



Desert Health®

News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community

May/June 2015

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FINDING YOUR HAPPY

It's surprising to learn of the number of people in our community who don't greet each new day with a smile. For them, mornings are a struggle, and the bright desert sun may be shaded by dark thoughts and feelings that cloud their mind and deplete their energy.

They are of different ages, shapes and backgrounds – from children to the elderly, from the disadvantaged to the privileged – but all share the heavy weight brought on by depression and anxiety.

According to the latest HARC surveys, 25.3 percent of Coachella Valley adults have reported an emotional, mental or behavioral problem that concerned them in the past year, and over half of these felt that their problem was severe enough to require professional help. This compares to national statistics which report 1 in 5 adults (20%) struggle with these issues.¹

However, if you consider our local 55+ community, that number increases significantly to 69 percent,² and according to Anthony Bassanelli, M.D., of Eisenhower Behavioral Health, this time of year brings increased incidents as friends and neighbors move to cooler climates, the social calendar clears, and desert heat keeps those most affected indoors and inactive. Depression and anxiety are the primary conditions he sees, and loss is a significant factor – loss of health, vision, finances, or family members – which can create feelings of isolation."

Certainly more loss occurs as we advance in age, but contrary to the belief of many, **depression is not a normal part of aging.**

But when you are stuck in a depressed state and can't seem to find your way out, what do you do?

"Changing habits can be very challenging; some people need only therapy, however, if mood problems have gotten them too stuck, some need the help of medications, and some need both," says Bassanelli.

According to the American Psychological Association, depression is treatable in 80 percent of cases; however, those suffering have to be willing to take the first step, and this can be the most challenging part.

In our valley, only 1 out of 4 adults who felt they needed treatment sought help. This is due in part to the stigma associated with behavioral health. Many feel there is a shame associated with such issues and therefore don't discuss it openly.

However, all of us should have a vested interest in overturning this stigma and encouraging those in need to seek help because depression affects not only the individual, but also their family, work environment, and the entire community.

Take the First Steps

Professionals at the recent Mental Health Summit III hosted by Riverside County and the Coachella

Continued on page 7

Health is a Choice

Lyme disease is on the rise. Once prevalent only in the northeast, the infectious disease has now been reported in every state in the US, and throughout the world. In 2012, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported 30,000 cases annually, only to revise that statistic to 300,000 in 2013.¹

The probable stats are due largely to the fact that diagnosis can be challenging, and no fool-proof testing methods have been established; both considerations are most troubling for those who suffer from the often debilitating condition. Diagnosis is based primarily on symptoms which can mirror other conditions and vary from person to person including extreme fatigue, fever, skin rash, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes.¹ Blood tests may be taken to detect antibodies against the Borrelia bacteria (Borrelia burgdorferi is the predominant causative agent of Lyme), but these tests are not deemed 100% reliable.

As a result, many patients are turned away undiagnosed, which can be detrimental, because if left untreated, the infection can spread to joints (causing arthritic symptoms); the heart (causing palpitations and dizziness); the nervous system, and even the brain (causing problems with short-term memory).¹

The key with Lyme disease (LD) is to detect it early. National Institutes of Health studies have shown that most patients recover when treated with a few weeks of antibiotics, but a large number of patients remain undiagnosed, and antibiotics are less effective in later stages of the disease.²

As such, many practitioners and patients are turning to alternative methods for both diagnosis and treatment. Michelle Steadman of Indio is one of them. Many know the desert native as an active Pilates instructor and the founder of TRUElicious Raw Superfood Bars. But the

Continued on page 8



We are proud to support the First Annual
DESERT HEALTH® WELLNESS AWARDS
Wednesday, May 20 • 6:30 p.m.
Desert Willow Golf Resort

Join us in honoring those moving health and wellness forward in our community.



For tickets visit www.DesertHealthNews.com



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We are so excited! The Desert Health® Wellness Awards are finally here.

We hope you will join us in celebrating those nominated by their peers and supporters for their contributions in moving health and wellness forward in our community. Everyone is welcome to attend the festive event, and the Official Program can be found on page 15.

In this issue we also focus on the growing concern of depression and anxiety as May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Local statistics are alarming and the first step to healing is shedding light on the issue. Many contributing writers offer suggestions, therapies, exercises, and the newest technology to help turn dark cloudy mornings into bright sunny days. It is a serious issue which many are calling a national epidemic, and we hope to provide education and resources for those in need.

We all know the brain is a powerful tool, and "neuro-mania" is a buzz word describing the current focus on how we can all enhance brain function to maximize potential. Several of our editorials provide strategies to do just that.

Another growing epidemic is Lyme disease. In Health is a Choice, we share Michelle Steadman's personal journey, and are glad to report she is doing well on her road to recovery.



Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to continue doing what we love. Everyone involved in Desert Health® shares the passion to educate and empower others to make health a priority in their lives.

We hope you find much inspiration on our pages.

See you May 20th!

Here's to your health ~

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Thank you!



When Mammography is Not Enough

How 3-D imaging technology is changing breast cancer screening

By Erika Z. Byrd

I always fill out the forms quickly in the doctor's waiting room. Do you have a history— No. Have you ever— No. I didn't have a family history of breast cancer or any cancer. But a year ago this past December, my mother was diagnosed and ended up receiving a double mastectomy. The key is to catch it early. And really the only way you can catch breast cancer early is through screening technology.

Before my mom's diagnosis, I would occasionally get mammograms. But that was before. To understand mammography and recent developments in screening, I met with Dr. Marla Lander, a fellowship-trained radiologist and breast imager at the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional Medical Center. The first question: is the radiation used dangerous?

"No," she said. The dose a woman gets during a screening mammogram with two views is about the same from the environment over about 7 weeks. Then we got to the hard questions: why is there so much negative press around mammography?

"It does make a huge difference, but it's not perfect. It can miss cancers in women with dense breast tissue," Dr. Lander said. Only about 40 percent of breast cancers present with calcifications. "You'll catch these with mammography, but that leaves the other 60 percent that can be tricky to find on the mammogram if the woman has dense breast tissue."

The problem with dense breasts is that it makes detecting cancer more challenging because cancer can be hidden in the tissue. After menopause or after a woman stops hormone replacement therapy, dense breasts will typically transition to fatty breasts. However, for 20 percent of women, dense breast tissue will remain an issue throughout their lives. The major risk factor, then, is missing detection of these hidden cancers during a mammogram.

How do you detect cancers in dense breast tissue? With 3-D imagery. "Screening ultrasound is revolutionizing how we practice breast medicine," said Dr. Lander. The Comprehensive Cancer Center has a Somo-v automated 3-D breast ultrasound that can acquire 3-D images of dense breasts in less than 5 minutes.

"The automated system covers every inch of the breast," said Dr. Lander. "And it's reproducible. You can compare the results side by side and from one year to the next. That's a huge advantage."

For example, there is one particular type of breast cancer that accounts for about 15 percent of cases. "It's easy to miss on a mammogram, MRI or even a PET scan," said Dr. Lander. "A fantastic advantage of the coronal view ultrasound is that lobular cancers jump out at the reader."

For a patient like myself, this was all I needed to know. I scheduled both a mammogram and a 3-D ultrasound screening at the Comprehensive Cancer Center. I got passing marks and peace of mind.

And I called my mom.

For more information about the Comprehensive Cancer Center, call (760) 416.4800 or visit www.desertcancercenter.com/breasthealth.

Handshakes Shouldn't Hurt

How to get your grip back from arthritis

Courtesy of Desert Regional Medical Center

Do you stiffen up even at the mention of the word "arthritis"?

May is National Arthritis Awareness Month, and according to the Arthritis Foundation, more than 50 million Americans are living with the condition. Despite how common arthritis is, there are a lot of misconceptions about this disease – namely, that it's just a fact of getting older and not much can be done about it. The truth is, two-thirds of those with arthritis are under 65, including 300,000 children. You don't have to 'just live with it,' either. There are many treatment options, ranging from conservative methods to surgical solutions.

The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis (OA), a progressive, degenerative joint disease. This is the type of arthritis that typically brings people in to see an orthopedic surgeon. While hips and knees are commonly replaced joints, arthritis of the hand and wrist can be debilitating.

"Hand surgery is more delicate and fine tuned compared to the bigger joints," said Orthopedic Surgeon Ramin Pooyan, D.O., a hand and upper extremity specialist with the Institute of Clinical Orthopedics and Neurosciences at Desert Regional Medical Center. "I became a hand surgeon because I was fascinated by the anatomy and the intricacy of the hands — how all the tendons, bones, nerves and muscles work together. If one thing is off, it affects the entire function."

More than half of the people who come to see Dr. Pooyan at his practice have arthritis. "This condition is more common in women than men. It also frequently occurs in the non-dominant hand," said Dr. Pooyan.

Pain and loss of function are the determining factors of why a person would consider surgery. This can be caused by anything from repetitive use to traumatic injuries. "If a finger is deformed by arthritis, but there is no pain and the movement is good, that's not a reason for surgery," Dr. Pooyan said.

Typically it is those with stage IV arthritis who have tried everything else that need pain relief through surgery. However, Dr. Pooyan said he has seen people with stage I or II arthritis who had severe pain that required surgical treatment.

On the surgical side, fusion of the joint may be recommended which provides excellent pain relief, but does limit motion. Dr. Pooyan also performs joint replacement of the knuckles or the middle joint. In the wrist, there are several different types of surgical treatment options. Surgery isn't the only option, however. There are several over-the-counter and prescription medications, as well as cortisone injections and occupational therapy.

Dr. Pooyan will give a talk Tuesday, May 19 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Sun City Palm Desert called "When Handshakes Hurt." He will discuss both conservative management and surgical options.

To learn more and to speak to Dr. Pooyan in person, register for the free lecture by calling (800) 491.4990. For more information about the Institute of Clinical Orthopedics at Desert Regional Medical Center, visit www.desertregionalicon.com

"Desert Regional Medical Center
SAVED MY LIFE."

-Danny Dotson
with Laura Dotson
From
STORAGE WARS

Dan Dotson is a fast-talking auctioneer in the hit reality show Storage Wars, so when his words suddenly failed him he knew something was wrong. Dotson was suffering the early signs of a stroke, and was brought by ambulance to the Advanced Primary Stroke Center at Desert Regional Medical Center. Desert Regional's award-winning program can stop strokes in their tracks—without ever making an incision to the head. Dotson credits Desert Regional for saving his life.

May is National Stroke Awareness Month.

To learn more about signs of a stroke,
attend this upcoming lecture:

"How to Recognize the Signs of Stroke"

Thursday, May 7, 1-2 pm.

Mizell Senior Center

480 S. Sunrise Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Presented by Ajeet Sodhi, M.D.,
one of the doctors who treated Dan Dotson.



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Preservation of the Patient Doctor Relationship

By Christopher R. Hancock, MD

"Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there is also a love of humanity." – Hippocrates

The patient doctor relationship has long been revered. However, there are many challenges currently assailing this time honored relationship. Modern times have brought new factors into consideration. Lack of timely access to care and the high cost of medicine are the principal complaints of most Americans. Insurance company and government agency attempts at addressing these problems too often result in cumbersome and unintentional policies that can actually degrade the patient doctor relationship.

Some of the more familiar issues are associated with implementation of the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), the burdensome provisions of the HITECH act (which requires physicians and hospitals to convert to electronic medical records in ways that do not enhance patient care), and the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR), a failed attempt to modify reimbursement for medical care that was recently repealed after two decades of tumultuous debate. Where general consensus and intention meet among all sides of the political spectrum, the technical components of getting there too often abound in conflict.

So let us focus where there is general consensus and avoid unnecessary consternation, keeping our minds on the prize: preserving the patient doctor relationship.

We probably all would agree that we wish to keep our preferred doctors who have treated us and are familiar with our histories. We want a relationship that has developed over years or even decades. We want to be able to see a variety of doctors, no matter what insurance, health care system, or hospital they may be affiliated with, without encountering barriers along the way. We want our doctors to follow us no matter what hospital we may be admitted to. Ideally, one should be able to see a physician of their choosing and seek care within a system that provides communication and continuity.

These are the goals of a large group of Coachella Valley doctors who have organized themselves into a network of providers to enhance patient choice and access. Desert Valley Independent Physicians (DVIP) group offers patients many choices across numerous specialties and helps facilitate timely access to care. Members share a willingness and commitment to develop an integrated health care network within the desert cities that fosters access to all health care providers. Their primary mission is to be a "gateway to trust and competency" for patients and to focus on wellness and preventative medicine.

Many of these doctors are already volunteer faculty with the newest medical school in California in 50 years – The University of California Riverside (UCR) School of Medicine. Several will be training the first UCR family practice resident class this summer.

Another objective of DVIP is the pursuit of health cost transparency. Members concur that all potential costs should be discussed with patients up front to help them negotiate through the "health cost fog." Furthermore, this group advocates for medical decisions to be made merit-based and upon academic pursuits, considering evidence-based medicine to guide health and longevity.

Change is inevitable, and positive change first starts with awareness. Many of us doctors share the same concerns as our patients and are actively working to restore and preserve the patient doctor relationship.

Dr. Hancock is a board certified neuroradiologist and can be reached at Desert Medical Imaging (760) 694.9559. www.desertmedicalimaging.com. For more information on Desert Valley Independent Physicians, visit DesertDoctors.org or call (760) 232.4646.

Dis-Ability Health

By Judy A. May, MA

If you don't have a disability (or at least won't admit to having one) or you don't work in the disability industry, it is unlikely this is a topic of conversation you are likely to have over coffee and a croissant. But it is a discussion to be held across our valley if we are going to meet the needs of this unique population.

As the largest minority group in the world, and growing, there is a high likelihood of your having a disability, developing a disability, or knowing someone with a disability. But the moniker "disabled" is its own worst enemy. It conjures up external assumptions and internal ruminations of inability and powerlessness that can lead to denial and isolation, fueled by stigma and misperceptions.

Chana Joffe-Walt writes in her article *Unfit for Work: The Startling Rise of Disability in America* that "over the past three decades, the number of Americans who are on disability has skyrocketed." She goes on to say, "the federal government spends more money each year on cash payments for disabled former workers than it spends on food stamps and welfare combined." This report, of course, is about the high cost of supporting people with disabilities and the current trend of scams to receive disability benefits. While this is an unfortunate situation, and certainly one that can lead to an impassioned debate, we're here to talk about living life to the fullest with a disability.

"The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities." (adata.org)

"We all have a personal stake in the community of people with disabilities, for it is one we can belong to in a heartbeat."
– Judy May, Regional Director, Incight

My aging eyes limit my ability to see well after dark or read fine print in a dimly lit restaurant. My hearing loss, while minimal, prevents me from hearing the timer on the stove, which can lead to some seriously over baked lasagna. Am I disabled? No. By definition, do I have a disability? Absolutely.

A few years ago I questioned a beautiful, college-educated, wife and young mother of two as to what her biggest challenge was since a car accident left her with quadriplegia that required a power wheelchair for mobility. Her answer didn't include her mobility challenges. It wasn't how much longer it took her to get ready each morning. It wasn't her need to use a catheter. Her response was, "Getting used to people looking past me."

