

EMBRACE YOUR INNER

KHAMELEON



DES MOINES BOTANICAL CENTER
STATE FAIR FASHION
MINES OF SPAIN

EDITOR'S NOTE

WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of Khameleon! The purpose of this publication is to inspire you to embrace your inner chameleon. Why a chameleon? Because a chameleon is an animal that knows how to adapt to its surroundings. You may think a chameleon as a shifty, color-changing lizard that blends in to not be seen. I imagine it as a mystique-like creature that can transform themselves into anything and everything. It does the unexpected, it strives on the risks of their environment, whether its something in their comfort zone or an experience they never knew existed.

I consider myself a chameleon of sorts – someone you can't pinpoint nor put in a box. Throughout my life I've called myself a fashion stylist, a (former) star athlete, a model, a performer, a promoter, blogger, event planner, cocktail enthusiast, even a not-so-funny failing comedienne. But one thing for sure is that I have numerous interests and I enjoy learning and trying new things.

I started out writing a fashion blog back in 2012, which I started and stopped numerous times. Reason? It's simple... life. Life experiences can take you in different directions where you have to adapt. I officially restarted my blog *The Crazy Chameleon* in fall 2017 where it still has been a work in progress over the years finding my voice and owning my brand. Originally, I focused on fashion, but fashion has never been my only passion. I slowly started transitioning my blog from just covering fashion to travel writing, mixology, and my journey with depression and anxiety. Then I thought about creating something more than a blog that included all my interests in a volume – hence the birth of Khameleon, which I changed the "C" to a "K" as an homage to the first letter of my name.

What will you be reading in Khameleon? Articles, visual storytelling, and inspiration boards about my numerous interests – fashion, travel, home entertaining, arts and culture, mental health, and promoting local people and businesses in the Des Moines area. Some issues may be light and jovial, others may be dark and moody. That's the purpose about being a chameleon, you don't know what to expect. Think of Khameleon as a digital diary and inspiration guide on how to embrace your own personal chameleon – to take risks, do the unexpected, experience something new, make a connection, transform yourself into someone you don't know can exist yet.



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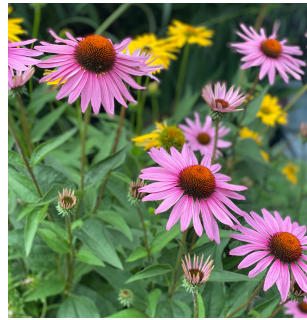
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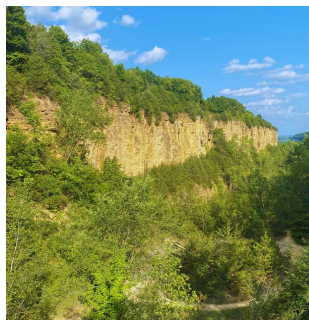
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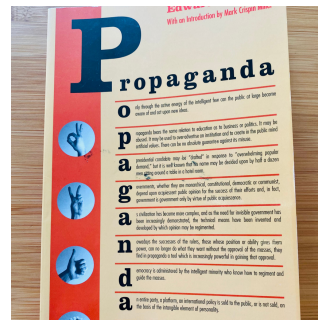
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**FASHION
BEAUTY
INSPO**

STATE FAIR FASHION

FASHION

The Iowa State Fair is back! A time of year where lowans and millions of fairgoers come together to stuff their faces with fried food, drink Iowa craft beer, and ride some carnival rides. But need some inspiration on what to wear?



