

A hand is shown holding a lit candle. The background is a soft, out-of-focus sunset or sunrise with warm orange and yellow light. The candle's flame is visible, and the hand is positioned to hold it steadily.

FAMILY DREAMCASTING: A YEAR OF NEW ADVENTURES

BUILDING CONNECTION, JOY, AND
EXCITEMENT ONE MONTH AT A TIME





THE SCIENCE BEHIND LOOKING FORWARD TO SOMETHING 01

Research in psychology suggests that **anticipation** of a **positive event** can boost happiness and well-being. This phenomenon, often called "**anticipatory savouring**," activates the brain's reward systems, releasing **dopamine** and **reducing stress**.

Anticipating a pleasurable experience gives individuals a sense of **purpose** and **hope**, which is particularly important for **family bonding and mental health**. Planning and discussing future activities also foster stronger family connections and promote shared joy.

A NOTABLE STUDY PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL APPLIED RESEARCH IN QUALITY OF LIFE IN 2010 BY JEROEN NAWIJN AND COLLEAGUES EXAMINED THIS PHENOMENON.

Key Findings from the Study:

- **Pre-Trip Happiness Boost:** The research found that anticipating a vacation significantly increased happiness levels, likely due to the excitement and positive expectations of the upcoming experience. This is known as anticipatory savoring.
- **During the Trip:** While vacations were enjoyable, the level of happiness often depended on how relaxing or stressful the trip was. The study suggested that the happiness boost experienced during the vacation was not as pronounced as the anticipatory happiness.
- **Post-Trip Happiness:** After returning, happiness levels tended to return to baseline relatively quickly unless the vacation was exceptionally relaxing or memorable.

This insight reinforces the idea that the act of planning and anticipating events, such as family activities, can be just as fulfilling as the activities themselves.





02

HOW TO CREATE A "DREAMS LIST" WITH YOUR FAMILY

THIS IS ONE OF THE FAVOURITE THINGS MY SON
AND I DO TOGETHER ON NEW YEARS EVE.

The PROCESS

01

GATHER EVERYONE TOGETHER

Make this a fun family activity, perhaps over a cozy dinner or during a relaxed weekend. My favourite time to do this is **New Years Eve** or **New Years Day**!

02

SET THE RULE: TRY SOMETHING NEW

This adds an element of novelty, which has been shown to enhance happiness and keep life exciting. Each activity has to be something you've **never done before**.

03

BRAINSTORM IDEAS

Each family member contributes suggestions, ensuring **everyone's interests** are **included**.

04

SELECT MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Vote or rotate who chooses each month's activity and mark them in your family calendar! This is key. What is **recorded**, get's accomplished.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS AT HOME OR NEARBY

MAKE YOUR OWN PIZZA NIGHT: CREATE UNUSUAL TOPPINGS.

STAR-GAZING ADVENTURE: USE A TELESCOPE OR PHONE APP TO IDENTIFY CONSTELLATIONS.

DIY SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS: LIKE MAKING A HOMEMADE VOLCANO OR SLIME.

EXPLORE HIDDEN TREASURES IN YOUR AREA.

PLANT A MINI HERB GARDEN AND USE IT IN MEALS.