Post accident, she still had her college degree and years of experience as a professional educator. She still drove her children to school and participated in their extracurricular events. She continued to work on her doctorate. She had not yet overcome her fear of driving on the freeway but she was alive and full of hope with expectations of a rich and productive future. In the eyes of those who met her, however, she was not only just disabled but incompetent by nature

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KMIR NEWS



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Middle School Students JUMP at Careers in Healthcare

HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America) – JUMP (Junior Upcoming Medical Professionals) is a student-led organization designed to be a stepping-stone for 7th to 8th graders interested in entering the health science and medical technology field. Through the program, HOSA-JUMP members have the opportunity to participate in career exploration through guest speakers, field trips, and middle school-high school mentorship. Ideally, JUMP is conducted at middle schools where there is an existing HOSA chapter at the local high school, as a partnership between the middle and high school sites is an important link to both the students and the advisors.

Through chapter management, including fundraising and community service, JUMP students learn teamwork strategies, leadership values, and positive work ethic. Through the competitive events program, students study various topics for mastery, familiarizing themselves with medical terminology, medical math, public speaking, health care careers and health education.

Currently there are four JUMP Chapters in the region at Nellie N. Coffman, James Workman, Raymond Cree, and Indio Middle Schools (IMS) where the Pre-Med Academy is more than just a JUMP Chapter. What began in 2005 has become a full three-year program, available to all students as an elective. IMS Pre-Med Academy serves approximately 325 students each school year (grades 6 through 8). The goal of the Pre-Med Academy is to provide students with opportunities to engage in activities that expose them to the multiple careers available in the field of medicine. During the three-year program, students move from the basics of human body systems and their associated illnesses to tackling subjects such as optometry, dentistry, forensics and veterinary science, to name a few. Lessons, however, go beyond note taking and

videos; students learn through various labs and activities true to the medical profession.

Thanks to partnerships with CVEP's Health Industry Council, Lifestream, Kaiser Permanente's Hippocratic Circle and the Palm Springs Animal Shelter, students gain more real world experience to enhance their education. Through these partnerships, the 8th grade pre-med students are able to tour all of the valley's hospitals, explore USC's medical school, interview and engage in conversations with 2nd year medical students, and even explore career options available to those who might be interested in veterinary medicine.

Through Lifestream's support, students work to give back to the community. Over the last ten years, the Academy has hosted over 30 blood drives, collecting more than 1200 pints (150 gallons) of blood. Students in the academy are an integral part of this quarterly event.

IMS pre-med students also visit elementary schools and take the opportunity to teach short lessons on health-related topics to third, fourth and fifth graders with the goal of sparking medical career interest in their younger peers.

IMS's comprehensive pre-med program, and the other regional JUMP Chapters, are always looking to improve and expand, and to enhance community involvement through mentors who are willing to share their passion and expertise.

For more information on JUMP Chapters contact: Nancy Kounovsky, Indio Middle School Nancy.Kounovsky@desertsands.us; Jerry Reylek, Nellie Coffman Middle School jreylek@psusd.us; Donna Sturgeon, CVEP Health Industry Council Donna@cvep.com or visit www.Cal-HOSA.org (Click on "About Membership" tab to find details about JUMP).

"Honey, I Can't Hear You!"

By Lauren Del Sarto

"Get your hearing checked!" My friend Pam and I had each heard this from our husbands for several years. But she is only 45 and I just turned 50, so we thought we were way too young to be losing our hearing. It must be them.

But when my mom chimed in, I listened. She is baffled that I can't hear how loud I am sometimes (especially after a glass of wine or two). So Pam and I chatted about our symptoms. She has a very hard time hearing her husband when she can't see his lips moving. "All I hear is a mumble. I know he's talking to me, but I have no idea what he's saying." Blessing or curse? I asked.

Pam's father is almost completely deaf and has been hard of hearing since she was a little girl. "I worry that I may have inherited this "deaf gene" from him, or maybe it's just wax." I admitted to issues hearing people speaking to me in a crowded, noisy environment. I find myself focusing on their lips to understand what they are saying (which always bugged me about my dad).

Pam's husband is also hard of hearing and she vowed that she would never be as stubborn as he about getting his hearing checked, if and when the time came. She decided the time was now, and I thought 'a hearing test for the big 5-0?' Why not?

We decided to go together, both fascinated by what we would learn, and

made an appointment with Dr. Kato at The Ear Institute in Palm Desert. Turns out Pam is losing the ability to hear her husband. The low frequency is starting

to decline in both ears, making it harder to hear male voices, which is unusual for hearing loss due to aging, says Dr. Kato. "Most hearing loss that results from aging occurs in the high frequencies first and then can progress to other tones." Maybe she did get that gene.

I had a similar pattern to Pam's in my right ear, but was losing high frequencies in my left ear. Not good as your hearing should be symmetrical, but it wasn't significant enough to garner further testing. We learned that high tone loss is standardly from noise

damage (loud music, heavy machinery, etc.). "When we have a high frequency loss, it is more difficult to understand speech because high frequencies are where the consonants are heard." This explained why I always put my earphone in my right ear to transcribe interviews.

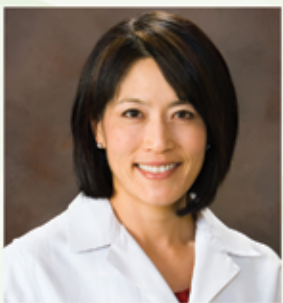
What about my big mouth when consuming alcohol? Dr. Kato summed that up to the signal to noise ratio, and that I probably just wanted to hear myself – and everyone else – speak louder.

At Dr. Kato's recommendation, we plan to schedule annual hearing tests and keep an eye on any changes. At least now we have an excuse for not hearing our husbands.



You are never "too young" to check your hearing.

THE EAR INSTITUTE
Center for the Ear, Hearing & Balance



B. MAYA KATO, MD
Otology and Neurotology
Board Certified, Otolaryngology

Do you or a loved one have:

- Hearing loss
- Ringing in the ears
- Dizziness
- Vertigo
- Balance problem
- Fear of falling

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**Finding Your Happy**

Continued from page 1

Valley Health Collaborative agreed on two important first steps: 1) understand that you are not alone; and 2) work with someone to create an action plan to turn things around.

Fortunately, here in the valley we have resources – especially for older adults – and many are free.

Change Your Environment

Socialization is an important part of healing, says Maura Fisher, MSN, RN of Eisenhower Behavioral Health. “We have clients who will say they haven’t been out of the house for a week.” Her team encourages them to go to the mall and just walk or visit a senior center; join a gentle yoga class, or get into a pool for gentle movement - “anything that involves movement and will lead them out of their environment and interacting with others.”

Treat Your Body Well

At the Mental Health Summit, Jeralyn Brossfield, M.D., director of the Eisenhower Wellness Institute, spoke of the five keys to brain health providing the acronym DEPSS: Diet, Exercise, People, Sleep and Stress Management.

“Depression is a complicated, multifactorial disease with a major biochemical component which can be greatly affected by lifestyle choices, and making changes can have dramatic results,” she says.

We have all been crabby when hungry, a mood which is tied to blood sugar levels. According to Brossfield, studies show that maintaining steady blood sugar levels throughout the day, avoiding spikes and crashes, is key to brain health.

“Eating 4-6 small meals throughout the day, rather than 3 large meals, is a simple first step,” she advises, adding that low glycemic foods such as those found in the Mediterranean diet rich in fish, nuts, olive olives and fresh produce will help alleviate the ups and downs commonly caused by the ironically named SAD diet (Standard American Diet; see more on nutrition in Dr. Brossfield’s column on p.23).

Just as important are exercise which increase brain tissue, and meditation or relaxation practices which increase brain activity.

We all know that a part of any plan should be a healthy lifestyle, but when depression or anxiety rules your thoughts and actions, how do you motivate yourself or someone you love to make healthy changes?

Brossfield advises that acknowledging one’s freedom *not* to change often helps make change possible. “Voicing corrective statements will often provoke an argument for the other side, so it is important that conversations allow the one affected to voice their own arguments for change.”

Asking questions to promote change is effective: “If you decided you wanted to get better, how would you do it? Where would you start?”

Remember, in between where you are and where you want to be are choices.

Free Program for Those 60+

Riverside County Department of Mental Health funds over 30 programs including a free local service for those 60 and over affected by depression and/or anxiety. The evidence-based program was developed at Stanford University and utilizes the cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) therapeutic orientation. Therapists are specifically certified in the CBT for LLD (Late Life Depression) model.

Components of the program include identifying unhealthy thoughts and helping clients to shift the thinking process to develop different, more balanced, thinking which will change the emotional state. There are also exercises aimed at reducing catastrophic thoughts which tend to enhance anxiety and identifying unhealthy core beliefs about one’s self, others and the world all of which can create distorted thinking patterns. Behavioral activities include creating a pleasurable events schedule and working through problems and establishing resolutions.

Offered at The LGBT Community Center in Palm Springs and Catholic Charities of the Desert (which are both open to any and all), the program is a structured problem-solving treatment approach that takes place over 16-20 session, and participants are reporting very positive results.

According to Jill Gover, Ph.D., director of mental health services at The Center who runs their CBT for LLD program, studies show that the program is comparable to medication in results and retention. “At the Center, we had a 90 percent retention rate (only 2 participants withdrew), and 77 percent successfully completed their treatment goals.” Post-program questionnaires also showed improvement in quality of life in 90% (all but 2) of the categories, indicating an increase in social activities and enjoyment.

New Technology for Severe Depression

When medications and talk therapies aren’t enough, brain stimulation procedures may be considered. One of the newest technologies (FDA-approved in 2008) is transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) which uses magnetic fields to stimulate nerve cells in the brain to improve symptoms of depression.³

The good news is that unlike other therapies in this category, TMS is non-invasive. Many treatments like vagus nerve stimulation or deep brain stimulation require surgery or implantation of electrodes. With TMS, a large electromagnetic coil is placed against the scalp near the forehead. An electromagnet creates currents that stimulate nerve cells in the region of your brain involved in mood control and depression. The stimulation appears to affect how this part of the brain is working, which in turn seems to ease depression symptoms and improve mood.³

Eisenhower Behavioral Health adopted the therapy last fall and is seeing significant results. “We are very excited about this therapy because it is completely non-invasive,” says Bassanelli. “And unlike electric compulsive (electric shock) therapy, it involves magnetic energy versus electric energy.”

A story in Eisenhower’s *Healthy Living Magazine* features Alice, who has struggled with depression and anxiety most of her life, but didn’t seek help until she was in her 50s. Working with Bassanelli and his team, she tried talk therapy and ten different medications in various combinations, but it was TMS that worked for her. Now she laughs, sleeps better and even purchased a bike for exercise. Her grandkids, with whom she now interacts more often, consider her to be a different person.

We are fortunate to have these resources available to us locally, and those in the industry are working to provide more. If you, or someone you know, struggle with depression or anxiety, reach out for help.

And if you are one of those who does greet each day with a smile, take the time to share that smile with a friend or neighbor who could use it. Professionals agree that one of the commonalities of those with anxiety and depression is that they just want to be heard. Sometimes those first steps start with simply sharing your story and receiving a little encouragement from someone who listens and cares.

RESOURCES: Riverside County Department of Mental Health: www.up2riverside.org

List of Senior Centers: http://www.vitalco.net/riverside_senior.htm

Eisenhower Behavior Health: (760) 837.8767 emc.org/behavioralhealth

Free CBT for LLD programs by Riverside County Department of Mental Health:

The Center, Palm Springs (760) 416.7899 www.thecenterps.org;

Catholic Charities, Indio and Palm Desert (760) 449.7877 www.ccsbriv.org

References: 1) National Network of Depression Centers <http://www.nndc.org/the-facts/>; 2) Health Assessment Research for Communities (HARC); 3) MayoClinic.org

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Health is a Choice

hard-working entrepreneur came to a halt when *Borrelia* bacteria was identified in her blood.

Choosing Alternative Options

In the Summer of 2013, Michelle was in full start-up mode with TRUElicious when she started feeling 'off' with signs of a bladder infection. She turned to a trusted member of her natural health care team, certified blood microscopist Jenny Holmes of Joshua Tree. Microscopists observe blood samples, noting changes that help identify disease. Michelle had been working with Jenny for seven years, and thus had a baseline of her healthy blood profile. This trip produced signs of bacteria that Holmes recognized as *Borrelia*.

"Blood microscopy is an effective tool for health care practitioners to consider when assisting one in establishing treatment plans for conditions that are hard to diagnosis, including Lyme," says Holmes who works with many integrative medical doctors, including Lyme specialist Chitra Bhatka, M.D., of Orange County Integrative Medical Center.

In Norway, many who feel they have LD and remain undiagnosed are heading to Oslo University where two biologists are using microscopy to identify the changing life cycles of the spiral bacteria which can take many forms, and bore into blood cells to move throughout the body.

The primary form of testing in Norway is through antibody detection as well. "We believe, contrary to the official stance, that the antibody reaction wanes in people who have been sick for a long time, and that only a small minority of those with chronic borreliosis test positive," explain Ivar Mysterud and Morten Laane who have published their findings in the journal *Biological and Biomedical Reports*. "The *Borrelia* infection suppresses the immune system so that it does not function properly. This is one of several reasons that it is difficult to give a definitive diagnosis."

Through the lens, they are able to see how the LD bacteria differ widely in shape and appearance, and are good at camouflage. As soon as the highly mobile and active bacteria experience deterioration in their living conditions, they form cysts, which are the dormant stage of the life cycle. Bacteria may also aggregate in colonies in a slime called a biofilm to protect themselves from external threats such as antibiotics, disinfectants and the body's immune system. When the environment is favorable once again, the *Borrelia* bacteria revert to their usual spiral form, and it is there that both cysts and individual structures may germinate and produce new "spirochetes."

"Lyme bacteria cannot live in oxygen-rich environments so they migrate to areas of weakness in the body where they multiply," explains Holmes, who referred Michelle to a specialist in Costa Mesa. But because of her demanding schedule, Michelle opted to simply take natural antibiotics and schedule a follow-up with Holmes. There are numerous natural antibiotic formulas that include herbs such as goldenseal and Echinacea, and they worked to clear Michelle's bladder infection, but soon after, she began experiencing other symptoms like fatigue and shortness of breath. She also felt as if her esophagus was swelling and food would sit in her throat, a potential sign of swollen lymph nodes.

For the next 3-4 months her health started to decline; however, she put any thoughts of stopping work aside, knowing that her family business could not operate without her. Her bars had just been accepted at Whole Foods Market which required moving production out of their home and into a manufacturing plant which she and her husband, Kevin, were to

build from the floor up. She had to get new packaging, permitting, certifications, licenses, and more, and considers those few months the most stressful in her life. "It was the most exciting time of my life, yet the most stressful, and truly almost killed me. I just felt myself getting sicker and sicker, but I put it aside because I had a job to do."

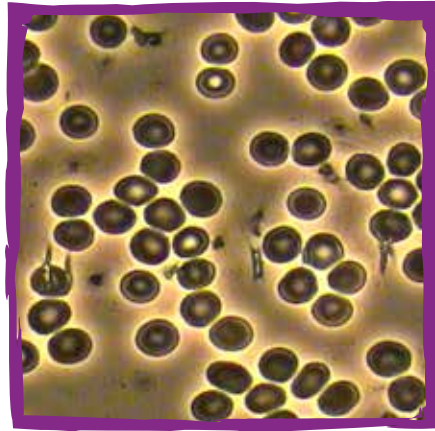
She remembers a picture of her and her family standing next to their product display on the opening day of Whole Foods in Palm Desert. "I looked at that picture and realized that I was so very sick." A week after opening, she knew something was really wrong. She returned to see Holmes, who this time not only identified active bacteria, but also prevalent c-reactive proteins which indicated severe inflammation throughout Michelle's body. She strongly encouraged Michelle not to wait any longer and to seek immediate care.