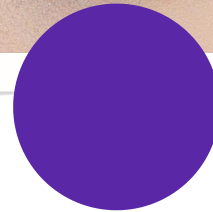
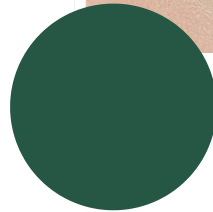
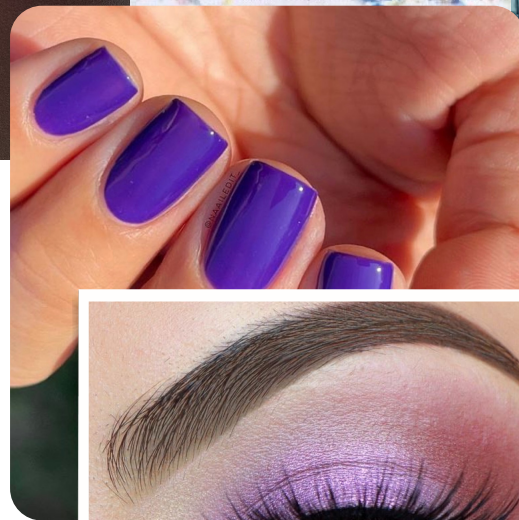
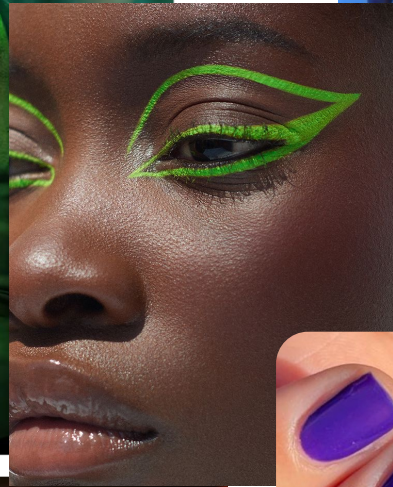
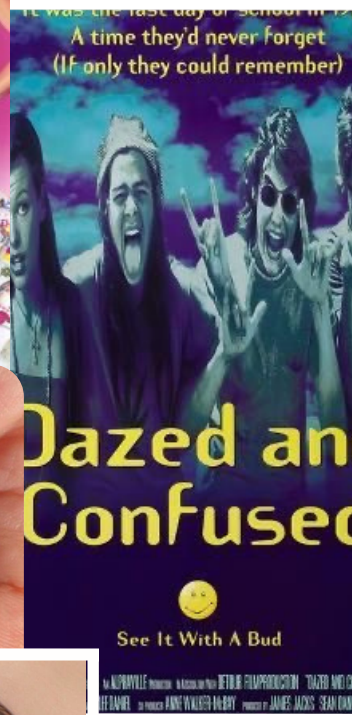
Photo: Iowa State Fair

Take a cue from the rides and food vendors themselves with bold saturated hues, such as goldenrod, Americana blue, or tangerine.



PERIDOT & PURPLE

Grab inspo from August's birthstone peridot or purple for an electrifying twist on Leo szn.



LOCAL

**PLACES
EVENTS
PEOPLE**

DES MOINES BOTANICAL CENTER



Believe it or not, it's been several years since I've been to the Des Moines Botanical Center. I had family in town back in July and I suggested they go there since it's a great local place for families.

On our visit, I was definitely inspired from all the greenery and plant life. It was very calming walking through all the variety of gardens inside and outside from the water garden to the bonsai collection, which has one of the oldest trees that has been in training as a bonsai since 1865.

Also, inside the [Des Moines Botanical Center](#) is Trellis Café which overlooks the water garden and serves a locally sourced, plant-based menu that is delightful for an afternoon lunch.

When I dined there, I ordered the combo plate of Chicken Coconut Curry and Roasted Zucchini and Tomato Flatbread. The curry was light and less heavy than most curry dishes I've had. Another perk to Trellis Café is that menu changes monthly. Check the Des Moines Botanical Center's website to view the current menu.

In addition to Trellis Café, the Des Moines Botanical Center hosts events, such as Music in the Garden Summer Concert Series which occurs every Thursday through September.



LOCAL RESTAURANT

HOQ

Nestled on the corner of East 5th and East Walnut in the East Village lies one of Des Moines' best eateries. Hoq is a locally owned farm-to-table restaurants that showcases Iowa ingredients and farmers.

