



## Get With the Times #4: Behaviors

- Introduction
- Onto the pages: Behaviors
  1. Document a predictable behavior or habit.
  2. Scrapbook a daily behavior or routine.
  3. Share a story behind a family joke.
  4. Document school or work struggles/behaviors.
  5. Scrapbook a note to your children about something you believe in.
- Triggers

*“I saw in my own behaviour, since the beginning of our acquaintance with him last autumn, nothing but a series of imprudence towards myself, and want of kindness to others”*

*- Marianne in Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen*

### **INTRODUCTION**

We're surrounded by behaviors of so many sorts. From our online behaviors to our bad habits (most of us have one...or two) to changes made in society and laws, to the daily routine that's a product of our behavior at home. Behavior surrounds us, and it's up to us to recognize them get those details onto our pages when we can. Oftentimes routines that we take for granted as a constant part of our daily lives disappear so rapidly that the change goes almost unnoticed and can be quickly forgotten. Let's not let that happen since they are an integral part of our being and, thereby, important and fascinating at the same time.

**WAYS TO INCLUDE BEHAVIORS ON YOUR SCRAPBOOK PAGES****1. Document a predictable response.**

My day is filled with predictable responses. When a solicitor calls, I'm bound to hang up the phone if it's a computer. And I'll rant for a bit. Predictable. When I head up to the shower and announce exactly that, I know that my husband is going to answer, "Don't get wet." Predictable--and a bit of a groaner after 16 years--but very much a part of my life and something I'd miss if he didn't comment. It's also, unfortunately, predictable that my daughter will whine and groan and moan and shed tears when I remind her that it's her turn for dishes. Now that's a behavior that I'd prefer to forget....

How I included a predictable response in "I Just Brian:"

- ◇ Design. This layout is just a simple four square design set a little bit off.
- Photos. In this case, again, the moment didn't have an actual photograph as it was a daily thing that spanned a few-month period. I enjoy scrapbooking these, not only for the



documentation aspect, but because it gives me permission to use those random shots that don't really go with anything else but beg to be used.

- ◇ Embellishment. After I finished the design and the telling of the story, I felt the layout needed something to direct the eye. It was then that I brought in the red flowers to create a visual triangle. Try to imagine that they are not there and how your eye would struggle with where to begin. The flowers give direction and flow.
- ◇ Journaling. The journaling here runs exactly as our interaction occurred. I say, he says – a narrative of this particular time frame in his life
- ◇ Title. My title grew out of the journaling, to be read as part of the narrative, but it can also stand on its own.

## 2. Scrapbook a daily routine.

As my days are filled with predictable responses and expressions, so, too, are they filled with behaviors that we follow day in and day out. For example, I drink two cups of coffee every morning. My kids each take a ½ hour computer turn between dinner and bedtime. We say our bedtime prayers after brushing our teeth and snuggling under the covers. The youngest one never sleeps. And we eat dinner together as a family every night . . .

**JOURNALING for “Every-day @ 6:”** This family eats together. Well, as much as can be helped given to dad’s unpredictable work schedule, but 98% of the time, we eat together. And we visit, and share our days. It’s funny, when I grew up it was normal for my whole family to come to the table with reading material. I with my newest Scholastic, my mom with a Reader’s Digest or a Good Housekeeping magazine, my dad with a Louie L’Amour or a spy novel and my brother and sister with their comics, and we all read. Your dad put his foot down right away when I tried that in our home. And I’m glad. Our dinnertimes are generally a happy time. And I love this shot. I captured it during one of my photo a day for a year attempts – and it tells me so much. Did you know, for instance, that your dad and I got a gazillion and one glasses for our wedding? True story. And look at us now 16 years later – a mish-mash of plastic cups, the last glass broken years ago already. And the ranch dressing, wow, do my kids love the ranch dressing. It’s always on the shopping list. Steamed vegetables, blue dishes, olives, mom and dad at the heads of the table – it’s all part of our dinner at six.



