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July/August 2023



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Did you know that some of the world's most therapeutic natural resources are right in our own backyard? For centuries, people worldwide have turned to mineral hot springs to heal what ails them. These unique waters contain a deep concentration of earth's elements, essential to the human body and to life.

All the more, the composition of minerals found in the waters of Desert Hot Springs (DHS) are of the best in the world. While this fact is commonly known in Europe, where doctors often prescribe bathing in mineral springs (balneotherapy), few in our region regard this treasure. Soaking in the temperature-controlled waters transdermally delivers lithium (the "happy mineral"), magnesium, potassium, calcium, sulfur (odorless) and more, replenishing our need and enhancing both mental and physical well-being.

Another fact you may not know: no other municipality can match the number of awards DHS's drinking water has received including "best water in the world" at the 30th Annual Berkeley Springs International Water Tasting (2020).

Beyond the waters is the unique convergence of five energy vortexes - sun, wind, mountains, faults and geothermal water - where earth's energy is stronger and can be felt more easily. Vortexes are said to generate feelings of peace and have long been used to promote self-reflection or physical and emotional rejuvenation. In Native American culture, such lands were in the care of medicine men who knew that communion with these powerful elements could bring forth healing. Spend time on Miracle Hill and it's hard not to feel it.

Today, there is a renaissance taking place in DHS as savvy investors, recognizing these earthly assets, are turning historic retreats into modern resorts welcoming all. Beautification of the "Spa Zone" is also underway including an \$8.4 million grant to refurbish Hacienda Avenue.

If you haven't taken in the waters lately, take a trip to DHS. In this edition, we present some of the hidden gems you'll find, each with unique qualities and offerings, inviting you to come relax, rejuvenate and replenish. (Photo: The Good House juice cleanse)

Contemplative Medicine Fellowship



In 2021, the renowned New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care launched the Contemplative Medicine Fellowship, a 12-month training for physicians, advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants, designed to immerse participants in the alleviation of suffering while supporting clinic responsibilities.

The following editorial, which first appeared in the international journal *Palliative & Supportive Care*, was sent to us by integrative doctor Tieraona Low Dog, MD and written by fellowship graduate Deirdre Pachman, MD.

I sat next to her hospital bed in her apartment, holding her hand in the quiet of the evening hours. She had been in bed now for five days, unresponsive. Before being placed in bed with the assistance of the hospice nurses, she asked me if one more bite of oatmeal would help her live longer. These were her last words to me. Previously, a vibrant 70-year-old woman, she became frail and was teetering on her last breath as the cancer continued to grow. I watched her irregular breathing and occasional grimaces; I felt a sense of helplessness and deep sadness. We were on a schedule alternating methadone, hydromorphone and haloperidol. I made sure I didn't miss giving a dose because I was determined that she would not suffer any more.

"In a profession that rewards doing, it is so very hard to just be."
- Deirdre Pachman, MD

I think back on all the suffering she endured in the past year: 10 cycles of intense chemotherapy, a Whipple surgery, multiple hospitalizations and procedures, as well as severe pain, nausea and fatigue. However, her physical suffering paled in comparison to the emotional and existential suffering I witnessed - the regrets, the fear, the anger, the grasping to life, the sadness and loss, and the intense grief of facing death too early.

I am a palliative care physician. I had witnessed the dying process multiple times before. I have cared for hundreds of patients at end of life, but this time it was different. This time it was my mother.

I was called to palliative care because I was called to the intimacy and wonder of end of life. I don't

Continued on page 18

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**Explore.
Unwind.
Awaken.**

Welcome Summertime!
Yes, that's me enjoying a cool cascade of nature's medicine from the mineral-rich waters of Desert Hot Springs. The secret is out and wellness retreats are springing up as investors seek this liquid treasure and its ability to heal what ails us.

In this edition, we introduce some of the area's hidden gems. Explore to discover your new escape, then relax, rejuvenate and repeat.

Thank you for bringing us along ~
Lauren
Lauren Del Sarto
Founder/Publisher
(Photo by Michelle Steadman)



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Let’s Shatter the Stigma

Mental health matters

By Student Emma Feller

I’m done with mental health being such a taboo topic of conversation. I’m done with the initial shock of others when bringing up my own mental health in a conversation. I’m so done with mental illness issues being treated as rare and shameful.

Having an experienced perspective on mental health is both fortunate and unfortunate. I openly share that my brother, Alek, died by suicide when I was 10 years old. I am fortunate to have gained unparalleled insight into the importance of openly and safely acknowledging the effect it had on me. I am unfortunate to have learned this through extreme loss in the form of my best friend.

Alek’s life is not defined by suicide; he deserves to be remembered as the goofy, selfless and loving brother and human he was. Contrary to stereotypes surrounding suicide, Alek is not selfish for ending his extreme suffering that went unsaid and unheard. While it is often difficult for people to ask me about my brother, it is not hard for me to talk about him or how he died.