First thing I noticed when I walked in on a Friday afternoon was the quiet and calm ambiance. There were a couple accents walls painted a subtle olive green and the tables were accompanied with different mason jar centerpieces filled with sand, dried flowers, and palm frond. Hanging from the ceiling throughout the restaurant were clusters of globe pendants hung at different heights. Soft jazz music was playing in the background as my mother and were served our cocktails.



I ordered an Aviation gin cocktail and my mom ordered a Paloma. For any cocktail enthusiast, gin-based cocktails are a refreshing option in the summertime and can pair well with numerous dishes. For our entrees, I ordered the Grilled Cheese & Soup and my mom ordered the Chef's Feature which was an Oyster Wrap. I normally stay away from soup in the summer, but the Chicken and Rice soup hit the spot for me - it wasn't too salty and the fresh herbs and ingredients flourished with each bite.

After our entrees, we ordered one more round of cocktails as dessert. I don't have much of a sweet tooth so I tend to stick with after-dinner cocktails and digestifs instead of a slice of cake. I ordered a Side Car, which is a Brandy and Cointreau based cocktail. Brandy (liquor distilled from wine or fermented fruit) and Cointreau (orange-flavored liqueur) are known as being great digestifs, which are beverages that are served after-dinner to aid in digestion.

Side note: Hoq is a part of the upcoming Des Moines Restaurant Week starting August 20th-29th.

LOCAL PEOPLE

CHRIS WOOD

As an avid cyclist and bonafide people connector, Chris Wood is someone you NEED to know!

I first met Chris at a networking event back in 2016, and we became fast friends. He has an outgoing persona that you are just attracted to. He also is a loyal person who will be there to support you in your ambitious endeavors, come to your parties and celebrations, and even be a karaoke partner. Chris has introduced me to an abundance of people since we first met whom have assisted me personally and professionally, and that's why he is one of Des Moines' top people connectors. Although Chris and I are good friends and know each other pretty well, I sat down with him at Juniper Moon and we discussed his professional career and development, his RAGBRAI experiences, what he loves about Des Moines, and more.

Q: Chris, you work for the Science Center of Iowa. Tell me what you do for them and what your job entails?

Chris: I serve as the Director of Major Gifts at the Science Center of Iowa where myself and our development team work with our individual and corporate donors to provide the financial resources necessary to fulfill our mission and be able to operate the Science Center of Iowa both physically within the museum and preschool as well as throughout the state through outreach programs.



Photo: Chris Wood/Ivory House Photography

Q: You were a recent graduate of Leadership Iowa. Tell me what that is?

Chris: Yes, I was nominated and selected to be a part of Leadership Iowa which is a 9-month professional development program that brings together 40 leaders in Iowa where we gather together and participate in experiences and discussions regarding different aspects of industry throughout Iowa. We gain insight about the opportunities and the challenges industries in Iowa face while building our leadership skills.

Q: You're also a graduate of Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute. Can you tell me about that experience?

Chris: The Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute is another leadership program that is focused on the community of Greater Des Moines. I graduated from that program a couple years ago and it gave me great insight about what Des Moines is all about. Through GDMLI, I was able to work with a small cohort of leaders where we worked on a specific non-profit project.



LOCAL PEOPLE

CHRIS WOOD

Q: What did you learn about doing these programs? Why do you think it's important to apply for them?

Chris: First and foremost, the relationships are incredible that you're able to develop. You get to work alongside these other leaders whom you get to know professionally and with building that relationship these connections can be a great resource if you're business is looking for a specific need; or you can be the connector if someone is looking for a lawyer, an architect, etc. Secondly, you get to have experiences that you may not have before, such as touring manufacturing facilities, or activities like flying in a helicopter. Anyone that is looking to grow as a leader, whether locally in Des Moines or across the state of Iowa should try and participate in one of these programs.

Q: How do you define a leader?