A FEW SUGGESTIONS OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

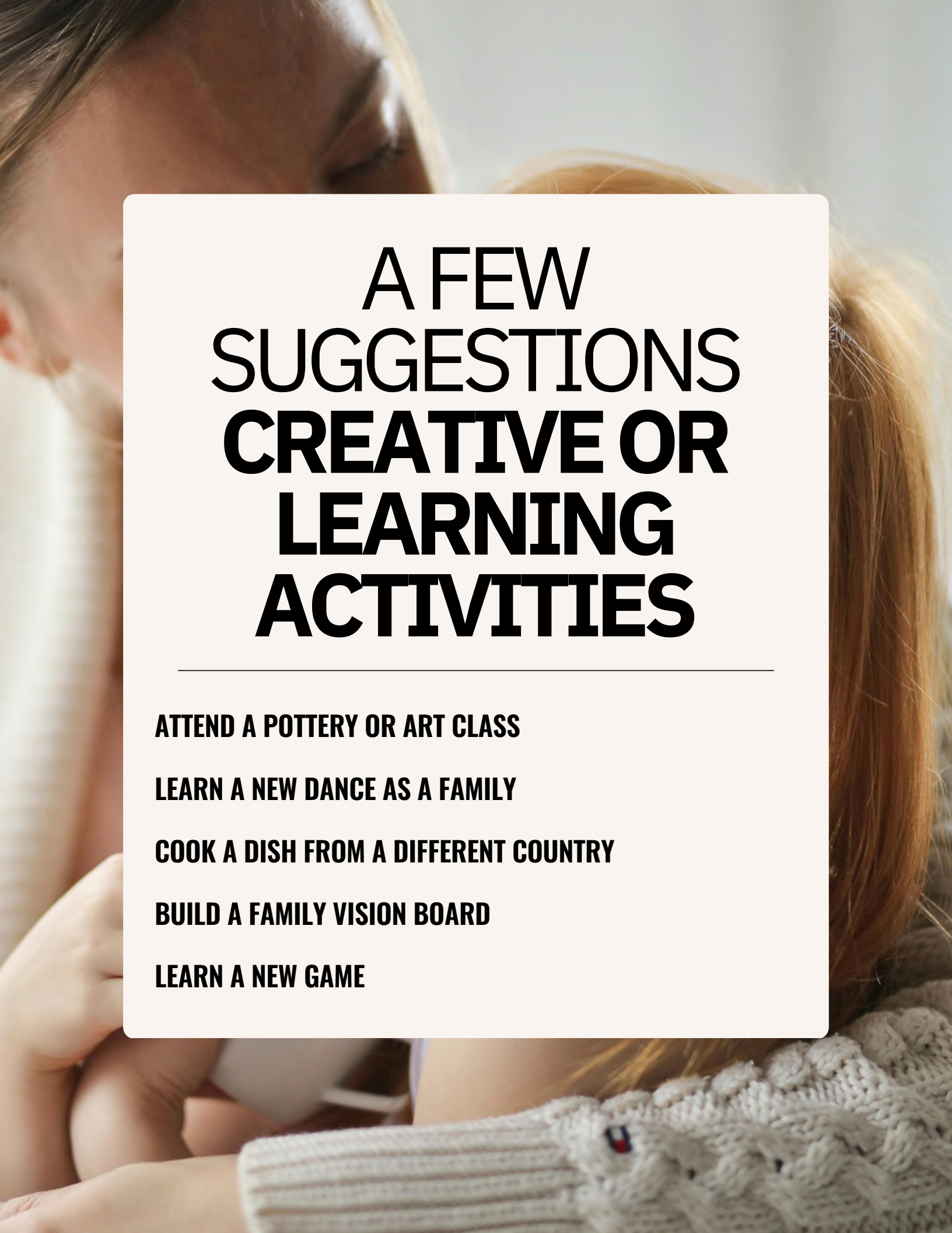
TRY PADDLE BOARDING OR CANOEING

VISIT A WILDLIFE SANCTUARY OR BIRD WATCHING

**TAKE A NEW HIKING TRAIL: CHOOSE ONE WITH A WATERFALL
OR UNIQUE VIEWS.**

GO ON A SUNRISE PICNIC

EXPLORE A NEARBY TOWN OR CITY



A FEW SUGGESTIONS CREATIVE OR LEARNING ACTIVITIES

ATTEND A POTTERY OR ART CLASS

LEARN A NEW DANCE AS A FAMILY

COOK A DISH FROM A DIFFERENT COUNTRY

BUILD A FAMILY VISION BOARD

LEARN A NEW GAME



A FEW SUGGESTIONS UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES

STAY OVERNIGHT IN A YURT OR TREEHOUSE

TAKE A GHOST TOUR

CREATE A TIME CAPSULE

GO TO A DRIVE-IN MOVIE

JOIN A COMMUNITY EVENT





The best way to
predict your future
is to create it."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN