great time to spring clean your lifestyle, embrace healthier habits and make low carb swaps to feel more energetic and healthier. By incorporating these low carb swaps, you can make healthier choices without sacrificing flavour or satisfaction. Enjoy the journey to an Atkins low carb lifestyle and enjoy the benefits to your overall health and wellbeing!



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**SIZZLE
POP FIZZ**





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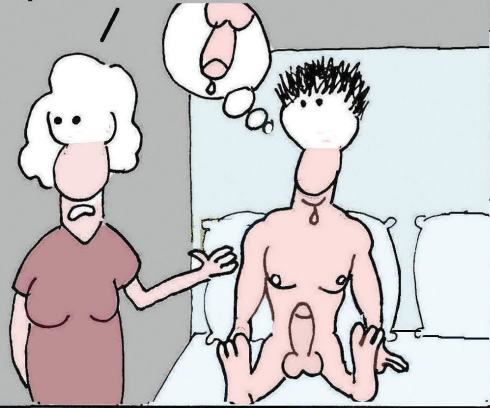
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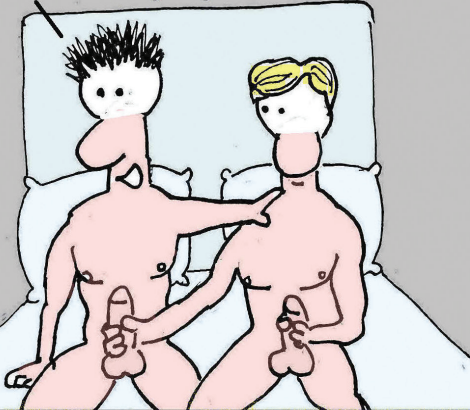
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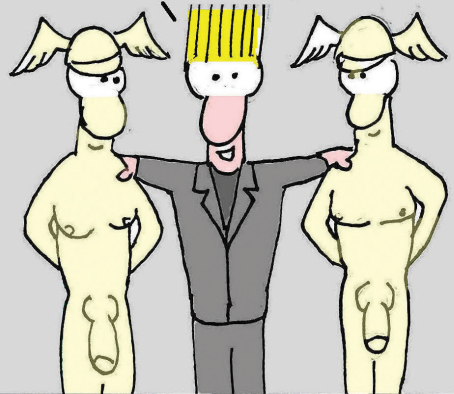
... a demon who loves cock has possessed our beautiful son



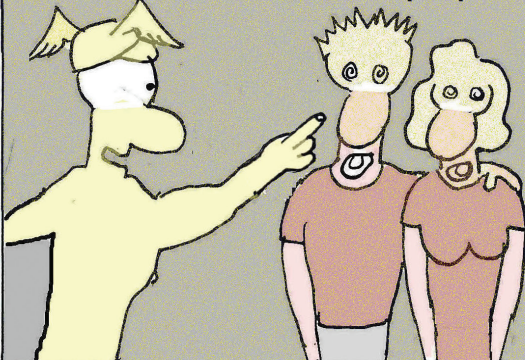
For Christ's sake Mom, I'm possessed by my love for men!



My angels and I agree, someone in this house IS possessed ...



Hetero demon, I command thee to leave the bodies of these people!



This boy is only possessed by a natural talent for loving men





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