Chris: Everyone has an opportunity to be leader. Anytime you influence anyone, you are in a leadership position. I think it's important to be empathetic and to be able to empower others with resources for them to become successful.

Q: How long have you lived in Des Moines?

Chris: I have been here for 20 years. I'm a Colorado native, but I came to Des Moines for work. I originally didn't plan on staying here long, but obviously that changed.

Q: What about Des Moines has kept you living here?

Chris: Well, my daughter Amara was born right after I moved here so that was one of the reasons why Des Moines soon became my home. Over those 20 years, Des Moines has evolved and progressed so much and it has become a wonderful place to live, work, and enjoy life. Everything from the arts and culture, to the nature and outdoors, but most of all the people here are incredible. You hear about "Iowa Nice" and that saying really is true. The people here are great if you need someone to help you professionally or personally.



Q: What are some events around Des Moines and Iowa do you enjoy the most?

Chris: I really love the summers in Des Moines. My favorite event in Des Moines is the Des Moines Arts Festival – it's a great event that brings the community together with local and national artists. I also love the Iowa State Fair. It's an event that I always recommend to family and friends that don't live in Iowa and something they need to experience. But my favorite of all Iowa events is RAGBRAI. It's the highlight of my summer. I've done RAGBRAI four times and it's such a fun experience to be with friends and to ride across the state of Iowa while traveling through small towns, eating local food and drinks. Cycling has definitely become one of my favorite things to do. I love the experience of being in nature and the freedom you feel when you're riding. For me, cycling is my time for peace, meditation and an escape from life.

LOCAL PEOPLE

CHRIS WOOD

Q: What are three adjectives or nouns that would describe you?

Chris: Mission Driven. Connector. Community Builder.

Q: How would you describe your personal style?

Chris: Midwest Dad trying to be cool. I have a Pacman blazer and fun Hawaiian shirts so I'm open to taking risks and being adventurous, playful and fun.

Q: What place in the world would you travel to that you haven't visited yet?

Chris: Peru and visit Machu Picchu and the Rainbow Mountains.

Q: Is there an activity or experience you've never done, but would like to do?

Chris: Go deep sea fishing.

Q: What motivates you?

Chris: Being someone who is passionately curious. Everyday I want to wake up and learn something new.

For more information about Sci Big Blast Gala, please visit the [Science Center of Iowa](#) website.

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TRAVEL

STATE
REGIONAL
COUNTRY
INTERNATIONAL



MINES OF SPAIN

WHERE THE MESQUAKIE AND JULIEN DUBUQUE MEET

As a native of (West) Des Moines I'm always curious about other areas of Iowa. My husband Mike is from the Dubuque area (Peosta exactly) and every time we go back to visit his family, I try and have us visit or do something locally. We went back to Dubuque in late July and while we were there, we hiked the Mines of Spain.

The Mines of Spain were first inhabited by the Mesquakie. Their village was located at the mouth of Catfish Creek and they carried on the fur trade with French voyagers. Julien Dubuque, a French-Canadian, was the first European to settle in what is now Iowa in 1788. In 1796, Dubuque received a land grant from the Governor of Spain, who lived in New Orleans at the time. The grant gave permission to Julien Dubuque to work the land which was owned by Spain and specified the 189-square mile area to be named as "Mines of Spain." Lead mining was prominent in the area, first by the natives and then by European miners. Mining eventually waned after the Civil War.

Dubuque married Potosa, daughter of the Mesquakie Indian Chief, Peosta. Julien Dubuque died on March 24, 1810 and is buried where the Julien Dubuque monument is located. The monument sits high above the Mississippi River and is a major landmark in the Mines of Spain. In 1993, the Mines of Spain was designated as a National Historic Landmark.



WHAT TO WEAR: INSPO

Some people may not care what they wear when they hike. As someone who expresses themselves through fashion, I do. And it's not because I'm vain, it's because I grab inspiration from nature. Everywhere I travel I'm inspired.

