

Embracing the joy of things just because

As a career journalist who seeks out the "why" behind things, the concept of doing something with only the reason of joy seemed unproductive to me, until now.

Things like enjoying a treat with my coffee while sitting in a café soaking in the ambiance or taking five extra minutes to lounge on a Saturday are things I find myself doing now in life, just because they bring me joy in the moment.

Join me at the end of the newsletter as I share how sometimes letting joy be your only reason for indulging in the small things that make you happy is reason enough to do them.

What's New?

Across the pond

For the last several years I've spent the summer months abroad in England where I take assignments that introduce me to some of the most fascinating places and experiences in the world. My home base here is in Herefordshire about two hours northwest of London in one of the most rural counties in England. Because of the rural landscape, every minute is like stepping into a painting with quintessential English cottages, grand Tudor buildings that have stood for centuries and stunning gardens with the mixed fragrances of lavender and rose. I have to say that the view from my office and my lunchtime walks are vastly different to what I experience in Ohio. I will be doing some fishing on the River Wye and I am looking forward to the work I have on my plate here.



My home base for the summer in the English countryside

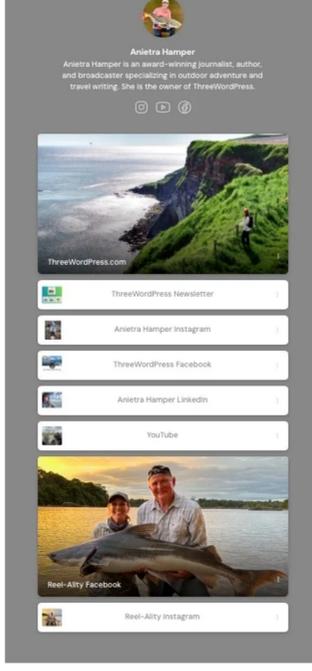
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Many of you know, or work in an industry impacted by the accelerated alterations brought on by AI and evolving Google algorithms. The travel and outdoor writing industry has been hit especially hard and freelancers who thrived on boundless opportunities to write for a variety of outlets are now crippled by the trickle-down impact of something for which we have no control. It has forced many businesses and independent journalists like myself to reevaluate what we do, how we do it and what direction we need to go to stay afloat. Though I maintain a number of outlets for which I contribute to regularly, I've shifted gears a bit to add some new things into the fold.

During this time of recalibrating, I ask for your support in the form of following, subscribing and sharing my eco-system of outreach on social media. I also ask for your support as I dust off Reel-Ality, a destination angling concept that kicks fishing to another level with my partner Ian who is also a global angler and guide. This project got sidelined previously but it's time to resurrect it and deliver some unique content as we ramp it up in the months to come.

Please check out my collection of outreach that I've compiled in one space on Linktree and support my channels by clicking the button below for easy access to all of them to subscribe and share my posts. I pride myself on relationships and we need to rely on each other's support as many of us endure a shift.

[Click here for my account listings](#)



One-day getaways radio segment

I continue my bi-weekly radio segments, One-Day Getaways with Anietra Hamper, on 103.9 The Maverick on "The Ride Home with Woody Johnson." We have enjoyed the popularity that this series has garnered that offer quick getaways from Columbus, Ohio with extended content on the podcast versions of these on-air segments. I offer insider tips for you to make the most of your time and money while enjoying a quick getaway. Click the links to listen to the episodes. My June segments included [Traverse City, Michigan](#) and [New River Gorge](#) in West Virginia.



Published Stories



CatfishNOW Magazine
Road trips that combine the best of fishing and great food are my favorites. In my June article for CatfishNOW magazine I take readers on an epic north Texas road trip for some big blues and BBQs. [Read More](#)



USAToday
Several lists launched this month for which I served as expert panelist for USA TODAY 10BEST Readers' Choice Awards. My subject categories for my USA Today contributions cover the outdoors, fishing and travel destinations and experiences.

Featured Destination: Ross-on-Wye, England



As I am based in the UK for a few months, it is only fitting that I introduce you to some of the beautiful places here. I'm starting with my home base of Ross-on-Wye which is a small town in Herefordshire catering to locals in a largely farming community. While many visitors to England just go to London and go home, they are missing out on the deep heritage and history that is really the heart of the country. While strolling around Ross-on-Wye I find lots of local merchants and artists selling one-of-a-kind items.

The independent cafe's proudly showcase the day's fresh baked goods that are must-haves with a cup of coffee (a "cuppa" here). The old market town still carries every trace of history with buildings inscribed with dates from the 1700s, Tudor buildings converted into pubs and streets and landmarks bearing the names of locals who were popular characters of their time.

Ross-on-Wye is like many small English towns that features the conveniences of richness to society but remain couched in a timeless sort of exterior that adds so much richness to a visit.



I was having coffee with a friend once when she showed me the pink glittery phone case she'd just purchased. She giggled at her attraction to such a juvenile option that seemed contrasting alongside her otherwise buttoned-up professional style.

"It just makes me happy, so I bought it," she said.

It was in that moment that I realized we all deserve those small opportunities to reconnect with our giddy childish selves and remember that there's room to enjoy things just because. Whether that's a pink glittery phone case or something else out of your norm that just speaks to you and makes you smile.

These *just because* moments are the equivalent of long weekend breaks for your mind; an opportunity to exhale and a way to embrace the little things that make you happy. So, I encourage you to lean in the next time you find yourself uncovering reasons not to do something, to go somewhere or to just get a little something for yourself just because. That is reason enough.

