

DETROIT

Are you a flower or a weed?

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SUN COLUMNIST



Flowers and weeds are both plants. One is generally grown for the beauty of its blossoms and the other is considered to be a nuisance with no real value. Flowers can change the appearance of a home or building, they can bring a smile

and happiness when given as a gift, and their beauty and scent will enhance any table. Wildflowers, on the other hand, when created into a dry flower arrangement are beautiful, yet in their natural state growing wild they are considered weeds.

Only our human egotistical point of view labels a weed a weed, instead of viewing them as critical and valuable functioning parts of nature. For instance, sorrels, docks and horsetails are indicators that the soil is becoming too acidic. Dandelions actually heal the soil by transporting minerals, especially calcium, upward from the deeper layers. They warn the lawn owner that something is wrong with his soil. Dandelion greens cooked or dried and made into a tea is a very powerful blood purifier. Daisies signal that the soil lacks lime. We perceive people in that same way, either they carry some value to us or they are a pest or an irritation.

A flower? Or a weed? Actually, it is all relative. We are all flowers and weeds; it just depends on what soil we choose to grow in. Most people would say that they believe that they are a nice person (or a flower), however, someone else might think of them as being a weed.

Let's say for instance that you were a political figure lobbying for free health care. To the people, you would be a flower but to the insurance companies, you would be a weed.

The murder of a little boy was the weed in his parent's life experience. But that experience was turned into a flower when the parents took to task the criminal justice system which has lead to a television show called "America's Most Wanted" resulting in the capture of hundreds of criminals.

The news of a pregnancy to a teen mother might at first be looked upon as a weed. Yet, when the baby is born with its little fat face and dancing eyes, it melts everyone's heart and then it becomes the family's flower.

You walk into the break room at work and the room is buzzing with gossip. You are not one who enjoys gossip so you do

not indulge in their conversations. You consider yourself to be a flower but they consider you to be a weed.

A young man molested and killed several children; society looked down upon him as being a weed. During a television interview, the young man told his life story which was filled with physical and sexual abuse of not only himself but of his siblings as well. His pleas for help went unheard by those who "didn't want to get involved". He was pushed to his breaking point, which resulted in his violent acts. As a result of the interview, a television movie about his life was made and a great awareness of child abuse and its adverse long-term effects was brought to light. Is this young man a weed or a flower?

Peacemakers and troublemakers, they are all God's children, and they are all relative. Peacemakers can cause trouble and troublemakers can ultimately bring about peace.

God instructed us to not judge and this is one reason why. None of us knows what each others journey is or what that journey might entail. So who are we to judge whether someone is a flower or a weed? We are also instructed to love and to pray for our enemies. Now you might be able to understand a little better what that means. Are your enemies really weeds?

In my experiences, I fully understand that there is no such thing as a "bad" person or a weed, only people who through their words, actions or inaction's in some way has incited change to occur.

Everything in this universe is energy and all energy is in constant motion, constant change. So it is in the human drama, things always have and always will be in constant motion and change. Dynasties, kingdoms, and nations have risen and fallen and someone or several someones were the catalysts for that change. Humans naturally resist change, which is the natural order of the universe, and our global and human conditions reflect that consciousness. The plant and animal kingdoms, which are supposed to be below our level of "intelligence", understand the natural order, and function in accordance with it. So who is setting the example for whom?

You might think of yourself as a flower and want people to love and to pray for you, but you also might be someone's weed, so does that mean that you don't still deserve love and prayer? Think about it. Try to see the bigger picture, which is what God wants us to see. Now tell me, are you a flower or a weed?

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Reduce, reuse, and recycle your tech

(StatePoint) Phones are essential to everyday life, but they also come with an environmental footprint.

New survey data from Allstate Protection Plans shows that Americans are thinking more seriously about that impact. The challenge is that habits around recycling, trade-ins, and refurbished devices are still lagging behind awareness.

Allstate Protection Plans' latest mobile survey shows that 52% of Americans say the environmental impact of smartphones is extremely or very important. That is a strong signal that sustainability is no longer a niche issue in consumer tech. People are paying attention not just to what their phones do, but to what happens to them over time.

That shift is also showing up in how people think about refurbished devices. Nearly two-thirds of consumers, 65%, say refurbished electronics are both economical and sustainable. People increasingly understand that extending the life of a device can reduce waste and deliver real value.

But there is still a gap between what consumers believe and what they do. While many people see the benefits of refurbished devices, only 18% say they have ever bought

a refurbished phone. The same disconnect shows up in recycling. Only 20% of consumers say they recycle their old phones, while 8% still throw them in the trash. Another 26% say they are not confident they know how to recycle a phone properly.

That uncertainty helps explain why so many devices never make it back into the circular economy. Instead, they sit unused at home. In fact, the average household has 1.8 unused smartphones tucked away in drawers. One forgotten phone may not seem like much, but across millions of households, those unused devices represent a major missed opportunity for reuse, refurbishment, or responsible recycling.