I chose to wear yellow while hiking the Mines of Spain because when I think of "Spain" I think of warm, vibrant colors that complement their culture. And with the word "mines", I think of gold mines, which gold itself can have a yellowish hue to it. If you are ever hiking the Mines of Spain, I recommend wearing golden yellow, soft greens, and tans.



AT HOME

**ENTERTAINING
RECIPES
DECOR**

PASTA, PASTA, PASTA

Some people pride themselves on being a good cook. I am NOT one of those people. I enjoy cooking and trying new dishes, but I don't have the quintessential chef gene. However when I do cook, I prefer to make things that are quick, easy, and that anyone can make. This issue I focused on two pasta-inspired dishes.



ZUCCHINI NOODLES N' SHRIMP

Zucchini noodles are a great alternative to pasta, and you get an added vegetable.

Ingredients

Zucchini noodles
Shrimp
Grape Tomatoes
Olive Oil
Salt
Pepper
Garlic (1 TBSP)
Cajun Seasoning or Slap Yo Mama
Crushed Red Peppers

Amount of ingredients varies depending on servings and personal preference.

Instructions

1. Wash and devein shrimp. Place shrimp on skillet filled with olive oil and garlic. Cook shrimp on medium heat until pink.
2. While cooking shrimp add salt, pepper, Cajun seasoning
3. Remove shrimp from skillet. Place zucchini noodles in skillet. Cook noodles.
4. While noodles are cooking, add sliced tomatoes. Sauté tomatoes until soft. Add shrimp back into skillet.
5. Once noodles and tomatoes are done, drain any excess liquid (if preferred)
6. Place noodles, tomatoes, and shrimp into a bowl. Garnish with crushed red peppers.

TORTELLINI WITH PESTO & TOMATOES

This tortellini dish can be used an entrée or a side dish.

Ingredients

Bag of three cheese tortellini
Jar of Pesto (or make your own)
Grape Tomatoes

Instructions

1. Cook tortellini
2. While tortellini is cooking, sauté sliced tomatoes
3. Once tortellini and tomatoes are done, add pesto.
4. Serve and eat

HEALTH & WELLNESS

MIND
BODY
SOUL

MENTAL HEALTH

When it comes to Health and Wellness, I don't just think about physical health; I think about mental health as well. I've written a lot about my struggles with depression and anxiety. I was first diagnosed when I was 15 years old and it's been a part of my life ever since. I like to raise awareness about mental health issues that can affect anyone. There are numerous studies and statistics that show 1 in 4 adults suffer from a diagnosable mental illness. I won't dive into more statistics, but for more information about mental illness head to [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#).

Since depression and anxiety are a part of my everyday life, I try and enjoy certain activities that can bring me joy and positive thoughts instead of negative thoughts that can trigger something in my brain. Here are some examples of things that help me, and maybe they can help you or someone you know that is struggling.



5 POSITIVE ACTIVITIES....

1

Cooking and trying new foods

Cooking a new recipe or going to a new restaurant can spark creativity and open your mind up to new flavors and experiences.

2

Play a board game or do trivia

I love the competitiveness of playing a board game or participating in trivia. It allows me to use my mind for positivity instead of self-destructing negative thoughts that can creep in.

3

Dancing

We all know the endorphins your body receives from physical activities. One of my favorite physical activities I enjoy is dancing. I get pleasure out of turning on some music and busting a move.

4

Watch a comedy show

When I laugh, it automatically puts a smile on my face. Laughter is one of my love languages and comedy puts me in a good mood whether it's watching a stand-up special on Netflix or going to a live performance.

5

Reading

Reading allows me to escape the real world and dive into another world where I can use my imagination to create a positive experience straight from a written word.