As she had her entire life, Michelle chose to seek alternative treatment and made an appointment with the team at Know Your Options in Costa Mesa where Holmes also works. The clinic is headed by Jacob Swilling, Ph.D., who has been consulting on cases like Michelle's for over 20 years.

The protocol theory at Know Your Options is to enhance the body's own immunity to fight the disease and to create an environment in which the bacteria cannot survive. Components include strict diet and supplementation; increasing red blood cell counts through simulated elevation (via CVAC); oxygenating the body with hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), and detoxification. The concentrated protocol is intense and required that Michelle put her life on hold in order to heal.

"I have always worked 3 to 4 jobs at a time my entire life," says Michelle. "For me to allow myself time to heal was very hard, but at that point, I physically felt like I was dying inside. I spent most of my time in bed and couldn't even climb stairs at home. It was a horrible feeling and hard to explain." She had read about people who had been bed ridden for years with LD and decided she had to do this. "I couldn't afford to do it, but for my health, I couldn't afford not to do it."

Fortunately, she had the support system around her to believe in the therapies she chose and to pick up the pieces in her absence, and while the protocol was very challenging for Michelle, her commitment paid off. One month later, she woke up feeling good once again.



Blood under a microscope showing advanced spirochete forms
Image by Holmes Health

The Protocol

Michelle packed her bags and checked into a hotel near Know Your Options for two weeks of concentrated treatment. Based on her microscopy report, a supplement plan was developed that included 32 doses of different enzymes, herbs, vitamins, and minerals scheduled throughout the day, and a strict diet of organic whole foods.

Her therapies included three daily treatments of Cyclic Variations in Adaptive Conditioning (CVAC) which challenges the body to adapt to varied changes in air pressure (like training at higher altitudes while lying down), followed 24-hours later by HBOT to oxygenate the new blood cells and create an unfavorable environment for the bacteria.

After six CVAC and two HBOT sessions, another analysis showed Michelle's blood on fire with activity; the spirochetes, which usually hide in tissues and cells were out - they were agitated and on the run. Her treatment plan was working. She returned to the desert and continued HBOT treatment at Desert Longevity Institute under Daniel Johnson, M.D., and

Continued on page 12

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How You Can Give Your Career a Fresh Start

By Susan Murphy, Ph.D.

(Previously featured at Forbes.com – February 15, 2015)

“The question is not how to survive, but how to thrive with passion, compassion, humor and style.” — Maya Angelou

Are you just surviving at work – caught up in the day-to-day doldrums of your job? Life is too short to tolerate any sense of dread on Sunday evening as you think about going to work the next day. If you aren't thriving at work and your passion is missing, perhaps this is the year for you to jump-start your work life. Since working until age 70 is no longer the exception, the sooner you take charge of your career, the better.

The good news is that you can re-charge your career at any time. Your career path can be vertical, horizontal or bumpy. Altering the direction of your career path does not carry the stigma it once did. In fact, the gold watch ceremony for employees who have been at one company for 50 years has become obsolete. Adults average four different careers in their lifetime—not jobs, careers. I've already had six. And each has been an extension of the previous ones. The neat thing is that skills and talents are often transferable, so you can take skills you've developed



in one career and transport them with you to another. Project managers can apply their budgeting, resource allocation, and planning to consulting assignments. Lawyers can apply their research and negotiation skills to many careers, including politics, teaching, and writing.

So, how do you begin to give a fresh start to your career?

Step back and do some honest reflection about your current situation.

Are you feeling disgruntled and disengaged in your current job or because of the type of work you are currently doing? Would you feel rejuvenated if you worked for a different manager or a different company doing similar work? If you still find your career choice one that fulfills life purpose and values, you may want to seek a different workplace environment. The ability to perform work that is aligned with your mission and values in an organization that encourages you to be your best self can reignite your passion, compassion, humor and style.

Do career strategic planning.

Businesses perform a SWOT analysis and so can you. After all, your life is your most important business. A SWOT analysis is a formal process where an organization considers its Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Be introspective about yourself. What are your strengths and talents? Take a look at all the things you've done

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The Eye is the Window to the Soul
It can also provide a road map to your health

By Camille Harrison, MD

They say the eye is the window to the soul. While this may indeed be the case, what I see when I peer into a patient's eye (and I have seen a lot of eyes in my career), is essentially a map to an individual's health.

When your doctor dilates your eye to examine the retina, many things about your health can be determined. The retina blood vessels are the only vessels in the body that can be directly viewed. No dye studies or x-rays are needed. All that is required is a skilled eye care specialist and the right tools for viewing. The health of the vessels in your eyes are often an indication of the health of the vessels throughout your body. For example, if I were to see scattered hemorrhages or deposits of cholesterol along the vessel path, it would be an indication that you likely have uncontrolled diabetes or high blood pressure. Narrowing of the arteries can be seen in the retina and indicates that your hypertension is damaging the small vessels throughout your body putting you at risk for vision loss, kidney failure, stroke or heart disease.

These findings are not always initially associated with vision loss, but they may lead there if the conditions are not treated. When this information is available to your medical team, it is valuable in setting treatment goals and monitoring treatment success. It is not uncommon to see these vessels heal right before our eyes when a patient improves their blood sugar or blood pressure.



Eye vessels help determine the health of other vessels throughout the body.


It is not uncommon that a person newly diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes may have had the disease, undetected, for many years. A comprehensive assessment of the eyes, especially the retina blood vessels, can help determine if damage has already occurred. This is helpful in determining your course of treatment, target blood sugar level, and recommended frequency of follow up to prevent further damage to your body.

Yes. All of this can be seen in your eyes!

There are other conditions that affect your entire body which are often first detected because of eye changes. Sudden onset of vision loss in a younger patient can reveal optic nerve swelling associated with multiple sclerosis. Inflammation of the retinal blood vessels may be a sign of inflammatory disease such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, and can result in vision loss, light sensitivity and eye pain.

Annual dilated eye exams after the age of 50 can not only detect the onset of eye conditions, but can be a tool in diagnosing diseases affecting your entire body. Incorporating these exams into your health care plan may be more beneficial than you ever knew.

Dr. Harrison is a vitreoretinal specialist with Coachella Valley Retina in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 895.1993.




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Off-Label Drug Use

By Greg Evans, OD

Many physicians use medications that are approved and marketed for one condition in order to treat alternative or other conditions. This practice is not only permissible; in fact, it's good medicine.

The Alliance of Specialty Medicine's position states that "the FDA acknowledges that physicians may prescribe any legally marketed product for an off-label use, as long as it is in the best interest of the patient."

Pharmaceutical companies often don't pursue off-label uses due to the added expense of sponsoring clinical trials to secure additional labeling, and the many years required for the FDA process.

As an eye doctor, here are some of the "off label" uses of medications I prescribe:

- **Restasis** (a dry eye drug) or **Advil** (a headache medication) is often used for uveitis, inflammation of the uvea (the middle layer of the eye).

- As an immunosuppressive agent, **cyclosporine** has value in treating different forms of inflammation. Research has shown that cyclosporine can shorten the timeframe to resolution in some patients with anterior uveitis. Some patients have more complications when steroids are used, so in mild cases cyclosporine is a good choice. A similar effect can be had with the use of Advil; particularly in some forms of recurrent uveitis.

- **Lotemax** (steroid) is commonly used for treatment of dry eye. Lotemax is FDA-approved for treating inflammation and pain following ocular surgery, but it's routinely used for a variety of anterior segment inflammatory conditions such as an allergic conjunctivitis, rosacea, superficial punctate keratitis (SPK), and dry eye. Dry eye has a significant inflammatory component and treatments often take a while to "kick in"; reducing the inflammation with a steroid helps get the patient comfortable much faster.

- **Doxycycline** (oral antibiotic) for recurrent corneal erosion (RCE), a painful corneal condition that often re-occurs. Doxycyclines - along with other oral tetracycline type medications - have anti-inflammatory properties and have been shown to reduce the incidence of MMPs (matrix metalloproteinase), proteases that are involved in the cleavage of cell surface receptors. They are common in inflammatory processes, and oral doxycycline is used in low dosages for the anti-inflammatory properties. At low dosages they are well tolerated by the body and do not cause anti-bacterial resistance.

- **Gatafloxacin** eye drops (antibiotic) for the treatment of corneal ulcers. Although approved for acute conjunctivitis, this class of drugs is commonly used for corneal ulcers. Although there are some gaps in effective pathogen coverage, they are still effective against most eye pathogens and well tolerated by most patients. The drops do not require compounding and are readily available.

- **Betadine** (povidone-iodine) or **Zirgen** (ganciclovir) for viral keratoconjunctivitis. Topical Betadine has been shown to be a virucidal agent and is used to reduce the overall viral load of a patient presenting with acute pink eye (viral infection of the cornea/conjunctiva). Zirgen (ganciclovir) is a herpetic eye drop effective against the herpes virus (multiple variations) but also effective about 70-80% of the time against adenoviruses. Use will usually speed up recovery and reduce symptoms.

As a doctor we need to make sure any off-label application is grounded on firm scientific rationale and sound medical evidence. It's important to let the patient know that this particular application is off-label.

Dr. Evans is the founding owner of Evans Eye Care in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 674.8806 or online at www.evanseyecare.com.



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It's Good to Get Sick!

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Health and wellness is traditionally viewed as the absence of disease while feeling vital, energetic, happy, and content. However, the complete absence of all signs of illness is not always an adequate measure of a stronger immune system or complete vitality. In fact, it is good for a body to get sick.

Getting sick for good health is an odd concept and one that many people neither hear often nor really understand. Health is purportedly deemed to be the non-sick, strongest bodies, unaffected by viruses and bacteria; those that “haven’t had the flu in 20 years.”

But, if we view the body as an organism that needs to remain responsive to the surrounding external environment, then we can begin to view illness as a healthy response, not a weakness.

The body as an organism needs to remain adaptable, stimulated, and fluid. When the body is inundated by viruses and bacteria, such as cold and flu bugs, it is normal for it to mount an appropriate response to these elements by producing cold and flu-like symptoms. A strong body will react with increased immune response when it senses exposure to pathogens. This response can be sinus congestion, cough, lethargy, or achiness. These are signs that our body is strong enough and responsive enough to understand how to deal with pathogenic body invaders.

As a responsive organism, it is actually a sign of health for the body to get sick from time to time to show that it knows how to work when called to action. A person with a healthy immune system will get a cold or flu every 1-2 years. The individual that is sick several times a year, constantly lacks vitality, and has ongoing chronic health issues, is also a person showing signs of a depleted immune system. A strong immune system and great health strikes a balance between being adequately able to adapt to the environment and mount responses as appropriate, and the inability to be entirely well for long periods of time.

An individual who rarely gets sick, or has not had a cold or flu in years, may actually be prone, theoretically, to deeper or more significant illnesses. It can be that this person actually has an unresponsive immune system that does not fight appropriately when exposed to heavy pathogens. If a person has not had an adequate cold or flu in years, it may be time to reassess health, adrenal function, thyroid function, nutritional status, and digestive health. These specific systems all play significant roles in stimulating and regulating the immune system. If the immune system is not responsive, then assessing the health and wellness of these areas of the body is a first step.

Allowing and welcoming a yearly flu can ensure a strong immune system for the rest of the year. However, if you are rarely ill, a functional health assessment holistically addressing the entire body is advisable.

Dr. Sinsheimer is a Naturopathic Doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568-2598.

Clearing Negative Energy for Positive

By Lauren Del Sarto

Reiki is a complementary health approach in which practitioners place their hands lightly on or just above a person and channel energy with the goal of facilitating the person's own healing response. It is based on an Eastern belief in a universal energy that supports the body's innate or natural healing abilities.

Although the therapy is not considered evidence-based, energy medicine has been practiced throughout the world for centuries. Studies on the therapy have focused largely on pain, anxiety, fatigue, and depression,¹ and according to the Center for Reiki Research, approximately 76 hospitals, medical clinic and hospice programs now offer Reiki as a standard part of care.²

Palm Springs Reiki Master Practitioner Jerri Quinn treats several clients as part of their treatment protocol for depression. “Reiki complements psychotherapy and therapeutic medications because it clears the body of negative energy and places it in a state of total relaxation, which is necessary for healing to take place.”

One of the basic teachings of Reiki is that beyond our physical bodies, we have an energy body made up of our aura (energy fields), chakras (energy centers) and meridians (energy pathways). The energy fields take energy in, the chakras break it down, and the meridians distribute it throughout the body. A disturbance in the flow of this energy can cause physical illnesses or negative emotions. Reiki practitioners aim to channel positive universal life energy to problem areas to enhance healing and overall well-being.³

In her practice, Jerri sees impressive results with depression and anxiety. “The goal of anti-depressant medications and counseling are to get a person to the

state where they no longer need those therapies.” She and many others believe Reiki can help facilitate that.

Carole Waddell of Indio, who has lived with anxiety for over ten years and was recently diagnosed with PTSD caused by trauma, agrees. “It seemed that no matter what physical or mental help I received, nothing was working.” Her treatment included counseling and anti-depressants, but she credits Reiki for her new found sense of hope. “Since starting Reiki, I have been feeling better about myself in mind, body and spirit. I can clearly see that before coming to the weekly sessions with Jerri, my thought patterns were clogged with issues that I could not deal with alone.”


“Being able to channel energy to help others is the greatest gift,” says Jerri who has practiced Reiki for three years. She especially likes working with animals and babies “because you can’t deny the results” recalling friends whose dog was lost and then found a year later. Their loving pet had been mistreated and starved and, when found was scared and anxious. They asked Jerri to work with their dog, and after only two Reiki treatments, he returned to the fun-loving companion they once knew.

Reiki should not be used to replace conventional care. If you have severe or long-lasting symptoms, see your health care provider, and as with any treatment plan, it is important to inform all your health care providers about therapies you select.

Jerri Quinn of Tranquil Reiki, Palm Springs, welcomes your questions and can be reached at (713) 591.4932 or TranquilReiki.com. For more information on the modality visit reiki.org.

References: 1) NIH Website: <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/reiki/introduction.htm>; 2) <http://www.centerforreikiresearch.org/>; 3) reiki.org






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The Gift of Flowers

By Doris Steadman, MEd, MSW

Seamus (“Jim”) McDonnell will spend Mother’s and Father’s Day giving over 100 hugs and bouquets of flower to gracious recipients in retirement homes throughout the Coachella Valley. Many won’t even know his name, but will lovingly refer to him as “The Flower Man.”

For 13 years, Seamus has been bringing flowers, and much joy, to elderly folks in the Valley through his non-profit organization, The Flower Bank. He receives unsold flowers from Traders Joe’s, Whole Foods Market, Fresh & Easy and other stores and delivers them to hospice, nursing homes and care centers – every day of the week – with the help of 8 to 10 volunteers. They reach 30 care facilities weekly.

On these two special occasions in May and June, The Flower Bank will provide the residents of California Nursing Rehab Center, Palm Springs, and Atria Senior Living Center, Palm Desert with individual flowers arranged by color so they can create their own bouquets to keep or to share.

“When an individual creates their own bouquet, they experience an emotional release which encourages more socialization and interactions with others, just by sharing their creations,” says Seamus who created his non-profit after once asking for - and willingly receiving – bouquets for six patients in his care. The joy he received from their heartfelt responses became his passion.



Seamus and his team deliver flowers to residents at 30 facilities each week.