At the same time, ownership habits are changing in ways that could support a more sustainable future. Consumers are keeping their phones longer. Twenty-three percent say they keep their phones for three to four years, and 21% say they only upgrade when their phone breaks. Battery life now ranks as top factor influencing buying decisions.

Holding onto devices longer, protecting them from damage, repairing them when possible, and making smarter end-of-life decisions all help reduce unnecessary waste.

NATIVE SUN

August 15 is National Relaxation Day

Here's how to celebrate it

(SPM Wire) National Relaxation Day, celebrated every year on Aug. 15, is an annual celebration of self-care. Because reducing stress can have positive effects on your mind and your overall wellness, it's important to take time to relax, no matter how busy life gets.

While these days, you may find yourself reflexively reaching for your devices during downtime, there are much better ways to actually reduce stress and feel

rejuvenated. Here are five alternatives to scrolling:

1. Calling a friend
2. Going for a stroll
3. Practicing breathing exercises
4. Reading a book
5. Listening to calming music

Feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed is common, but taking time for yourself can help you cope and feel your best.

Zevia and Cardi B launch "Real Talk Interpreter" campaign



PRNewswire/ -- Zevia PBC (NYSE: ZVIA), the better-for-you beverage brand built on great soda taste and real ingredients, today announced the launch of "Real Talk Interpreter," a new national campaign starring GRAMMY® Award-winning artist, fashion icon and entrepreneur Cardi B.

Launching across national streaming TV, video, social media and retail, "Real Talk Interpreter" marks Zevia and Cardi B's first creative campaign together, bringing the brand's "refreshingly real" ethos to life through Cardi's signature honesty and humor.

The campaign arrives as zero sugar soda continues to outpace the broader category, underscoring a shift in what consumers want from soda: the taste and refreshment they love, without sugar, fake sweeteners or other artificial ingredients. Zevia has been built for that shift since the beginning, delivering great soda taste with zero sugar and real ingredients. With Cardi B, Zevia is turning that commitment to realness into a campaign that is bold, entertaining and unmistakably Zevia.

In the campaign, Cardi B stars as the "Real Talk Interpreter," translating filtered everyday conversations into what people really mean. Two hero spots bring the idea to life in distinct but familiar settings: "Potluck," where neighborly small talk masks what people are really thinking and, "Guidance Counselor," where polished parent-teacher language is decoded in real time. In both, Cardi cuts through the niceties with the direct, funny, and unfiltered commentary fans know and love, while sipping Zevia Orange Creamsicle and Creamy Root Beer, respectively.

The creative extends Zevia's commitment to being real beyond the can and into everyday life, grounded in the belief that real beats fake every time. Zevia is real soda with real ingredients. Cardi is real talk with no filter. The campaign connects those ideas through a simple, universal behavior the gap between what people say out loud and what they are really thinking to prove that real hits harder.

"Real is at the core of everything we do at Zevia—from our ingredients to our

brand voice—but we also believe better-for-you choices should be fun", said Kirsten Suarez, Chief Marketing Officer of Zevia. "That's what makes Cardi such a natural fit with Zevia. Her authenticity, humor and confidence help us introduce Zevia to new audiences and show that great-tasting, zero sugar soda made with real ingredients can still have plenty of personality and flavor. Together, we've created a campaign that's entertaining, memorable and unmistakably real."

"Let me tell you something, I'm always going to say exactly what's on my mind, and that's why Zevia and I are perfect for one another," said Cardi B. "Zevia keeps it real with the ingredients, and I've never been one to bite my tongue. With 'Real Talk Interpreter,' we're bringing that same energy to everyday moments and saying what everyone is really thinking."

Later this week, the campaign will bring fans directly into Cardi's "Real Talk Interpreter" world. Through posts on her Instagram and TikTok channels, Cardi will invite consumers to share via direct comment, their everyday filtered moments they want her to decode—from dating app screenshots, to group-chat drama, and the things people say when they mean something else entirely. Select submissions will be featured across Zevia's and Cardi's social channels, with Cardi delivering her unfiltered interpretation on fans' real-life moments in her signature "Real Talk" style.

To keep the real talk going all summer, Zevia and Cardi B have also launched the Zevia x Cardi B Real Summer Sweepstakes, giving fans the chance to win weekly prizes and a grand-prize package featuring exclusive autographed Cardi B merchandise, free Zevia and more. The campaign is also coming to life at select retailers through custom displays featuring Cardi, extending the partnership from screens to the soda aisle. Fans can enter the sweepstakes today by visiting zevia.com/real or by scanning an in-store QR code at participating retailers nationwide.

For more information, visit www.zevia.com or follow Zevia on Instagram and TikTok.