ARTS & CULTURE

TV/FILM

BOOKS

POETRY

MUSIC

VISUAL ART

PERFORMANCE ART

ARTS & CULTURE: BOOKS & TV

MUST WATCH

When people ask me who my favorite superhero is, I tend to respond with "I like villains". I was super excited when I heard Loki was getting a TV series on Disney+ because he is my personal favorite Marvel character. I've always liked him - maybe because my favorite color is green, or maybe because I have a soft spot for complex anti-heroes. Either way, **Loki** is a show you must watch.

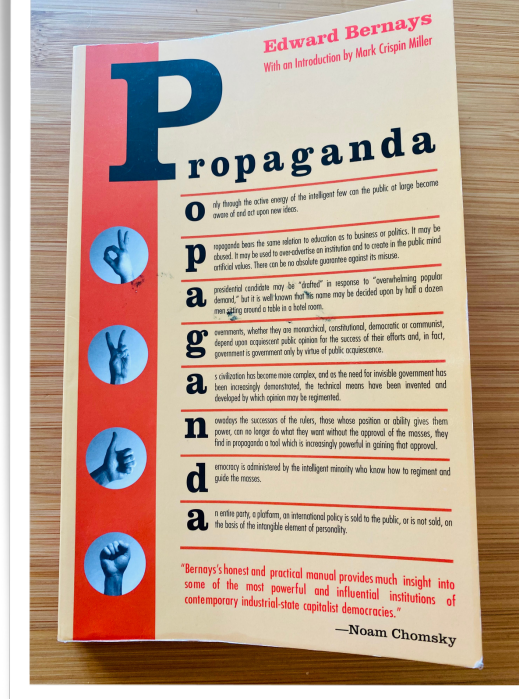
I won't spoil too much, but the series follows Loki after he steals the Tesseract during the events of Avengers: Endgame, and an alternate Loki is brought to the Time Variance Authority (TVA), a bureaucratic organization that keeps track of the timeline and extracts those who don't stay within their timeline.



It is perfectly acted by Tom Hiddleston reprising his role as Loki and the addition of Owen Wilson as Mobius, an agent of the TVA, adds depth to a storyline that tries to turn Loki from a selfish, shifty character into a caring, heroic individual.

The script keeps you hooked with suspense and character development in each episode where you want to keep watching to know what happens next. And the score is one of my favorite elements of this show, especially with its moody tones and ticking sound effects that signify time itself.

All episodes of Loki can be watched on Disney+



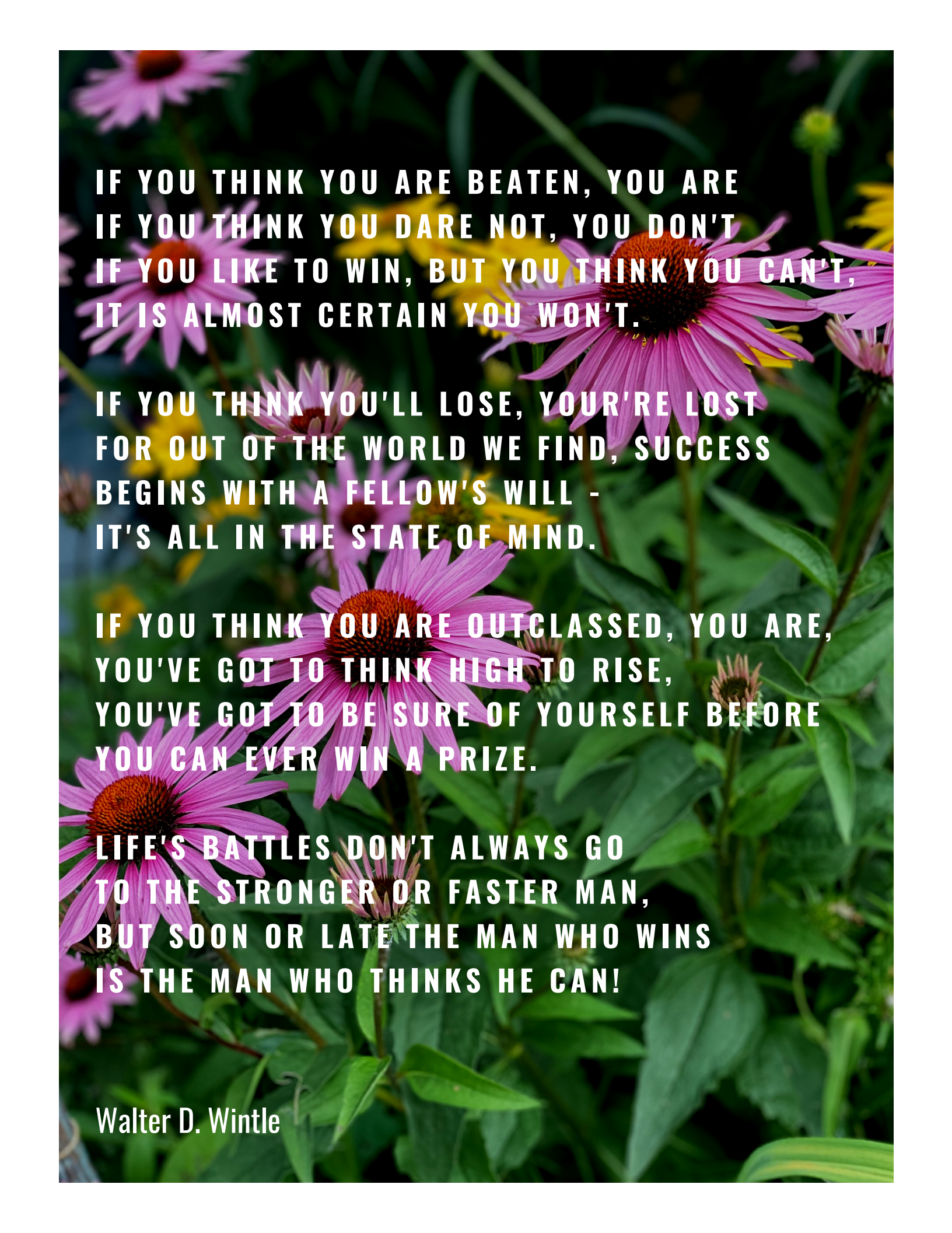
MUST READ

Anyone who has a career in PR, or has an interest in public relations, needs to read **Propaganda**. Written by Edward Bernays, the nephew of Sigmund Freud, and originally published in 1928, Propaganda outlines a manual of mass manipulation which provides a detailed examination of how public discourse and opinion are shaped and controlled in politics, business, art, education, and science.

When we hear the word "propaganda" today, we automatically associate it negatively through promotion of extreme viewpoints. However, propaganda itself is used in everyday life. Think of it as the "inception" process of public relations. It's the process of spreading ideas not just directly, but indirectly and sublimely to make one think it's their idea to begin with.

One excerpt I was fond of stated, "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country."

This book will make you think.



**IF YOU THINK YOU ARE BEATEN, YOU ARE
IF YOU THINK YOU DARE NOT, YOU DON'T
IF YOU LIKE TO WIN, BUT YOU THINK YOU CAN'T,
IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN YOU WON'T.**

**IF YOU THINK YOU'LL LOSE, YOU'RE LOST
FOR OUT OF THE WORLD WE FIND, SUCCESS
BEGINS WITH A FELLOW'S WILL -
IT'S ALL IN THE STATE OF MIND.**

**IF YOU THINK YOU ARE OUTCLASSED, YOU ARE,
YOU'VE GOT TO THINK HIGH TO RISE,
YOU'VE GOT TO BE SURE OF YOURSELF BEFORE
YOU CAN EVER WIN A PRIZE.**

**LIFE'S BATTLES DON'T ALWAYS GO
TO THE STRONGER OR FASTER MAN,
BUT SOON OR LATE THE MAN WHO WINS
IS THE MAN WHO THINKS HE CAN!**

Walter D. Wintle