### How I included a daily routine in "Everyday @ Six:"

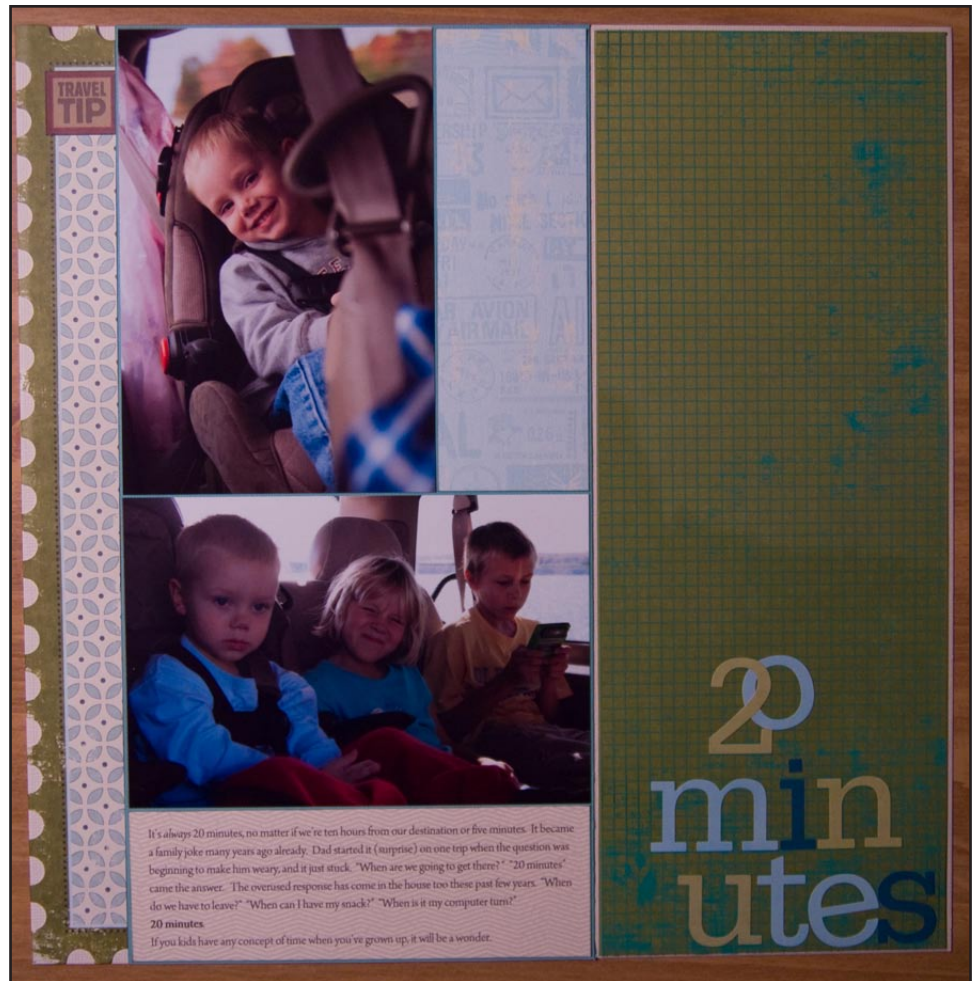
- ◇ Design. This one follows the thirds rule: photo on the top third, journaling and title on the two bottom thirds.
- ◇ Photos. Again, this photo was taken during my attempt to take a photo every day for a year. What I loved about that challenge was that I found myself favoring those photos that I never would have taken otherwise. They share so much about our daily life. I shot this particular one on a very typical evening with my wide angle lens, grabbing everyone in meal-eating action. I cropped it and printed it 11" wide for this layout.
- ◇ Embellishment. This layout began in green and black with a touch of yellow. After I had that all assembled and together, I felt like it still needed a little bit of kick. I brought in the red. By adding a bit of red to the title, a small strip between the patterned papers and a small red arrow on the upper left corner to lead the eye, I created a much more visually pleasing layout.
- ◇ Journaling. I wanted to document how dinnertime goes in our house. I enjoyed comparing it to how it was when I was growing up, as well as noting that we can thank the man of our current house for that particular difference. I also pointed out things in the pictures that might be missed, but will trigger memories once brought to my children's attention years down the road.
- ◇ Title. Titles don't need to be big. I often find myself preferring small titles that almost act as an embellishment, as is the case here.