To his knowledge, Seamus is the only person in America with a program like The Flower Bank. He has received numerous requests to expand to other cities; however, to pay for his endeavor, Seamus works nights as a registered nurse and respiratory therapist, and spends his days distributing flowers. Although the flowers he receives are free, distribution is not.

He doesn’t plan on stopping any time soon and hopes to generate additional funding to support the organization. “Many of our older citizens are lonely and forgotten, and the simple gift of flowers has a strong effect on their emotional state,” he says, noting a Rutgers University study that actually proved the fact that the gift of flowers brings a higher “Duchenne response” (genuine smile) and significantly elevates moods—more than any other gift.

Seamus describes walking through the corridors with his hands full of blossoms and hearing residents call out “It’s The Flower Man!”

And with that, you realize the gift goes both ways.

Happy Mother’s and Father’s Day to all! Remember those who may be alone. To assist Seamus in continuing to give the gift of flowers, please contact him at (310) 430.3269 or jseamus@msn.com. The Flower Bank is a 501(c)3 non-profit (EIN # 47-2488433). For more information, visit [Facebook.com/TheFlowerBank](https://www.facebook.com/TheFlowerBank).

Health is a Choice

Continued from page 8

drove back to Costa Mesa once a week to continue CVAC.

Not long after her return, her body’s natural detoxification process began and Michelle experienced “herxing” which occurs when dead or dying bacteria release large amounts of toxins into blood and tissues at an alarming rate, provoking a sudden and exaggerated inflammatory response as the body attempts to eliminate the released toxins much faster than it is able to. Herxing is said to also occur in those treated for Lyme with pharmacological antibiotics.⁴

The experience was excruciating, and Michelle added hydro colonics along with probiotics to aid in detoxification. “Everything I had to do was out of my comfort zone, and I had overcome,” she says. The HBOT chamber made her feel claustrophobic, the CVAC challenged her system, and the colonics were not in her plan. But she stuck to it knowing she had to get back to her life.

One month after starting treatment, her microscopy showed the *Borrelia* still present, but it was very faint, and her inflammation was reduced significantly.

Her practitioners warned her that her body was still going through the healing process and that she would have both good days and bad. And she did, but she pressed on with the protocol for another month and at the end of 60 days, her blood was clear.

Helping Others

Many reading this article will feel that Michelle should have gone to a medical doctor and taken prescribed antibiotics at the first sign of illness. But her initial symptoms were not typical of Lyme, which is why many with this disease are misdiagnosed or undiagnosed.³

“Lyme disease is often referred to as the ‘great imitator’ because it mimics other conditions, often causing patients to suffer a complicated maze of doctors in search of appropriate treatment,” says Chitra Bhakta, M.D.

The choices Michelle made were right for her, and she remains symptom free today. After her life-changing experience, she has learned to better honor and listen to her body. When she gets tired, she lets her body rest.

She is a firm believer that there are many factors that contributed to her healing - not only the natural modalities, but also the internal mindset and support system around her that enabled her to get through it.

She has since met numerous people who themselves are struggling with LD, and she finds it heartbreaking that they won’t follow in the footsteps of the many who have successfully sought alternative methods, because for her, it worked. “Two factors have to be in place,” she notes. “You really have to be open to natural remedies, and you have to be in the mental space to really deep down inside want to get well.”

And that is where Health is a Choice.

If you are experiencing symptoms similar to Lyme disease (www.cdc.gov/lyme), it is strongly recommended that you seek help from your primary care physician or health care practitioner and begin treatment early. Do your research and know the options available to you from both the medical and natural health communities.

Certified microscopy specialist Jenny Holmes (Joshua Tree) can be reached at holmeshealth.com; Integrative doctor Chitra Bhakta, MD (Newport Beach) www.ocimc.com; Know Your Options (Costa Mesa) www.KnowYourOptionsCenter.com.

References: 1) <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2013/p0819-lyme-disease.html>; 2) <http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/postlids/index.html>; 3) Phys.org: Classic microscopy reveals Borrelia bacteria, June 5th, 2013 by Trine Nickelsen in Biology / Cell & Microbiology. <http://phys.org/news/2013-06-classic-microscopy-reveals-Borrelia-bacteria.html>; 4) <http://www.lemonandlyme.com/Articles/Expect/Herx.php>



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Broken-Hearted: Emotions Directly Cause Progression of Heart Disease

By Nicole Ortiz, ND

Emotions are a beautiful part of human nature. Our ability to feel makes us perfectly human! Stress, from all sorts of challenging situations and events, can significantly shorten your life, particularly in the form of a heart attack. Emotions such as depression, anxiety, anger, hostility, as well as social isolation, significantly affect heart health.

Negative feelings start in the brain, but they quickly engulf the entire body. The brain triggers a cascade of chemicals and hormones that speed the heart rate, quicken breathing, increase blood pressure, and boost the amount of energy supplied to muscles. All of these changes enable the body to respond to an impending threat. Unfortunately, the body does a poor job of discriminating between grave, imminent dangers and less momentous, ongoing sources of stress. When the fight-or-flight response is chronically in the "on" position, the body suffers. This chronic stress response can occur if the body is persistently exposed to stressors that overwhelm its adaptive ability. Think of it as if the body is in a constant state of "short-circuiting." Hormones and other substances released by the body under stress affect the supply of blood to the heart muscle, increase the clotting potential of the blood and limit blood flow in the vessels around the heart, which may result in the build-up of a blood clot. Also, long-term mental stress appears to stimulate the body's production of LDL and triglycerides, which interfere with blood pressure regulation and activate molecules that fuel inflammation.

There are several situations that can trigger heart-related problems. Stress reduces heart rate variability, an objective, accurate and sensitive measure of coronary disease and a powerful predictor of sudden death. Stress reduces the ability of your immune system to fight infections. Infections are a causal factor in inflammation as well as destabilizing plaque. Severe stress can cause a heart attack in the absence of significant blockage in the arteries. Stress also causes atrial fibrillation, the most common sustained arrhythmia, as well as ventricular fibrillation, the leading cause of sudden death.

Depression and heart disease is a two-way street. Depression appears to promote heart disease, but it can also result from a heart attack. Studies prove that people who are depressed are about twice as likely to develop coronary artery disease and that people who already have heart disease are three times as likely to be depressed as other people. One depression study followed 218 patients for eighteen months post MI (heart attack) and found that 75% of the post-MI deaths were related to depression in the next six months. This was independent of other risk factors.

Broken Heart Syndrome is yet another source of heart problems. Yes, there is a medical condition called Stress Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy, which is a true condition in which intense emotional or physical stress can cause rapid and severe heart muscle weakness (cardiomyopathy). This "myocardial stunning" is due to severe left ventricular contractile dysfunction that frequently mimics a massive heart attack.

The condition can occur following a variety of emotional stressors such as grief, fear, extreme anger and surprise. It can also occur following numerous physical stressors to the body such as stroke, seizure or difficulty breathing.

Probably the most disturbing correlation is between childhood abuse victims and the incidence of heart disease. Men who experienced sexual abuse in childhood have three times the chance of suffering from a heart attack than men who were not abused during childhood. This was determined after adjusting the study for race, obesity, physical inactivity, education level, smoking, diabetes, and household income.

If someone is a "hot head" studies tell us they are nearly three times as likely as a level-headed person to have a heart attack. Researchers at the University of North Carolina measured the anger levels of nearly 13,000 men and women and then tracked them for six years to prove this correlation.

Financial stress is often a potentiator of heart attacks. Incidences rose as the stock market crashed, according to a 2010 report in *The American Journal of Cardiology*. Researchers at Duke University reviewed medical records for 11,590 people who had undergone testing for heart disease during a three-year period and then compared monthly heart attack rates with stock market levels.

Earthquakes also trigger stress-related heart problems. Sudden cardiac deaths rose sharply immediately after the 1994 earthquake in the Los Angeles area, and hospitalization for heart attacks jumped on the day of the 1995 temblor near Kobe, Japan.

We can all likely identify with at least one of these scenarios in our own lives. Although circumstances are often unavoidable, it is how we choose to deal with them that ultimately determines the health of our heart. In general, practice giving and receiving love; your heart will thank you in more ways than you think.

Dr. Nicole Ortiz is a primary care Naturopathic doctor with a passion and expertise in preventative cardiology at Live Well Clinic. For more information on in-depth cardiovascular lab and genetic testing, contact us at 760-771-5970 or at www.livewellclinic.org.

Sources: 1) Mittleman et al, *Circulation*, 1995, vol. 92 ; 2) NEJM 1996;334:413-419; 3) Frasure-Smith et al, *JAMA* 1993, vol. 91; 4) Rebecca Thurston, Ph.D.; Tara Narula, M.D.; Gregg Fonarow, M.D.; July 17, 2014, *Stroke*, online



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Dissolving Trauma through Mindfulness

How the secrets of our past hold the key to freedom

By Scott Kiloby

How can a traumatic event or set of events from earlier in life create a present desire to scarf down cookies, drink wine every night, or partake in other obsessive behaviors? The answer lies in how our brains and bodies record experience and respond to life situations.

Researchers and addiction specialists are finding more and more evidence that addiction is quite often linked to psychological and emotional trauma from earlier in life. The science of neuroplasticity tells us that our brains are not static, unchanging organs, as was once believed. From the time the brain begins to develop in utero until the day we die, the connections among the cells in our brains reorganize in response to our changing experiences. This dynamic process allows us to learn from - and adapt to - different events in our lives.

When we experience traumatic events, such as abuse, bullying, death of a loved one, or abandonment, our brains can lock into a cycle of remembering and replaying the psychological and emotional effects of the events. If the events are too much to handle at any point in life, we may naturally look for ways to protect ourselves from having to experience this pain over and over. This is when some of us become vulnerable to the development of addictions, which provides a way of hiding or covering up this pain. We essentially learn to be addicted as a way of coping with past trauma.

If a person is suffering from addiction, the answer is not always as simple as just quitting, moderating or making better judgments. This learned process of addiction that results from trauma can be very powerful. The addictive substances or activities can actually feel as if they are needed in order to survive. After all, for those of us with past trauma, addictions are exactly how we survived psychologically and emotionally for many years. Because this learned process carries so much power in our lives, recovery from addiction may be very difficult - and, in some cases, impossible - unless the underlying trauma is dealt with effectively.

Neuroplasticity, as it relates to trauma and addiction, may sound like nothing but bad news, but there is a bright side! The big implication of neuroplasticity is that, if our brain changes itself based on our experiences, then changing the way we relate to our experiences can actively reshape our brains. One way to consciously change our experience is to learn how to apply mindfulness, the ability to be intentionally aware of our inner experience of thoughts, emotions and sensations as they are happening.

By being more aware of our present experience as it is happening, we begin to form a naturally more peaceful and non-reactive response to what is happening. Things that once seemed like threats are no longer perceived that way. The cookies, wine or other obsessions no longer have the same pull. Through mindfulness, the pathways in the brain that have recorded trauma and have locked us into a cycle of addiction as a way to cope with that trauma, begin to change. The very mechanism that brought about our suffering becomes our way out of suffering. The pain of our past becomes the key to our present freedom.

Scott Kiloby is a noted author, international speaker and the director of the Kiloby Center for Recovery in Rancho Mirage which focuses on treatment through mindfulness. For more information visit KilobyCenter.com.

TCM for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

By Diane Sheppard, Ph.D., L.Ac.

We all get tired, but sometimes "tired" is insufficient to describe a serious condition. Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is far more than just being tired. This baffling and little understood affliction is a complicated disorder characterized by extreme fatigue, often associated with muscle and joint pain. It may worsen with physical or mental activity and does not improve with rest. Those affected with CFS can get so run down that the disorder interferes with the ability to function in day-to-day activities, and some become severely disabled and even bedridden, which in turn creates its own set of problems.

In addition to extreme fatigue, CFS can encompass a wide range of other manifestations including, but not limited to, headaches, flu-like symptoms, and chronic pain not dissimilar from fibromyalgia.

For those suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can help relieve many of the symptoms. It is well known that TCM effectively relieves aches and pains associated with CFS. Additionally, acupuncture and Oriental medicine, by strengthening Qi, can improve overall health to help you avoid getting sick as often and assist with a quicker recovery, as well as to increase vitality and stamina.

There has been much research on CFS and TCM recently which indicates promising results for sufferers of this debilitating condition. A study in China evaluated cupping as a treatment for chronic fatigue. All of the study patients complained of the classic symptoms of CFS, unusual and severe fatigue and additional problems with headaches, insomnia, muscle-joint pains, backaches and pains, poor memory, gastrointestinal disturbances and a bitter taste in the mouth. Patients ranging in age from 28-54 received sliding cupping treatments twice a week for a total of 12 treatments. The results showed there was significant improvement in energy levels, less insomnia, better memory, and reduced spontaneous sweating, sore throat, profuse dreams, abdominal distention, diarrhea, and alternating constipation and diarrhea.

In another study conducted at Guangzhou University in Guangzhou, China, subjects with CFS were evenly divided by random selection into an acupuncture group and a control group. The observation group was treated with acupuncture and the control group was treated with an injection. Participants completed a fatigue scale and results showed that people who received acupuncture reported significantly more relief from their symptoms. A similar study was conducted in Hong Kong that gave half of the group conventional needle acupuncture and half (the control group) sham acupuncture. Using a fatigue scale, improvements in physical and mental fatigue were significantly larger in the acupuncture group, and no adverse events occurred.

In meta-analysis, 28 papers were statistically reviewed in order to assess the success of acupuncture as a therapy for CFS. The analysis showed that treatment groups receiving acupuncture had superior results when compared with control groups. As a result, it was concluded that acupuncture can be effective for CFS. Therefore, it merits consideration as a viable treatment protocol for patients and is deserving of additional research.

Diane Sheppard is the founding owner of AcQpoint Wellness Center in La Quinta. She is a licensed acupuncturist with a Ph.D. in Oriental Medicine and can be reached at (760) 775.7900. www.AcQPoint.com.



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Over 50 nominations were received for the First Annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards. Finalists have been selected by our Executive Committee and winners will be announced at the evening event taking place Wednesday, May 20, 6:30–9:30p.m., at Desert Willow Golf Resort.

Tickets are available at www.DesertHealthNews.com

INDIVIDUAL



Jeralyn Brossfield, MD Eisenhower Wellness Institute

In her position as Medical Director at Eisenhower Wellness Institute, Dr. Brossfield has integrated wellness programs such as yoga, QiGong and meditation into the hospital model for community members and Eisenhower employees. She also leads a team of Take Shape for Life Health Coaches who are committed to empowering and walking with individuals to transform their health.



Alexa Palmer Health Educator, Author

Alexa is an early childhood educator and author of *Jolene: Adventures of a Junk Food Queen*, a fantasy adventure story that teaches children about healthy eating habits. Since 2008, Alexa has shared Jolene with thousands of valley kids and beyond at Farmers Markets, clubs, shelters, libraries and in classrooms. Her mission to educate children on the topic is never-ending.



Cathy Serif Balanced Training Boot Camp

Cathy has transformed thousands of lives during the 8 years of her early morning boot camp. She is a community advocate for well-being and the author of several books including the *Desert Detox Diet*. She conducts free community camaraderie workouts and rallies teams for the many walks and races in the valley.

NON PROFIT



The Melanoma Awareness Project of the Desert

After learning that 19 out of 20 melanoma deaths could possibly be prevented through education, William Lavin started MAP in 2008 while still in high school. With the goal of making a difference, he developed a website, a lecture, awareness bracelets and brochures that have educated over 14,000 students (and adults) about skin cancer. Wills also established free screening clinics targeting those without insurance.



