

## Monthly Newsletter – August 2013

### A Message from Theo and Warren

On Friday 2 August, we hosted a breakfast with the Wits Paediatric Fund (WPF) where Bruce Whitfield, Theo Vorster and Warren Ingram held a panel discussion on investing in uncertain times, financial products and various other topics that were raised by the audience on the day.

More than 100 people attended and all proceeds from the breakfast went to the WPF. Galileo Capital paid the attendance fee for our clients as part of our on-going commitment to the WPF.

The function also doubled as a book launch of Warren's book, "Become Your Own Financial Advisor" and 60 books were sold on the day with many people asking Bruce, Warren and Theo to sign the book. The profits for the book sales on the day were also split between WPF and Serendipity Trust, which is an education charity.

We have included some photos of the event, which we hope to repeat annually given the great feedback from our clients who attended. Thank you to Prof Daynia Ballot, who is the driving force behind the WPF.





-- Theo and Warren

## Destination: Madagascar

Madagascar lies off the east coast of southern Africa, yet few of us every consider visiting it. But it's rich in biodiversity, and perfect for the eco-tourist who wants to see something a little different.

Scientists estimate that Madagascar broke away from the African continent around 160-million years ago, before mammals even existed. As a result, the only fauna the island has in common with Africa are bats – because they could fly that far.

Madagascar is the fourth largest island in the world and one of the most bio-diverse countries on earth. It is home to thousands of species of plant and animal life, of which about 80% cannot be found anywhere else on the planet. In fact, 65% of all bird species are endemic to Madagascar, which means that they can only be found there.

The tropical rainforests are also teeming with life – with 40 different species of chameleons alone. Dwarf chameleons, tomato frogs and giant rats are just some of the curious creatures you'll find there.

But the most famous inhabitants of Madagascar have to be the lemurs, and there are about 50 types, in all shapes and sizes.

If you are looking for a different destination with huge national parks off the beaten track, rare and endangered species, an astonishing sea life and spectacular trekking in a moonlike landscape, Madagascar is an excellent option.

## How your nose controls your brain

Your sense of smell is one of the most powerful, yet underrated senses you have. Often what you smell may actually be controlling the way your brain works:

1. It can freak you out – you can actually inhale fear, and it changes your brain. A German study showed that when people sniffed ‘fear sweat’, they had increased activation in neural circuits associated with empathy, in contrast with people who sniffed normal sweat, and if you breathe it in for at least five minutes, you may feel more anxious (and not know why).
2. It can make you more alert – in an experiment at Rice University in the US, female volunteers scored higher on a word-association test after smelling sweat from the armpits of people watching horror-movie watchers (compared to neutral or no sweat). Through learned association, inhaling ‘fear’ or ‘stress’ sweat may make us more alert, and give us a cognitive boost.
3. It can boost your sexual sixth sense – We’ve all heard of pheromones and how we are attracted to the smell of certain people, but it turns out we can also use our noses to work out whether or not the attraction is mutual.
4. It can help you to eat less – the more powerful a food’s odour is, the less of it we eat in each bite. So, eating strong smelling foods can trigger an unconscious portion-control reflex.
5. It can improve your mood – the smell of flowers can make you more chatty, smiley and sociable, for example, and the smell of perfume and freshly-baked bread can make you kinder to strangers.
6. It can trigger retail therapy – a simple orange scent subconsciously inspired people in a Swiss store to spend about 20% than when shopping with no scent or a complex one, according to a study published in the Journal of Retailing.

## Online shrinks – are they effective?

Organisations like the UK’s NHS has rolled out online psychotherapy in years gone by, and the practice is widespread in a number of countries with national health systems. Now a new study from Switzerland has found that online psychotherapy is just as efficient as traditional, in-person therapy.

The study, run at the University of Zurich, looked at 62 patients who were experiencing moderate depression. They were divided into two equal groups; one received traditional cognitive behaviour therapy both orally and in writing while the other got online therapy and had to perform one predetermined written task per therapy unit.

After therapy, both groups reported lower levels of depression: 53% of patients in the online therapy group were no longer diagnosed as depressed, compared to 50% in the face-to-face group. The effectiveness of online therapy even continued three months after treatment. The university said after three months, depression couldn't be detected in 57% of the online group versus 42% of the traditional therapy group.