### 3. Share a story behind a family trait or joke.

Every family has some sort of family joke that gives some insight into family behaviors or interests. We probably have more than our fair share. One look at my husband's jeep will give you an idea into the type of behavior I have to put up with on a daily basis. He added a blue Ford emblem on the back of it, and, on the passenger side air bag compartment, it states in big-white-can't-miss letters: "Get in, sit down, shut up, and hang on." Feeling sorry for me yet? This is what I live with.

#### How I shared a family joke in "20 Minutes:"

- ◇ Design. This one also follows the rules of thirds. Vertically – the photos and journaling are on the left two thirds, and the title is on



**JOURNALING for "20 Minutes:"** It's always 20 minutes, no matter if we're ten hours from our destination or five minutes. It became a family joke many years ago already. Dad started it (surprise) on one trip when the question was beginning to make him weary, and it just stuck. "When are we going to get there?" "20 minutes" came the answer. The overused response has come in the house too these past few years. "When do we have to leave?" "When can I have my snack?" "When is it my computer turn?"

**20 minutes.**

If you kids have any concept of time when you've grown up, it will be a wonder.

the right third.

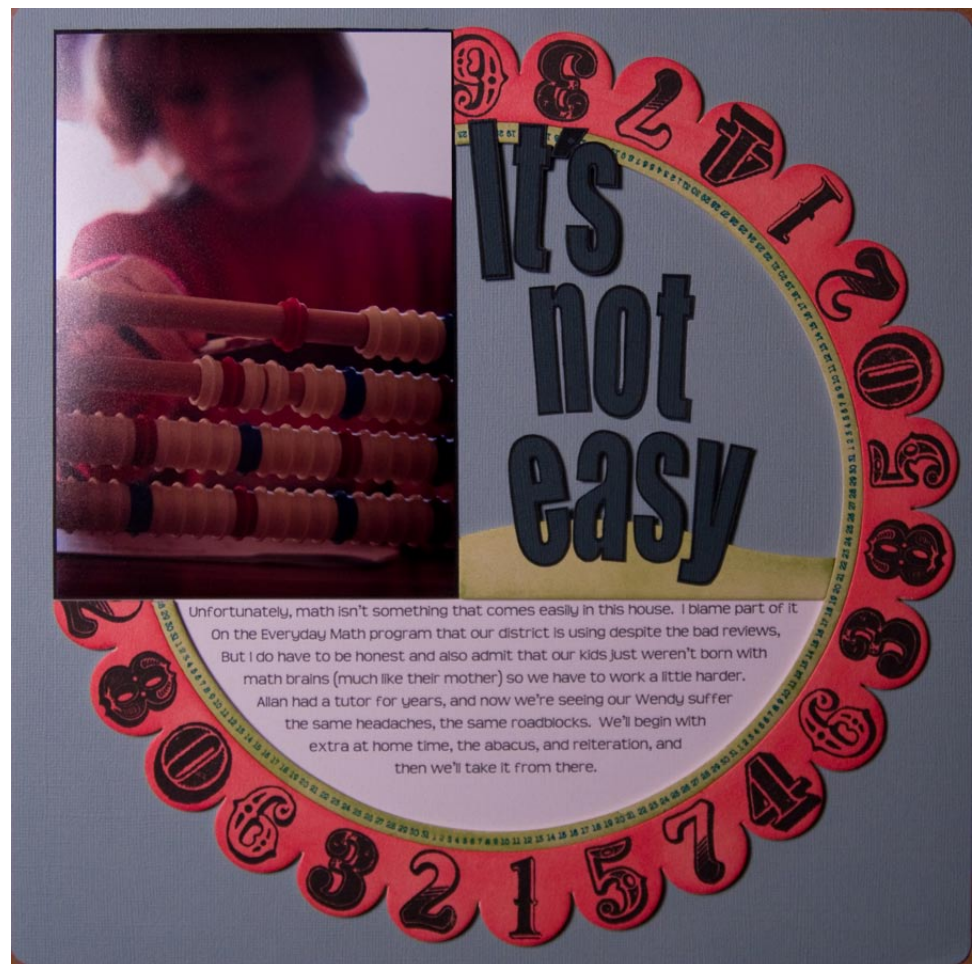
- ◇ Photos. I brought travel photos together from a couple of different trips to help support the story.
- ◇ Embellishment. Just one embellishment—in the upper left corner—acts as a lead-in.
- ◇ Journaling. The journaling on this page is short and to the point. I share a bit on the joke's origins, and, more importantly, who's responsible for it.
- ◇ Title. I had originally intended for the title to be in that blue spot just to the right of the top photo. But – I changed my mind. I decided that my lower right corner needed something and layered my title there instead, using colors that tie into the layout.

#### 4. Document a work or school struggle and how it's overcome.

Our work and school atmospheres are filled with behaviors that we must handle and learn to deal with. I vividly recall what a hard adjustment my oldest son had from elementary to sixth grade, largely due to the unexpected behaviors that he witnessed there. This, in turn, led to a whole new challenge and behavior in him. The list goes on.

**JOURNALING for “It’s Not Easy:”** Unfortunately, math isn’t something that comes easily in this house. I blame part of it on the Everyday Math program that our district is using despite the bad reviews. But I do have to be honest and also admit that our kids just weren’t born with math brains (much like their mother) so we have to work a little harder. Allan had a tutor for years, and now we’re seeing our Wendy suffer the same headaches, the same roadblocks. We’ll begin with extra at-home time, the abacus, and reiteration, and then we’ll take it from there.

With school winding down - I’m looking forward to the end of noggin shattering mathematics for awhile. :)





How I shared a school behavior on "It's Not Easy:"

- ◇ Design. Every once in awhile, I enjoy a circle. I made this one large enough to hold the layout as well as carry the journaling, title and photo.
- ◇ Photos. Would you believe me if I told you that, once again, this photo was from my photo-a-day project? If you've never done such a project, try it. Try it for one month. Take a photo every day of the little things that make up your day. You won't be disappointed. Oftentimes, those pictures have spurred a layout or story for me, as is the case here. Once I had the shot, I really compelled to tell this story that I might otherwise not have gotten around to.
- ◇ Embellishment. I consider the circle and inner ring to be both a frame and embellishment.
- ◇ Journaling. The journaling tells a bit about the math struggles that we suffer here at home. I also included information about the program that the school is teaching, as well as mentioning that her older brother struggled as well.
- ◇ Title. My title fills the space and the words I chose also remind me of one of my husband's uncles: his favorite expression was, "It's not Easy". While the layout has nothing to do with him at all, the words I used will trigger that memory as well. I like to intertwine my memories, to let one jump to the next to the next. And there's nothing wrong in that.

**5. Write a letter sharing something you believe in.**

From politics, to a new law being pushed through, our current president, the war, or your faith – we all have something we believe in. Although I'm not very likely to bring up or publicly debate those matters I feel strongly about, I do think that they are important enough to me to get down onto my layouts so that my children and family are aware of my feelings and beliefs. I consciously work on weaving these important items into my pages whenever the opportunity is presented, and I often do so by way of writing directly to my children.

**JOURNALING for "It's a Christmas Tree:"** To my children:

It really hit me this year how much things have changed since I was a child, and not necessarily in a good way. When my 10 year old tells me, "It's not a Christmas tree, mom...it's a holiday tree" – that gives me cause for concern.

No, Allan, it's a Christmas tree. Forever and ever it will be a Christmas tree.