Neighbors 4 Neighbors by Desert Village Initiative Sun City, Palm Desert

A Sun City (PD) community program with volunteers offering assistance aimed at keeping independent neighbors in their homes. Services include a daily phone call; assistance with minor home maintenance (4,300 tasks in 3 years); rides to medical appointments, errands and community activities (44k miles so far); and short-term help with pets as needed.



Neuro Vitality Center (formerly The Stroke Recovery Center)

In their 36 years, NVC has provided over 10,000 local stroke survivors with multi-disciplinary rehabilitation programs to enhance recovery and quality of life. They help patients experience greater ease with daily tasks, fewer visits to emergency rooms, socialization and less depression.

LARGE BUSINESS



Massage Envy of the Coachella Valley

Massage Envy provides convenient, professional and affordable wellness services so that everyone can incorporate massage into their well-being journey. Their program helps members reduce stress, recover from surgery or injury, or to simply “unplug” and relax. Locally, they support and raise funds for numerous causes including the Arthritis Foundation, American Heart Association, Coachella Valley Economic Partnership and Leadership Coachella Valley.



Two Bunch Palms

This renowned resort destination located in Desert Hot Springs operates on four pillars: healing waters, therapeutic spa treatments, healthy cuisine and movement. Established in the 1930's, the resort has offered healing therapies to hundreds of thousands, and their newly enhanced focus reaches beyond mind, body, and spirit to include individual, community and natural resources.



The Vintage Club of Indian Wells

Making membership health a priority, The Vintage Club partnered with the Eisenhower Wellness Institute to develop a comprehensive, preventative program addressing all areas of physical, mental, and emotional health. Vintage Vitality includes individual assessment, a tailored action plan, and post-program evaluation aimed at helping members thrive at an optimum level of health. Individual programs are coupled with educational group activities. The program is set to be extended to Vintage employees this summer.

SMALL BUSINESS



Kinetix Health and Performance

Over the past 11 years, Kinetix has provided expert training, fitness and wellness to tens of thousands. From specialized training to sports camps and community outreach, they have impacted a long list of dedicated fans. Over 65 youth who trained with Kinetix have been awarded college scholarships. Michael Butler also volunteers his time with PD and LQ High Schools as both a medical and nutritional advisor.



Klein and Clark Sports Production

Thirty years ago, Greg Klein and Brenda Clark set out to make the Coachella Valley a fitness mecca. Since then, they have produced over 275 running races, triathlons, bike rides and kids' obstacle challenges, attracting hundreds of thousands to our community for healthy and fun competition. Grateful participants write of overcoming obstacles and changing lives after taking part.



Next Level Fitness

Next Level Fitness has provided the valley with training and nutritional guidance for the past ten years. Their signature program Fit in 42 (in which thousands have participated), was developed to teach healthier habits through action and education. Owners Gerry and Casey Washack also dedicate their time and services to the members of Act for MS (multiple sclerosis), raising funds and providing group training sessions to members.

EVENT OR PROGRAM



The Drive Against Hunger Golf Tournament

Now in its fourth year, this annual golf tournament has raised \$73,000 for its chosen charities: FIND Food Bank and The Well in the Desert. The steering committee selected these organizations because of the large number of people they reach and serve valley wide. The event brings together generous sponsors, golfers and community members to make a difference.



FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program

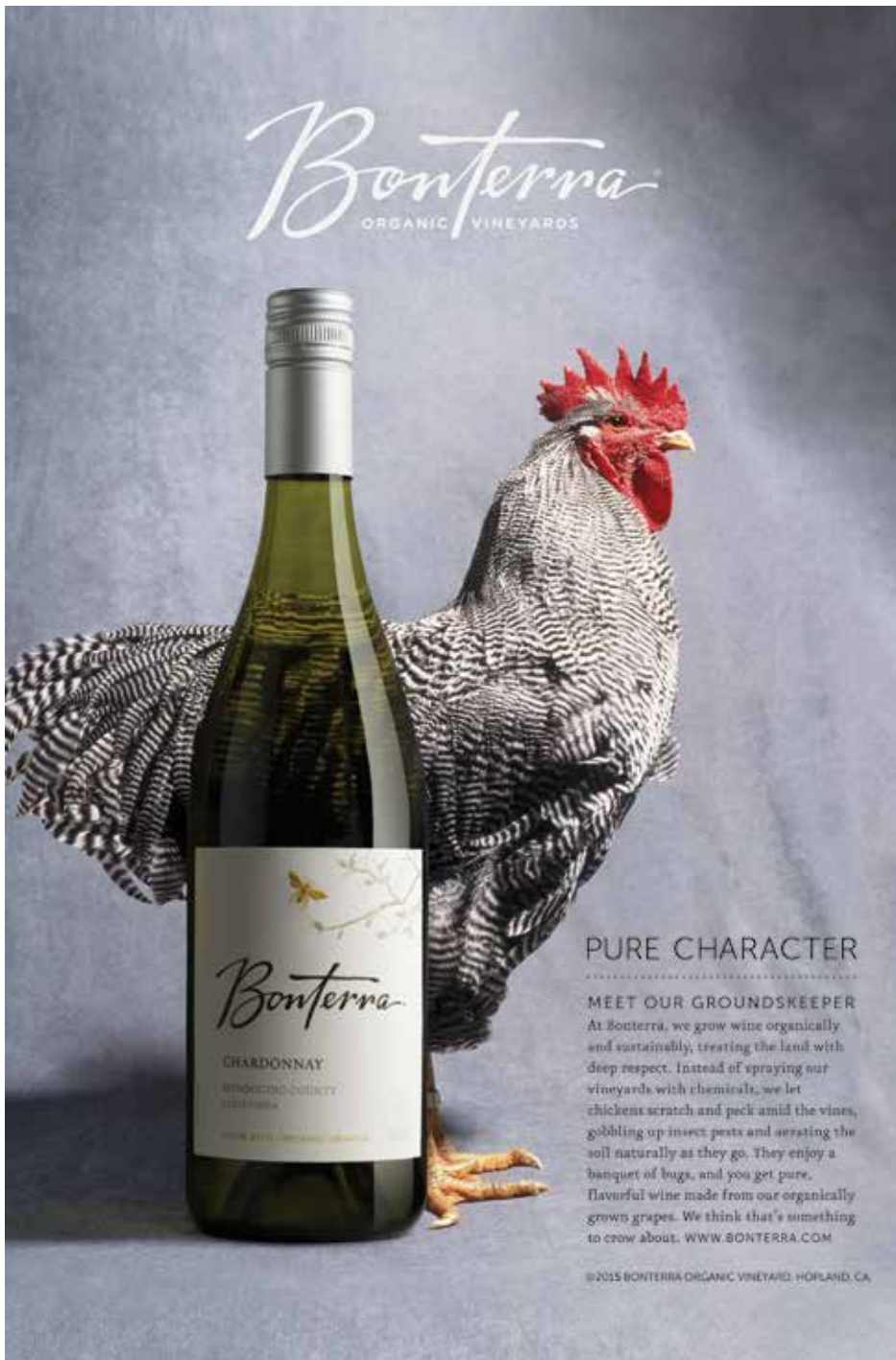
Addressing the spike in area food insecurity that occurs each year when valley school children participating in the Free/Reduced-Price Meal Program lose access to that vital nutrition, FIND created the Summer Feeding Program. Working with Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs, the program offers free mini farmers markets, cooking classes and activities that help provide nutritious summer meals to over 11,000 children and families.



City of Palm Springs Mayor's Healthy Planet, Healthy You Race and Wellness Festival

2015 will be the fourth year for this annual event which has generated over \$1 million in funds for local health and wellness programs. It has also expanded to a year-round Healthy Planet, Healthy You program comprised of community and school gardens, food security seminars, film showings, fitness activities, a speaker series, and the formation of a new Wellness Subcommittee through the City's Sustainability Commission.

www.DesertHealthNews.com



Guest Speaker Steven Gundry, M.D.



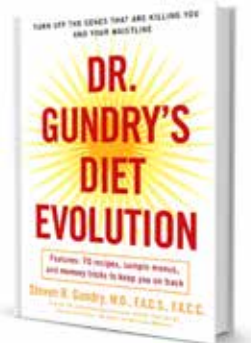
Integrative medicine doctor Steven Gundry, M.D., is a researcher, inventor, and cardiac surgeon. But he is destined to best be known as the author of the life-changing book *Dr. Gundry's Diet Evolution: Turn Off the Genes That Are Killing You and Your Waistline and Drop the Weight for Good*.

Inspired by the stunning reversal of coronary artery disease in an "inoperable" patient using a combination of dietary changes and nutraceutical supplements, Dr. Gundry changed the path of his career in 2001. An obese, chronic "diet

failure himself, he began researching and designed a diet based on evolutionary genetic coding which enabled him to effortlessly lose 70 pounds and reverse his own medical problems.

No longer satisfied with repairing the damage of chronic diseases, he founded The International Heart and Lung Institute and The Center for Restorative Medicine in Palm Springs and is helping thousands find their own path to health.

As the featured speaker at the first annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards, Dr. Gundry will share his personal story and discuss the future of integrative care in medicine.



EVENING FESTIVITIES

Please join us!

Guests will arrive at **6:30pm** for check in and silent auction registration.

Our festive dinner will include Mediterranean Medley, Vegetable Veranda, Power Protein and American Classics dining stations along with the silent auction, and will take place on the veranda from **6:30pm to 7:45pm**.

We will then move into the ballroom for our guest speaker at **8pm** followed by the awards presentation from **8:30pm – 9:30pm**.

Tickets are \$75 and include a Desert Health® tote filled with wellness offerings.

Purchase your tickets today at www.DesertHealthNews.com



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Nominations were sent in from members of the community and the challenging job of selecting finalists and winners belonged to our Executive Committee.

We graciously thank them for all of their time and contributions to our first annual event!



Tricia Gehrlein

**Regional Director,
Clinton Health Matters Initiative**

Board Member, JFK Hospital Governing Board



Donna Sturgeon

**Director, Business/Education Engagement,
Coachella Valley Economic Partnership**

Member, FIND Food Bank Special Events Committee
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Lisa Ford

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2014-2015 Co-Chair, American Heart Assoc. Circle of Red
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Member, Dementia-Friendly Coachella Valley Task Force
Member, CHMI Healthcare Access and Quality
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Associate Member, CSUSB Palm Desert Campus
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SILENT AUCTION

The evening event will feature a silent auction benefitting Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine, the valley’s only free medical clinic. A variety of items will be featured including a number of one-of-a-kind treasures made by the hands of talented doctors in our community.

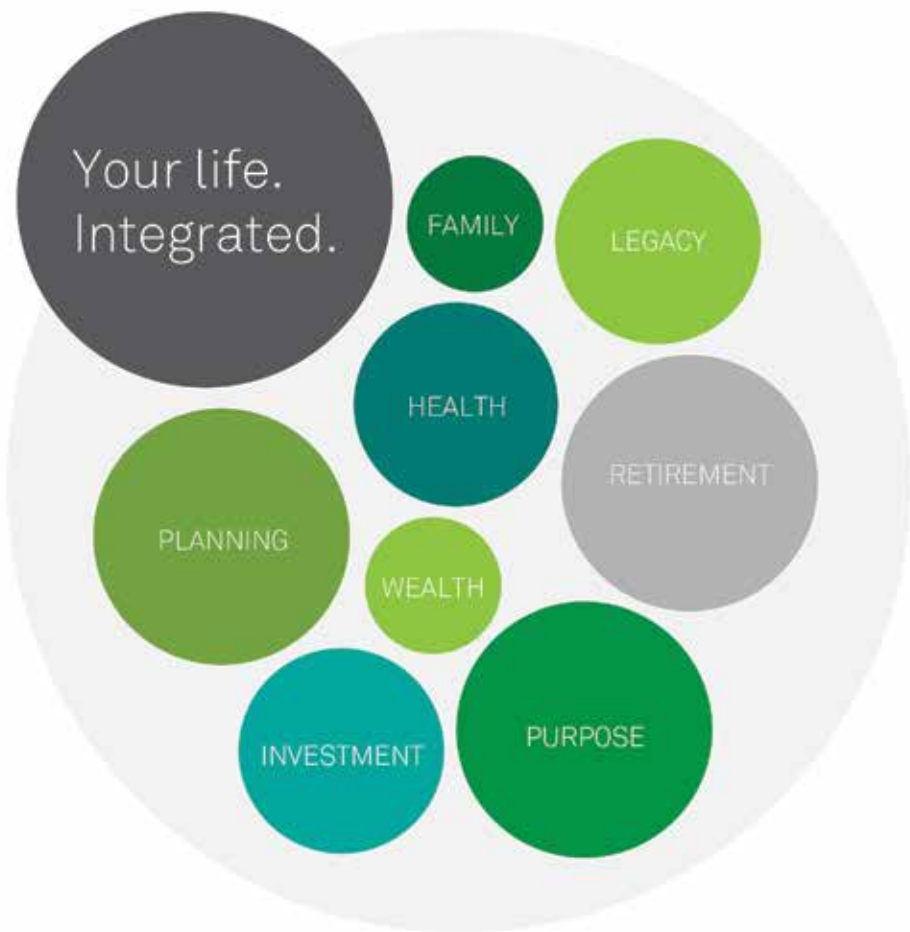
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NOMINEES

Congratulations to all who were nominated by their peers and supporters for the First Annual Desert Health® Wellness Awards.

Thank You for all you do to move health and wellness forward in our community!

Aaron Adame, OD Optometrist Individual	Glenn Smith Fitness Director, Sun City Palm Desert; Personal Trainer Individual	Neighbors 4 Neighbors Non-profit
AIDS Assistance Program, Inc. Non-profit	Green Acres Sustainable Living Farm Non-profit	Neuro Vitality Center (formerly The Stroke Recovery Center) Non-profit
Alexa Palmer Health Educator, Author Individual	Jeralyn Brossfield, MD Medical Director, Eisenhower Wellness Institute Individual	Next Level Fitness Small Business
Carol Teitelbaum, MFT Cofounder, Creative Changes Conferences Individual	Jill Gover, Ph.D. Director of Counseling, The Center Individual	Palm Springs Cruisin' Association Non-profit
Cathy Serif Balanced Training Boot Camp Individual	Joel Rodriguez Preschool Teacher; Instructional Assistant, Martha's Village & Kitchen Individual	Palm Springs Scottish Rite Childhood Language and Learning Center Non-profit
Christian Jelmberg Founder, Street Life Project Individual	Juicy Juicy Organic Juice Bar Small Business	Power Yoga Palm Springs Small Business
Christopher S. Bates Trainer Individual	Kelly Lewallen, LMFT Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist Individual	Scott Kiloby Founder, Kiloby Center for Recovery; Author, Speaker Individual
Christy Porter Executive Director, Hidden Harvest Individual	Kinetix Health & Performance Center Small Business	Steven R. Gundry, MD, FACS, FACC Surgeon, Researcher, Author Individual
Chuck Amendola Natural Health Care Practitioner Individual	Klein and Clark Sports, LLC Small Business	The Vintage Club Large Business
City of Palm Springs Mayor's Healthy Planet, Healthy You Race and Wellness Festival Event or Program	Live Well Clinic Small Business	Tina Marx Empowerment Coach, Author, TV Personality Individual
Desert Blind and Handicapped Association Non-profit	La Quinta Middle School Non-profit	Transcendental Meditation® of Palm Springs Non-profit
Desert Recreation District Non-profit	Marta Shand DSUSD Site Manager of Nutrition Services Individual	TRUElicious Small Business
Drive Against Hunger Golf Tournament Non-profit	Massage Envy of the Coachella Valley Large Business	Turning Heads Project Non-profit
Evolve Yoga Small Business	Mayor Steve Pougnet City of Palm Springs Individual	Two Bunch Palms Large Business
FIND Food Bank's Kids' Summer Feeding Program Event or Program	Melanoma Awareness Project of the Desert Non-profit	Valerie Somervell Founder, Saving Grace Serenity House Individual
	Michele Mician Sustainability Manager, Office of Sustainability, Palm Springs Individual	Vanessa Reyes-Flores Founder, Mariposa Fitness & Nutrition Individual
		We Care Dental Non-profit





Tools for Training a Positive Brain

By Pam Salvatore

You've heard the term "knee jerk reaction"? Well, our brains do the same type of thing. Throughout our lives, our brains create neurological pathways which connect thoughts to reactions. These reactions manifest as emotions and physical experiences.

Until recently, it was generally accepted by medical professionals that once the brain was formed, these neurological pathways remained largely unchanged throughout life.

In her book *Brain Boosters: Seven Ways to Help Your Brain Help Yourself*, Simone Ravicz, PhD, employs the newly proven concept of brain plasticity, the theory that we can reprogram our neurological pathways at any point during our lives. By combining brain plasticity with proven psychological treatments, Dr. Ravicz provides tools to accomplish this reprogramming, along with the insight to change thoughts, and our emotional and physical responses to them. If you have experienced phobias, depression, anxiety, chronic fatigue, PTSD, trauma, weight-related issues, or chronic pain, Dr. Ravicz's tools are designed to give you the power to take control of the situation and help relieve the burdens that accompany these conditions.

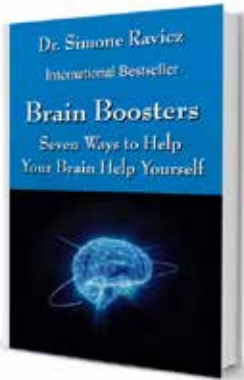
In an interview with *Desert Health*®, Dr. Ravicz stated that the uniqueness of her book is that people can choose from a variety of techniques and find the one(s) that works best for them.

Dr. Ravicz's Tool Box

Tapping (EFT). Rooted in the concept of energy medicine, EFT focuses on the dysfunctions in the chakra, or body's energy system. An orchestrated sequence of tapping on different acupressure points on the body, while making relevant statements, corrects this energy disruption and redirects positive energy to where it needs to go.

EMDR. By focusing on a particular target memory, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) aims to deal with the corrective processing of unprocessed memories. It is believed that these unresolved issues from the past contribute to our behaviors, thoughts, and feelings today. EMDR works in two ways: through the orienting response, which is the constant refocusing of attention back and forth (similar to REM eye movement), and by focusing attention on memories of the trauma, while simultaneously focusing on stimulation that disturbs this "working memory" linkage. According to Dr. Ravicz, EMDR is the most effective treatment overall as it can be used to treat a wide variety of problems and major changes are often evident after one or several sessions.

Neuro-Hypnosis is a tool for embracing emotions and eliminating negative thoughts. Neurological pathways created by repeated negative thoughts establish an automatic response to these thoughts in the form of negative emotion; the more frequent the negative thoughts, the more subconscious and habitual the negative reactions become. Neuro-Hypnosis makes it easier to access the subconscious to change its negative beliefs and behaviors to positive ones.



Mindful Meditation focuses on calming the mind and introducing mindful awareness of one's thoughts and sensations. Its goal as a tool is to identify how your mind produces negative reactions to thoughts. Negative thoughts and feelings are noticed, acknowledged without judgment and allowed to simply pass away from the mind. This way, the negative power of disturbing thoughts and feelings disappears and much greater acceptance and tolerance develop. Being mindful allows you the freedom to move forward in a positive manner. Dr. Ravicz notes that meditation can be hard to master for some as they must first learn how to be mindful in order to silence that negative chatter.

Proper nutrition and exercise can bolster mental capacity and improve brain function. Just like every other organ in your body, the brain has nutritional and metabolic needs. Just as other organs grow old prematurely through neglect or mistreatment, so does the brain. Eating a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables, and lean protein - and getting regular exercise - ensures that the brain is getting what it needs to best serve you today and in the future.

Think Positively! By identifying and acknowledging both positive emotions and positive individual traits, you increase the incidence of happy events in your life. According to Ravicz, tools such as journaling and practicing gratitude help you identify negativity and turn it into happiness. Once you've made a habit of this conversion, the happy state is wired into your brain and you can naturally enjoy life from this new vantage point.

Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) is an extension of mindful meditation. Once mindful of all of your thoughts, ACT requires that you take the extra step of distancing yourself from them. For instance, instead of saying, "I'm depressed" you would say, "I'm having the thought that I'm depressed." In doing so, you take away the power of that thought

so you can deal with it in a rational manner. Once rational, your reaction can either be changed or accepted so it no longer influences your happiness. The guiding principle of ACT is creating a comfortable mental environment so your values can shine through.

Overall, *Brain Boosters* is much more than a quick stepladder to emotional success. Dr. Ravicz provides solid, proven science, therapies, and exercises that allow you to take control of your thoughts and emotions and turn them around to work in your favor. All you need is an open mind and the willingness to learn. *Brain Boosters* provides the tools needed to achieve a well-balanced, meaningful life free of both emotional and physical pain.

Simone Ravicz, Ph.D. of Palm Springs is a Life and Business Coach. *Brain Boosters: Seven Ways to Help Your Brain Help Yourself* is available through national book retailers online. For more information visit www.SuccessBrainCoach.com.



Author Simone Ravicz, Ph.D., of Palm Springs



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The Whole-Wheat Fallacy: Diabetics Beware

Gluten often takes the blame when it comes to health concerns these days. Unfortunately, gluten isn't the only problem with your whole-wheat bread. Americans essentially traded fat for wheat when we started the low fat craze. This diet change, not so coincidentally, marked the beginning of our obesity and diabetes epidemic, both of which are trending upward.^{1,2} Sadly, no one knew Americans would be left with such significant consequences those 50 years ago, destroying our ability to obtain wheat in its original form.

Today we only cultivate genetically engineered strains of wheat, commonly referred to as "dwarf wheat." This hybridized form, which is very profitable, produces an incredibly detrimental chromosomal change that led to implications no one predicted. The mutated compounds in modern wheat have had far worse consequences than sugar on our blood metabolism, organs, and brain. Let's take a closer look at how the modern wheat has helped fuel our decades of skyrocketing health crises.

Today's hybridized wheat is high in amylopectin A. This unique carbohydrate sends blood sugar soaring higher than a candy bar.³ Consider how many times someone eats wheat daily: muffin for breakfast, sandwich at lunch, and pasta for dinner. Constant insulin requirement from the pancreas inevitably wears it out. Say hello to type II diabetes. How soon symptoms appear merely depends on your personal threshold. The unavoidable reality is that today *all* wheat in our country has this high concentration of amylopectin A; therefore, whole-wheat makes almost no difference on blood sugar when compared to white bread.

Today's Franken-wheat is addictive. During the digestive process, modern wheat is broken down into "exorphins." In short, it passes the blood-brain barrier and sets off the opioid receptors in the brain. Yes, wheat gives you a high, and it makes you want more. This protein, when broken down, can also trigger brain and mood problems, some as serious as schizophrenia. More commonly, this unnatural wheat stimulates appetite, causing binging and cravings. Interestingly, dairy also has this problematic exorphin.⁴

America's wheat is inflammatory. This is when we get to blame gluten. America's dwarf wheat has produced a higher percentage of gluten, as well as additional types of gluten proteins that cause celiac disease and autoimmunity. When this sticky protein is consumed in such high concentrations, it leaks past the intestines into the bloodstream, triggering inflammatory reactions against the gluten invader. We are especially susceptible to this inflammation when we combine wheat with our modern, stressful, polluted world.

In addition to these reasons, avoiding your daily bagel is a good idea, as today's wheat has up to 28% less of the important blood sugar and body balancing minerals like magnesium, iron, zinc and copper.⁵ Bottom line, even if you don't have antibodies to gluten, this genetically altered, hybridized form of wheat you are eating still affects you.

Try 6 weeks without wheat. Stick to whole foods (not gluten-free junk food) and watch your blood sugar improve, and your waistline shrink. If you are diabetic, work with your doctor to adjust your medications accordingly.

Tiffany is a Certified Nutrition Consultant and Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner and can be reached at (760)285.1221 www.GlutenFreeWithTiffany.com

References: 1.) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK19623/> 2.) <http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/23/1/133.full.pdf> 3.) http://www.health.harvard.edu/healthy_eating/glycemic_index_and_glycemic_load_for_100_foods 4.) <http://www.jbc.org/content/254/7/2446> 5.) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19013359>

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DisAbility Health

Continued from page 4

of the fact that she required a wheelchair.

Hers is an extreme and dramatic depiction of the ramifications of incurring a disability after living a life disability-free. Her clearly visible disability left her open to conjecture that included the level of her intelligence. Those with invisible disabilities experience a similar fate.

The slow speaking, able-bodied high school student with a traumatic brain injury, who longs for socialization with peers, is now too "different" to be part of the inner circle. The aging population who are losing their hearing can no longer participate in group activities or go out with friends for an evening dinner because it is just too difficult to weed through the cross talk and noise. Curtailing those activities we once loved seems the only answer, but that leads to isolation and often depression.

Those who are born with a physical disability learn to adapt from the time of birth. Those who acquire a disability through an illness, an accident or through the process of aging will be required to develop new ways of sustaining previously learned behaviors and skills. A leg amputee will learn to walk again with the addition of prosthesis. A person experiencing a spinal cord injury that impairs their ability to walk will re-gain mobility through the use of a wheelchair. These aren't perfect solutions, but they are solutions that return mobility and independence, creating a new normal that leads to a more functional and engaging lifestyle.

One only needs to follow Facebook page upon page to realize that people with disabilities are alive and well.

There are multiple pages of dedicated and forward thinking disability-focused organizations that recognize on one

hand the life-altering experiences that have left individuals with considerable mental and physical challenges and, on the other hand, the resilience and commitment of these individuals to keep their lives moving forward.

Parents of children with disabilities have created pages or groups so that they can share their stories, seek advice and find comfort from the wealth of information they receive from people who have "been there, done that."

It is these proactive individuals and groups

who are changing the face of disabilities and reducing the stigma associated with having a disability.

We all have a personal stake in the community of people with disabilities. It is a community open to anyone who might experience an accident, illness, genetic difference or the effects of aging - one we can belong to in a heartbeat.

Judy May is the regional director of Incight, a local non-profit organization which helps educate the community about disabilities, provides information that promotes healthy, active lifestyles, and instills a greater appreciation of the abilities of all people who not only live, but thrive with a disability. For more information visit www.incight.org.



Incight program instructor Andrew Chao assists double amputee Damien Sanchez of Palm Desert while rock climbing in Joshua Tree.



Detoxification Genomics

By John R. Dixon, DC, CCN, Dipl.Ac

Many of the exciting new discoveries in functional medicine involve the science of genomics. Gene mutations, also referred to as SNPs, can predispose you to conditions such as heart disease, arthritis, osteoporosis, anxiety, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, neurodegenerative disease, cancer, chemical sensitivities and many more diseases.

Detoxification is a word that has many meanings. In the context of human biochemistry it refers to specific metabolic pathways which are at work throughout the body processing unwanted chemicals and toxins for elimination. These pathways involve a series of enzyme reactions that neutralize unwanted chemicals and transport them to the liver and kidneys so that they can be excreted. Excess hormones, prescription drugs, inflammatory chemicals, environmental chemicals, and toxins are eliminated by this same process.

Your genes help create the enzymes that assist your body with detoxification reactions. Most of this takes place in the liver. A decreased ability to detoxify can be caused by gene mutations. A poor diet, chronic nutritional deficiencies, exposure to environmental toxins, cigarette smoking and excess alcohol consumption can all contribute to change your gene expression and promote disease.

Genetic testing can help identify potential detoxification weakness that you may have. Based on your particular findings, it is possible to modify gene expression through precise, targeted, and individualized interventions.

The primary detoxification enzymes are:

Cytochrome P-450: a group of important detoxification enzymes found primarily in the liver. These enzymes represent the body's first line of defense in removing unwanted chemical toxins. Gene mutations in this group are known to be linked to diminished capacity for detoxification of pesticides, herbicides, pollutants, and some steroid hormones. Impaired activity of this group of enzymes is closely linked to numerous adverse drug reactions.

COMT is a key enzyme in a detoxification reaction called methylation, or the reaction used to deactivate dopamine, norepinephrine, estrogens and various other chemical toxins. Reduced activity of this enzyme has been linked to increased risk of anxiety, panic disorder, nervousness, fibromyalgia, breast cancer (especially when coupled with long term estrogen exposure), and acute coronary events.

MTHFR is another key enzyme in the methylation cycle. Down regulated activity of this enzyme has been linked to a broad spectrum of health problems including increased risk of autism, depression, schizophrenia, essential hypertension, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and neural tube defects.

GST is a group of enzymes involved in the detoxification of heavy metals (mercury, cadmium and lead), carcinogens, steroids, herbicides, fungicides and solvents. Defects in GST can contribute to fatigue syndromes and many cancers.

NAT are a pair of enzymes that detoxify tobacco smoke, exhaust fumes, other environmental solvents. Decreased activity of this enzyme group is associated with increased risk for lung, colon, bladder, head and neck cancer.

SOD is a group of antioxidant enzymes. Mutations affecting these enzymes can lead to increased free radical activity and cell damage. There may also be an increased risk of developing neurodegenerative disorders with impaired SOD activity.

Testing for detoxification gene defects is science-based, affordable, easy, and results are available in about 7-10 days. The sample is obtained by placing a small piece of paper in your mouth for a few minutes. Gene mutations can also be identified with blood testing.

Nutrition and lifestyle-based treatment protocols are available to assist in addressing enzyme weaknesses. Whether or not you choose to test your genes, they will continue to play an important role in your health. By testing, you have the opportunity to influence the outcome and more actively promote a healthy life.

Dr. John Dixon can be reached at the Natural Medicine Group (760) 345.7300.

Sources: 1) Laboratory Evaluations for Integrative and Functional Medicine, 2008; 2) Genova Diagnostics website; 3) PubMed



A decreased ability to detoxify can be caused by gene defects which can be identified through simple, science-based tests.

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Music & Movement Therapy for Autism

By Doris Steadman, MEd, MSW

Autism now affects as many as 1 in 68 children and adults.¹ Those diagnosed may have a wide range of developmental delays, as well as difficulties with communication, motor and language skills, and certain repetitive behaviors that limit their social interactions.²

There are many theories on which therapies best help affected children become more integrated into society, and through numerous studies, music is proving to be a very effective one.

Now considered evidence-based for autism spectrum disorder (ASD), music therapy is the use of music interventions to address non-music therapeutic goals.⁴ A 2004 study from the Journal of Music Therapy found that music therapy used with children and adolescents with ASD increased appropriate social behaviors and decreased inappropriate behaviors. And the good news is that most children will work at it because it is fun, adding to the long-term changes in social behavior and cognitive ability with prolonged use of the therapy.⁵

Music is motivating and engaging and may be used as a natural reinforcer as children in studies appear to respond more frequently to the therapist's requests while music is played.⁴ When paired with motion therapy and repetitive training, results showed increased attention to tasks, vocalizations, gestures and vocabulary comprehension; engagement with others; and enhanced body awareness and coordination.

Fortunately, there is a new community program being developed locally by Bob and Nancy Horn which will offer ASD and other special needs children the opportunity to experience dance and music therapy. Currently in the planning and development stage, the non-profit called All Things Are Possible will offer specialized classes with musical instruments, ballroom dancing, and vocal instruction.

They are working with local medical professionals to develop programs and have pediatricians, neurologists, child psychologists, speech therapists and special education teachers on their advisory board.

Jerome L. Lipin, M.D., FAAP, who also holds a fellowship in developmental disorders is on board and plans to conduct a controlled study to further support the non-profit's work. Throughout his career, Dr. Lipin, who is now retired, worked closely with developmentally disabled kids and feels strongly that both music and movement can make a significant difference. "Studies are well documented and I have seen the work that the Horns are doing in their dance classes," says Dr. Lipin. "We look forward to documenting the success of music and dance together to help current and future generations."

Targeting a location at Westfield Mall, Palm Desert, All Things Are Possible is currently seeking volunteers and the donation of musical instruments. "We have master dance instructors, and music, vocal and band instructors who will work with the children alongside certified therapists," says Horn, who is very excited to get the program started. "Our goal is to give each child the self-esteem they need to live a full life while helping parents cope with their children's disabilities."

For further information or to see how you can help, contact Bob Horn at (760) 413.3593 or e-mail bobhorn.atap@gmail.com.

References: 1) CDC Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 2010.; 2) Lisa Jo Rody, About Health, autism.about.com; 3) Whipple, J (2004). Music in intervention for children and adolescents with autism: A meta-analysis. Journal of Music Therapy, 42 (2), 90-106.; 4) Autism Speaks Blog, Infographic: Music Therapy and Autism. 5) Autism Science Foundation Blog, Music Therapy May Help Children with Autism.



Insomnia Relief May Start with Brain Chemistry

By Darren Clair, MD

More than 60 million Americans report that they have experienced some form of insomnia in the past year, and sleepless nights are responsible for a little over 250 million lost days of productivity annually. In seeking solutions to this widespread problem, science has recently shifted its focus toward brain chemistry.

According to Ronald C. Kessler, Ph.D., Harvard Medical School professor of health care policy, it's not only that people are missing work. He has determined that sleep-deprived people are still going to their jobs but are accomplishing less because they're so tired.

A national survey in 2011 also determined that workers with insomnia who were too tired to fully function on the job cost the United States over \$60 billion. Based on this survey, about 1 in 4 workers are sleep deprived due to insomnia. Of the 7,400 people who participated in this national study, approximately 20% of those suffering were taking a drug or participating in behavioral treatments.

Behavioral scientists have a list of things that you should do to get a good night's sleep. It includes avoiding caffeine and alcohol before bedtime, going to sleep in a regularly scheduled routine, controlling room temperature so it's not too cold or too warm, and moderating the brightness of light in the room. Bright light causes your body

to inhibit the production of melatonin, the hormone generated naturally in the pineal gland in the brain that allows our bodies to relax and sleep.

Science is now considering a suspected link, for example, between insomnia and the reduction in levels of the inhibitory neurotransmitter known as gamma-aminobutyric acid in the brain. You see this in health food stores as the supplement known as GABA. People with insomnia can show around 30% less GABA in their brains than people who do not suffer from insomnia. Other studies, particularly one at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, observed the effects of high levels of the neurotransmitter glutamate in the brain of insomniac patients.

Although brain chemistry analysis is not an area that most doctors have studied, we have had positive results with this approach. The analysis is not yet recognized as reasonable and necessary by many insurance companies, but testing will reveal which brain chemicals are deficient or excessive.

If you are suffering from insomnia, a brain chemistry study may hold the key to a good night's sleep.

Dr. Clair is founder and medical director of Vibrance Rejuvenation Center in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 324.4872.



Brain chemistry analysis may provide answers to sleepless nights.



Do you feel confused by all the latest dietary trends? Although there seem to be hundreds of ways we are advised to eat, most diets can be grouped into three categories based on their similarities:

PALEO refers to a diet made up of foods presumed to make up the diet of early humans, consisting chiefly of meat, fish, vegetables, and fruit, and excluding dairy or grain products and processed food. Similar diets are Atkins, Wahl's, Grain-Brain, and Dr. Gundry's Matrix Diet. Usually, those following this plan keep carbohydrate intake very low (thus the most gluten-free) and allow unlimited animal protein, green vegetables and fat intake.

Authors such as Loren Cordain, Gary Taubes, Bill Davis, Steven Gundry and Robert Atkins review the evidence for following this diet with claims of reducing heart disease and other disorders caused by inflammation.

MEDITERRANEAN diets emphasize whole foods, plenty of fish, healthy fats, and a variety of vegetables and fruits. Grains and red meat are moderately used. Diets that align with this category include South Beach, Zone, DASH, and have been written about by authors such as Barry Sears, Wayne Andersen, Mark Hyman, and Arthur Agatston. The claim to fame for this category is that they tend to correlate with less heart disease and can be effective in controlling blood sugar.

VEGAN & VEGETARIAN diets avoid animal products or selectively limit them. Fat intake is kept to extremely low quantities. These diets tend to be more defined by what one does not eat (animals) than what one should eat. Whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables are the key foods in this diet. The leaders of this perspective such as Dean Ornish, Nathan

Pritikin and T. Colin Campbell describe reduction of cancer and heart disease as positive outcomes.

So with all of these claims sounding similar, how can we find options that are best for us? There are some pillars on which all of these researchers agree, and these should be the basis for choosing your dietary plan:

- **Eat lots of plants.** Make colorful vegetables the mainstay of your diet. Phytonutrients present in whole vegetables and fruits provide fuel for our mitochondria to build energy.

- **Avoid processed foods** which expose us to toxins and unhealthy fats and added sugars. Almost any processed food containing oils will be high in an unhealthy form of omega-6 fatty acids, which increase bodily inflammation and oxidative stress.

- **Maintain steady blood sugar levels,** as rapid spikes and blood sugar crashes seem to be a key culprit in causing disease. Eat a low-glycemic diet regardless of the type of plan you choose.

- **Portion control.** Repeated studies connect smaller amounts of food consumption with longer life. Our calorie intake has gone up 425 calories a day since 1970. During that timeframe obesity and lifestyle-based disease have become epidemic.

- **Awareness and Appreciation.** Noticing the beauty and joy of our food requires that we let our minds pause while eating. Eating slowly gives our body time to send signals to our brain indicating we are full. Feel appreciation for those who grew our food, the earth for its bounty, and our own value in receiving our food.

Wisdom and cheers to you this summer as you make your next choices for health!

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Addiction: East Meets West for Long-Term Recovery

By Lauren Del Sarto

If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction, you understand on a deep and intimate level the desperation to do whatever it takes to recover. Addiction professionals, counselors, doctors, scientists, clergy and many others continue to search for a cure-all for the mental, emotional, relational, and financial trail of devastation that chemical dependency leaves in its wake.



Stress and cravings add to the unending cycle of addiction.

Have you ever heard someone say, "I drink or use to take the edge off"? Have you ever thought about what "the edge" really is? "The proverbial 'edge' is stress caused by mental anguish and physical pain," she says, adding that in his film *Pleasure Unwoven*, Kevin McCauley, M.D., demonstrates a medical model of addiction that clearly identifies stress as the root of all addictions. "That stress is magnified by the phenomenon of addictive craving which adds to the often unending cycle of substance abuse. Most of us can identify with the discomfort of craving chocolate or a cup of coffee; the kind of craving associated with addiction is far more sinister."

Addiction is a Symptom

"We also know that addiction is a symptom of a greater problem. No one ever sets out intentionally to be an addict or alcoholic." Addiction is a progressive condition which usually starts with the unintentional discovery of a "solution to a problem" of which the person often wasn't aware to begin with - until that fateful day when he or she realizes that a drink or drug seems to solve the problem by reducing pain or taking off "the edge."

The Opiate Epidemic

Unfortunately, the most effective medicinal solutions to physical pain are opiates such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, methadone and heroin. It's no surprise that heroin and pain medications in particular continue to top the list as the fastest rising addictions in the United States according to the Centers for Disease Control, and that drug overdose deaths increased for the 11th consecutive year in 2010. "Although opiate-based drugs are never prescribed for emotional pain like grief and loss, social anxiety and low self-esteem, many sufferers unfortunately turn to them for similar relief."

Jessee, who conceived and built the anxiety treatment specialty programs at the Betty Ford Center and Michigan's Brighton Hospital (now the Brighton Center for Recovery), has teamed up locally with Albert Lai, M.D., of Desert Pain and Rehabilitation in Rancho Mirage to create what they call a cutting edge approach of east meets west.

Lai, who has 12 years of experience in pain management, has seen the problem all too often. He recently went back to school to become board-certified in addiction medicine. "I have seen an increasing number of people go from being medicated for acute pain to becoming addicted to opiates and feel it is my responsibility to assist and be part of the solution to this growing epidemic."

Dr. Lai and Suzanne Jesse's program incorporates medical technology and therapeutic counseling and aims to restore a patient's full functional ability - physically, emotionally and socially - through a comprehensive, interdisciplinary team approach.

Treating the Physical Edge

On the medical side, Dr. Lai uses an FDA-approved drug called Naltrexone which is implanted through a minimally invasive procedure and works to relieve cravings associated with physical dependence to alcohol and opiates for up to one year.

This critical element of relief offers a patient time to begin the restoration of their lives without the distraction of craving. "This might possibly be the greatest advancement in addiction treatment we have seen since the development of Alcoholics Anonymous 12 Step Program," says Lai.

Treating the Emotional Edge

To address the emotional stress that accompanies addiction and is often the underlying cause, Jessee has developed a holistic program that incorporates elements of five of the most evidence-based integrative practices for stress management and anxiety including progressive relaxation, mindfulness, guided imagery, cognitive behavioral therapy and self-hypnosis.

"These therapies allow the client to tap into their brain's own pharmacy for natural healing at the cellular level," says Jessee, who calls her unique approach Neurogenesis Meditative Therapy.

"We feel that this integrative approach will provide an effective pain management solution as well as an effective intervention for opiate addiction," adds Lai. "Our goal is whole person care for long-term recovery support."

For more information visit www.RecoverySupport.Help or www.EscapeAnxiety.com.

Today, like never before, addiction is a life and death matter. Finding what works, matters.

Traditionally, the field of medicine has been divided when it comes to treatment plans. Eastern medicine is well grounded in holistic approaches such as meditation and counseling while western medicine standardly turns to pharmacology. Of late, those programs which combine an "East Meets West" philosophy are garnering much success with sustainable, long-term recovery.

But to understand the solution, you first have to understand the problem. For that, we spoke with Suzanne Jessee, M.A., C.Ht., a master's level clinician who specializes in addiction and anxiety and the author of *Escape Anxiety*.

"The Edge"

According to Jessee, all in the field of addiction seem to agree that physical pain, emotional stress and anxiety are the double-edged swords



Integrative therapies for stress management are a key factor to success.



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NATUROPATHIC FAMILY MEDICINE

with Dr. Shannon

Know the Signs of Heat Exhaustion and Dehydration

With the desert summer heat fast approaching, it is important for parents to recognize early signs of heat exhaustion and dehydration in children, as well as how to treat and prevent them. Children lose water much faster than adults so they do not regulate their temperature as well. It is important to understand that children are much more sensitive to the heat and will become affected by heat faster.

Dehydration in children can become serious very quickly. It is essential to keep children hydrated and to respond immediately if any signs of dehydration are present. It is also important to remember that if a child is thirsty, then he or she is already mildly dehydrated.

To prevent dehydration, drinking water is key. However, hydration also comes from fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, and pure drinks such as coconut water. Foods that can dehydrate the body are those that lack natural water or are high in sodium such as crackers, dry cereal, chips, and processed foods. Be aware of early signs of dehydration, act quickly, and most importantly act preventatively on a daily basis.

Signs of Dehydration:

- Dry, wrinkled lips
- Dry mouth
- Thirst
- Irritability
- Lethargy
- Dry diapers for 6 hours in an infant
- No urination for 12 hours in older children

Prevention of Dehydration:

- Drink water regularly, throughout the day
- Eat fresh fruit regularly, daily
- Keep head covered
- Wear loose clothing
- Stay in the shade
- Take frequent breaks from direct sun

Heat exhaustion is often accompanied by dehydration, but only occurs when a child is exposed to high temperatures. It is a result of the body's inability to cope with higher heat, and the body will show specific signs that it cannot regulate its temperatures. Children will get heated faster and lack the ability to cool the body down as quickly. It is much more common to see heat exhaustion in children than healthy adults because of their sensitive systems. Heat exhaustion can be dangerous, so be aware of the signs and seek medical care if your child is not recovering from heat exposure.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion:

- Fatigue
- Headache
- Nausea
- Rapid heartbeat
- Profuse sweating
- Muscle or abdominal cramps
- Irritability

Prevention of Heat Exhaustion:

- Drink plenty of water
- Wear sunscreen
- Stay out of direct sunlight
- Hydrate adequately 2 hours prior to exercise or sun exposure

To avoid heat and dehydration issues this summer, act preventatively daily. Be sure that children drink plenty of water in the morning prior to sun exposure, eat plenty of fresh foods, stay covered or in the shade, and take frequent breaks from direct sun exposure. If you feel your child is suffering from dehydration or heat exhaustion, it is important to get the appropriate medical care quickly.

Dr. Sinsheimer is a Naturopathic Doctor with Optimal Health Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 568.2598.

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Advancing In Years

It is a common belief that as we age, our minds and bodies decline and life inevitably becomes less satisfying and enjoyable. Cognitive decline is inevitable, and work is less productive.

According to a recent *Wall Street Journal* article, we are all wrong.

Certainly life gets better in many aspects as we get older. Our moods and sense of well-being improve with age. Friendships also tend to grow more intimate as older adults prioritize what matters most to them.

The WSJ article states that knowledge and certain types of intelligence continue to develop - and can even offset age-related decline - with the brain's ability to process new information and reason abstractly. Expertise deepens, which can enhance productivity and creativity. "Some go so far as to say that wisdom - defined in part as the ability to resolve conflicts by seeing problems from multiple perspectives - flourishes."

Naturally, growing older has its share of challenges, and some people don't age as well as others. But "those who fall into the stereotype of being depressed, cranky, irritable and obsessed with their alimentary canal decline" constitute no more than 10% of the older population. "The other 90% of the population isn't like that at all," says Paul Costa, scientist emeritus of a long-running Baltimore National Study of Aging (BNSA).

It is believed that emotional well-being improves until the 70s, then levels off. But the BNSA research shows that even centenarians report high levels of well-being. As they age, their moods (measured by the ratio of positive to negative emotions) steadily improves. Costa adds that contrary to the popular view that youth is the best time of life, the peak of emotional life may not occur until well into the seventh decade.

Studies conclude that older adults focus on positive rather than negative emotions, memories, satisfaction, and stimuli. As people age, they tend to prioritize emotional meaning and satisfaction, giving them an incentive to see the good over the bad.

As we age our brains also undergo structural changes. The neurons that carry messages become less efficient. As a result, concentration and memories slip together with abstract reasoning and novel problem solving. However, recent discoveries also indicate that older adults perform better in the real world than they do on cognitive tests. The WSJ article warns that "typical laboratory tasks may systematically underestimate the true ability of older adults."

Other studies conclude that older adults typically report better marriages, more supportive friendships, less conflict with children and siblings and closer ties with members of their social network than younger adults.

Conclusions stated were based on extensive research and I found them to be illuminating and positive. Still, I have to agree with Bette Davis... "Growing old is not for sissies."

George can be reached at ugadolph@live.com.



Get Ready for Seven Serious Life Transitions Ahead

By Reesa Manning, Vice President & Senior Financial Advisor

Most baby boomers will face seven key events in their last stage of life that will color their finances and investments. Prepare for these events by thinking about them now.

Unlike earlier, happier events such as getting married, having children, and moving up the career ladder, some of these events may be dreaded. For this reason, many boomers may put off facing them, but lack of preparation can make a bad situation even worse.

1. Your parents will get old. You should start thinking about this now and begin gathering resources so you won't be at a complete loss when your parents can no longer function independently. You should begin discussing with your parents: Health Status, Long-Term Care, Power of Attorney, Estate Planning.

2. Your parents will die. This is the natural order of things. You will face both emotional and financial issues when your parents die. Go to A Healing Place (www.ahealingplace.org) for insights and resources that can help with the emotional issues. As for financial matters, this is what you will face: The estate must be settled, Inherited assets must be managed.

3. You will fight to stay healthy. Boomers are starting to come to terms with aging, but serious illness is still largely unexplored territory for most of them. Boomers will be paying attention to their health, either working hard to stay healthy or managing chronic illnesses. A glimpse of what's ahead: Navigating the health care system, High out-of-pocket costs.

4. You will reach retirement age. Boomers will reach the traditional retirement age at which they may take advantage of certain tax benefits and entitlement programs developed under the traditional retirement system. Boomers who aren't thinking about retirement as such will still want to take advantage of them: Social Security, Medicare, Tax Issues.

5. You will need to manage multiple sources of income. Even boomers who say they'll "never retire" will likely have multiple sources of income that will need to be managed. These may include the following: Self-employment income, IRA Distributions, Investment Income.

6. You will get old. Boomers can barely imagine it now, but like their parents, boomers themselves will get old someday. What types of assisted living arrangements will you want to consider? How will you pay for it? What can you do now to make this phase of life more comfortable?

7. You will die. Sorry to be so blunt, but you know it's going to happen. Boomers seem to be somewhat more open to contemplating their own deaths than their parents' generation, perhaps because they still see it as a long way off. Go to the Real Age website (www.realage.com) and take a test to find out your "real age" along with health tips that will help you "live life to the youngest." As they review their lives, boomers are starting to consider legacy planning and ethical wills (<https://celebrationsoflife.net/ethicalwills/>). This life-centered approach to death can lead to some of the estate-planning tasks you should be executing now, including advance directives and wills. It's a good idea to review your estate plan or specific tax situation with your estate attorney.

Reesa Manning is Vice President and Senior Financial Advisor at Integrated Wealth Management, specializing in retirement and income planning. For more information, call Reesa at (760) 834.7200 or reesa@IWMgmt.com.

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How You Can Give Your Career a Fresh Start

Continued from page 9

during your career and while in school. What have you accomplished? What did you enjoy most? Where have you excelled? What areas have you not enjoyed and which stressed you or drained your reservoir of personal energy? This process can show you what career you have the passion and capacity to do. The updated best-selling book, *What Color Is Your Parachute?* by Richard Bolles, is an excellent resource for this process. Additionally, there are many self-assessment instruments that you can use in your introspection to help you understand your career aptitude, styles of leadership and conflict management, and workplace preferences.

Discover and assess your gaps in knowledge, skill, and behaviors.

What are the hard and soft skills you need for the next part of your life journey? Seeking honest feedback from people who know you well can be insightful. One exercise is to ask people close to you, "What are 4 words that describe me?" Examine those "4 words" and ponder how those 4 words match your view of yourself personally and professionally. This is the time when many women seek help with self-esteem and displaying self-confidence. Organizations like Toastmasters teach members to speak spontaneously and confidently. Improving networking skills is often a key skill during this discovery period. Many professionals take additional training and education in areas they want to strengthen including courses, certifications and degrees.

Hold informational interviews with people more established in your current field and in the career that interests you. Many professionals enjoy meeting with others who believe they are influential and want to learn from them. In this time of "giving back," professionals are happy to share their experience and help others who are interested in learning from them. Be clear that you are not asking for a job, it's just that you admire them and want to learn more about their experience and their field. You may find ideas for invigorating work in your current field that you can implement immediately.

Do your "due diligence."

Research your current career path as well as other options. Read trade journals, conduct research online, and interview others in the field. Is the future of the industry positive or is it a struggling industry that is not growing? Reach out to others in your network to better understand other industries and fields you are interested in exploring.

Keep your sense of humor and enjoy the journey.

Continue to focus on the positive every day — no matter where you are on your career path. There is always an opportunity to impact those in your circle in a positive way.

As Maya Angelo said, "The question is not how to survive, but how to thrive with passion, compassion, humor and style." Are you thriving now? If not now... when will you start?

Dr. Susan Murphy is a best-selling author, coach and speaker who specializes in relationships, conflict, leadership and goal-achievement. Dr. Murphy can be reached at Dr.Murphy@LiveWellClinic.org and (760) 674.1615.

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Ritu Chopra, MS, MD

Options to Living Life Scarred

Scarred. It can mean a lot of things, both physical and emotional. The physical scar can remind us of an event or process that we'd rather not have experienced. Surprisingly, improvement or elimination of the scar can bring about a kind of healing and recovery that no amount of acceptance or therapy can produce.

While scar removal procedures are often a daily routine for practitioners in our field, for the patient, the effects are often profound and life changing.

When we meet a new scarred patient, the tie between the physical and emotional is obvious. As someone tells us their story, often their fingers will drift to the scars and gently touch them as they speak. Usually emotions build and build, and we can see the weight this condition puts upon their mind and spirit. A sadness evolves, a feeling of being doomed to this situation forever.



Injury can leave scars that are often more than skin deep.

After carefully listening to the patient about the history of the scars, and the attempts that have been made to improve them, we do a physical examination. In many cases, we can offer a significant transformation, yet in others, we cannot.

Scars can be objectionable for several reasons. Factors include coloration, wideness, pigmentation (either too light or too dark), depth (either depressed or raised) and location. If a scar is in a troubling location, often we can relocate it into a fold or crease and make it less conspicuous. Most often, we recommend a "scar revision."

Scar revision is simply cutting out the old scar and re-suturing it. One might ask, "If surgery caused the scar, how will more surgery fix it?" The answer is in the details. Several factors can be dramatically improved with good technique and tissue handling. For example, let's say someone fell and was cut by a blunt surface. They went to the ER and were sutured up by the doctor on duty. The scar is wide and indented...and right in the middle of the forehead.

In our experience, improvement can be seen in 4 out of 5 categories that most often lead to scarring, or 80% of the time. Those categories include:

- 1) Mechanism of injury.** A scalpel in the hands of a skilled surgeon is much more delicate and precise than a blunt curb or fist.
- 2) Delay.** In trauma situations, the time between the injury and suture closure is prolonged - the trip to the ER, the waiting room, waiting for x-rays or test result, and finally the surgery repair. Hours pass. In scar revision surgery, the closure immediately follows the excision of the old scar.
- 3) Technique.** Technique applied in trauma situations tends to differ greatly from that of a planned procedure by a physician trained in cosmetic surgery. We focus on releasing local tissues so there is less tension on the wound in the healing phase, as tension leads to wide scars. We use "atraumatic technique," which means treating tissue gently and exposing the skin to a minimum of manipulation, dryness and heat, while using delicate, sharp instruments that cut cleanly without crushing or traumatizing vital tissue.



Dr. Ordon addresses a facial scar removal procedure.



Removing scars can help remove negative memories and restore character.

Clearly, gathering a thorough and detailed history is vital before choosing a course in scar revision. Often laser therapy is the best course as lasers can substantially improve coloration of scar tissue with virtually no recovery. Intense Pulse Light Therapy can also eliminate the enlarged blood vessels that make some scars conspicuous.

If you have disconcerting scars, there are options to consider. With so many advances in technique and technology, there is absolutely no reason for those with concerns to live life scarred.

Dr. Chopra is medical director of The Plastic Surgery Institute in Rancho Mirage and can be reached at (760) 568.2211. Please send your ideas and recommended topics for his column via email to csmith@roxosurgery.com.



Luminous Skin at Any Age

Courtesy of Massage Envy

You've come a long way since you were a teenager. And so has your skin. So if you haven't changed your skincare routine since you got your driver's license, it's time to shake things up.

In our teenage years, we experience breakouts. As we age, we experience different types of changes in our skin's appearance, even if we still have breakouts.

Skin care needs to respond to and change with our skin. Ready to rethink your skincare regimen? Rather than focusing on your age, consider your skin type and signs of aging you're experiencing. Mix and match products that address your specific needs.

Genetic Aging: We're all familiar with the classic signs of getting older—fine lines and deep wrinkles. Why does it happen? In addition to skin becoming thinner as we age, the breakdown of collagen affects the ability of the skin to repair itself as well as its very cellular structure. And because collagen is what helps keep skin firm, what you notice is visibly less elasticity, which makes skin more susceptible to wrinkling and sagging.

To combat the effects of genetic aging, try products that contain collagen which smooth fine lines and wrinkles by boosting collagen and hydration levels.

Retinoids are also skin savers. That's because retinol can help expedite the skin's turnover, assisting older surface skin cells to die off faster and allowing for new cell growth. The process helps to minimize the appearance of wrinkles and slows the breakdown of collagen.

There are products designed to specifically target creases and crow's feet

that can help reduce the appearance of deep wrinkles.

Environmental Aging: Overexposure to sun, pollution and wind can take its toll. Environmental aging reflects how you've taken care of your skin throughout the years.

One key ingredient in fighting telltale pigmentation (patchy darkening of the skin typical of sun damage) is vitamin C. Products including a concentrated formulation of vitamin C can provide enhanced collagen-building and skin-brightening power.

Hormonal Aging: This type of skin aging occurs largely as a result of reduced estrogen levels in women. There are product lines specifically formulated to combat the effect of hormonal aging.

Phytoestrogens—plant based compounds such as those found in wild yam and soybean—are particularly effective in eye creams.

Night creams can also have a significant impact on reducing the effects of hormonal aging by restoring the skin's hydration and luster. Many combine essential fatty acids and ingredients such as starflower oil, shea butter, retinol and clover flower extract to hydrate and restore your skin's healthy glow.

While aging is inevitable, proper care will help keep your skin beautiful at any age.

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Energy Drinks and Sports Supplements

Do they really improve athletic performance?

By Michael K Butler BA; PTA; CSCS*D;RSCC*D; NMT

In the last 15 years, a growing number of professional athletes have tried to remain competitive in their sport through the use of sports supplements and energy drinks. Unfortunately, this has trickled down to our youth.

A national study done by the Kellogg's Group in 2012 showed that 40% of all kids skipped breakfast. Of those, 43% said they skipped breakfast because they did not have time in the morning, and 29% said they were not hungry. Other studies evidenced that those who skipped breakfast consumed 40% more sweets, 55% more soft drinks, 45% fewer vegetables and 30% less fruit during the day. Often they look to sports supplements and energy drinks because they are not fueling their bodies with real food.

Energy drinks are beverages that contain caffeine and a combination of other ingredients designed to boost energy. They were first introduced in Europe/Asia in 1960, and then hit the US market in 1997. It is now a \$10 billion a year industry, and 30-50% of its consumers are children and adolescents. Energy drinks may contain up to 1200mg of caffeine per serving and other ingredients that also contain caffeine. Because the FDA does not regulate energy drinks, the manufacturer does not have to disclose the amount of caffeine in every ingredient, and most companies have learned to hide the actual amounts of caffeine in their "proprietary blend." Most energy drinks also contain between 40-80 grams of sugar. Another ingredient added to energy drinks is vitamin B, which can cause nerve damage when habitually consumed, and most energy drinks contain 2000-8000% of the recommended daily amount.

In 2013 there were 20,783 visits to emergency rooms nationwide due to anxiety, headaches, irregular heartbeats, heart attacks and dehydration resulting from energy drink consumption.

As for enhancing sports performance, caffeine at low doses (3-6 mg/kg/bw) is beneficial. All the other ingredients have been shown to have little to no effect on improving performance.

Sports Supplements: Our kids look up to sports heroes and seek to emulate them. Unfortunately, many have been suspected of taking sports supplements and some banned substances. The market is flooded with supplements promoting that their product will put on 20 pounds of extra muscle. Again the problem with most of the top selling products on the market is that they are not regulated by the FDA, because they are not recognized as a food, so the ingredients in most of the muscle gainers and weight loss supplements are very questionable. With much of the same outcomes as our energy drinks, we must question their safety and ask ourselves, "Is this really worth it?"

In conclusion, energy drinks are a quick fix that can give you instant energy, but which is followed by a severe crash, and sports supplements should be intended to supplement what you are not getting in your diet, not to replace a healthy meal. Very little evidence exists that either improve athletic performance.

Michael K Butler is co owner of Kinetix Health and Performance Center in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 200.1719 or michael@kinetixcenter.com.

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Living Wellness

with Jennifer DiFrancesco

Maximizing Mornings

A Habit for Summer Success

A change now affecting us all is the onset of warmer desert temperatures which narrows the window of opportunity to enjoy outdoor exercise.

Our habits must alter in response to the seasons, and a productive habit we desert dwellers can take at this time is to alter sleep and wake schedules. Maybe getting up early is not your normal habit, but starting this new ritual during our sweltering summer months will profoundly increase your wellness potential. Big horn sheep and other desert animals alter daily living for survival based on temperature changes, and we should too.

A new morning ritual often must start with a clear evening ritual: possibly an alarm to tell you when to go to bed (set the cell phone for this reminder), or awareness that time spent doing wasteful things in the evening (i.e. flipping channels and surfing the web), extend the evening and take us away from our new purpose.

The following practices can help ensure success with your new morning routine:

Set sleep and wake times based on healthy facts. Most adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep per night. We must figure bedtime this way. In our society, we are influenced to think that sleeping is a luxury. Don't succumb to believing that less sleep makes you more successful and more productive. Sleep does not equate to laziness (laziness is sleeping when you should be doing something else). Know the difference. While we sleep, human growth hormone is secreted by the pituitary gland, thus repairing muscles and bones. Shorting yourself of even one hour of sleep per night has cumulative negative effects.

Ease into it. Train yourself in small increments of time change working towards your goal. You cannot expect to adapt immediately to change in wake-up time.

Use tools. Set multiple alarm clocks and move them away from the bedside.

Create a pep talk. Go to bed with an internal message to "jump out of bed like a firefighter."

Call in the recruits. Have a friend call you or set up an accountability partner. Meeting a wellness buddy is a sure way to be held to the time.

Take notes. Keep a journal by the bed and record how it feels waking up early, appreciating the desert sunrise. Rest assured, there will never be a journal entry that is anything other than appreciative. Read those personal notes before going to bed and upon waking and it will remind you how you want to feel.

It is essential to capitalize on summer mornings from now throughout September. Just as you train your body with exercise, train with this new constructive habit for the summer season. We all know that "the early bird gets the worm." Truth is, he also gets the majestic beauty of our desert mornings and wings that will continue to soar through our hot summer months.

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