I truly believe that we can all get along in this world if we would just respect each other and our different beliefs without trying to change and take meaning out of everything.

Did you know, my children, that when I was a young schoolgirl we sang church hymns as part of our school programs? Oh, yes, we did. I have the programs somewhere around here to prove it. We sang Away in the Manger, Joy to the World and Hark the Herald Angels Sing. In school. Public school.

And somewhere along the line...those carols were taken out of the schools. But not our hearts. Never ever ever our hearts.

I want you to realize that no matter what things you are forbidden to say and do in your future...nobody can ever take those things out of your heart.

And this season, Christmas 2005, as it would happen it was the Target stores that decided that they would no longer say Merry Christmas...and, that the Christmas tree would now be called a holiday tree. The very fact that a retail development that markets as to get us to do all of our Christmas shopping in their stores now wants to ban the word Christmas...appalls me. And, apparently, this has drifted into the schools as well because when I asked you, Allan, if the presents for the classes exchange were under a Christmas tree...you answered me that no, they were under the holiday tree.

My children, it's a Christmas tree.

Always.



How I shared my beliefs in "It's a Christmas Tree:"

- ◇ Design. Because this layout was of a more serious nature, I wanted to keep a very clean and linear design so as not to take away from the message.
- ◇ Photos. This was one of those layouts that wasn't photo-specific so I found myself searching through the Christmas photos that I had. I wanted a photo that represented the holiday, had a Christmas tree in it, and represented my kids' ages at the time. This photo was all that I had, and, as a color photo, it was horrid – as in, I nearly deleted it from my memory card when I took it. It was very blown out, but on a lark I saved it. By converting it to black and white, I was able to salvage it and, I felt like it actually added to the mood of the layout.
- ◇ Embellishment. I used a length of ribbon under the title to help transition from title to journaling and photo, as well as to tie in the holiday theme. I also added a small hope brad on the bottom, also in keeping with the mood of the page.
- ◇ Journaling. This journaling came straight from my heart to my children. It was an instant reaction to my son's comment when he told me it was a holiday tree. I gathered all my feelings on the topic together in one place and told my children exactly what I believe.
- ◇ Title. It's a Christmas tree. I chose this title because I think it's strong enough to make the reader interested, and strong enough to make a statement on its own. I included a little masked tree in my letter C to add visual interest.

## **TRIGGERS for scrapbooking the behaviors of your times.**

- Do you have a teenager? What behavioral changes have you noticed in the past year?
- Is there a moment that causes or triggers the same behavior again and again?
- Do you have a punishment or a solution for a behavior? For example, when my three-year-old misbehaves, he has to sit by himself until he calms down and says he's sorry. Or, when my then 11-year-old was grumpy, I could cure him just by asking him to hold the newborn: it cheered him every time.
- Consider comparing behaviors. My oldest is very particular; my next one is more of a free spirit; my three-year-old is very soft spoken, and my youngest is our busiest child to date. They all have a set of behaviors and traits that make them unique.
- Include hobbies or rituals. For instance, I like to walk in the mornings, go to Curves in the afternoon, enjoy a bit of quiet time after the kids go to bed, and I love Mondays. We also have a fair amount of hobbies and interests in our home that reflect our behaviors.
- How about a talent or a new skill--when a child learned to whistle, perhaps?
- If you've ever traveled, there are a lot of behavior differences to be found. I know my husband and I often marvel at the difference in driving habits from state to state. You could document the societal differences you notice when traveling from one country to another.
- What are the things that you caution your children against? Consider online behavior, how to behave in public, how to behave at the dinner table, in school, or in class.
- Document the changing of age by listing all the habits and behaviors that the person exhibits at that time. It's fun to see what changes from year to year.
- How about bad habits? My kids are full of them – from nail biting, to eating their shirts, to the clearing of the throat. It's gotten so I'm afraid to stop one because the one that replaces it just might be worse. Now that I have four children, it would be interesting to see which habits they all carry, and which are unique.