My brother, Alek, ended his life, and I am not ashamed to say that.

The pity that comes with the loss of a loved one to suicide makes the need for ending the mental illness stigma glaringly obvious. I immediately see the regret in people’s eyes for asking how my brother died. Few immediately place concern on the fact that I was only a 10-year old girl as they do when asking about my aunt who I watched die from cancer two years later.

The ‘suicide pity’ makes me cognizant of the immense progress that still needs to be made around the topics of mental health and suicide prevention.

Sadly, it is not shocking for a teenage boy, or any male, to die by suicide. So, the shock in people’s reactions proves how much more this really needs to be integrated into normal conversations.

I firmly believe if mental health and suicide prevention were a normal conversation in households, taking place without judgment or blame, crippling illnesses could be openly discussed to aid in the person’s healing journey. With honest, safe and comforting support, loved ones can begin working together to seek professional help and implement change, potentially saving many from suicide, self-harm and addiction.

Mental health is not an easy topic to discuss, and it is not something that starts overnight. But I try my best to lead by example, so that maybe others can too:

- To open dialogue that I see a therapist, and it is not shameful, I joke with friends about what I’m going to “bring up at therapy.”
- To garner understanding from professors and work associates, I am open with them when in need of time and space to address challenging situations that weigh heavy on my mental illness, just as I would if I had a physical illness.
- To normalize the routine that supports my mental well-being, I am honest with friends when I have to pick up medications or attend a psychiatrist or therapy appointment.
- To encourage others not to downplay their own struggles by saying they are “just overwhelmed,” I emphasize that suffering is suffering whether minor or severe; it may be different for each person, but it is valid and real and should be seriously addressed. And just because I understand my struggles doesn’t mean others should dismiss their own because “compared to you, it’s probably nothing.”



The Feller Family in 2010 (left to right): Kaitlin, Alek, Kyle, Karen, Emma and John

My experience with mental illness and being professionally diagnosed doesn’t make my struggles any worse than yours; it just means that I’m able to identify *why* I’m struggling and how to use healthy coping skills learned in therapy. I *always* say that I have tools in the form of medications, supportive family and friends, access to therapy and confidence in talking about mental health. It is my hope that others struggling may one day feel the same.

In addition, I have struggled with chronic pain for seven years. I was told by doctors time and time again that my pain “can’t be that bad,” “you don’t need medicine, take some ibuprofen,” “it’s not possible to have such pain at your age” and “your pain is in your head.” From the ages of 14 to 21, in my heart, I believed there was no hope for an end to my physical pain. After multiple injections and two back surgeries, I am nearly pain-free.

Today, even when I feel hopeless, I have the resources to keep me hopeful. I am extremely fortunate to have a father who is a doctor and never gave up fighting for me, and a mother who always listened to and believed me.

I tell my story and experiences not for pity, but in the hope that someone learns they are not alone and that anyone can help break the stigma. Be the person who is consistently open and honest about their mental health. Teach by example. Try to be comfortable and confident expressing your struggles with mental health. Have the everyday, easy-going mental health conversations, so that the hard conversations have the space and comfort to be spoken and heard.

Be the open and understanding person you wish others were with you. Do not be ashamed of your mental health journey, and certainly *never* compare it to another’s; it is *your* life and journey, no one else’s.

Tell people when you’re proud of yourself, because some days your best may be simply taking a shower, while other days it could be securing your dream job. You deserve to be proud of yourself. Take every win you can and shout it from the rooftop, because this society desperately needs to learn that a person’s best is almost wholly dependent upon their mental health.

Spread more understanding, patience, kindness - and especially LOVE - in this world. You never know who may need it.

Emma Feller of Palm Desert is a student at Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, and a summer intern with Desert Health and can be reached at emmaefeller@gmail.com. If you or a loved one are struggling and need immediate assistance, dial 988 for the suicide and crisis lifeline.



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Why is Vitamin D so Important?

By Pam Gossman, DNP, APN, BC-FNP, CPHQ

Vitamin D is often called the “sunshine vitamin” because it is produced in our bodies when we soak up some rays. But did you know that vitamin D plays a crucial role in keeping our bodies healthy and functioning optimally? Let's delve into the importance of vitamin D and why it's essential for your health and well-being.

Vitamin D is a unique vitamin that functions like a hormone in the body. When sunlight hits our skin, it triggers a process to produce vitamin D naturally. This incredible vitamin supports numerous bodily functions and helps maintain our health in various ways:

Strengthens bones and teeth. Vitamin D works in tandem with calcium and phosphorus to promote healthy bone growth and maintenance. It helps our bodies absorb calcium which is vital for strong bones and teeth. An adequate intake of vitamin D helps reduce the risk of developing conditions like osteoporosis.

Supports the immune system. A strong immune system plays a crucial role in fighting off infections and keeping us healthy. Vitamin D enhances the immune system by activating immune cells and increasing the production of antimicrobial peptides helping protect us from common illnesses like the cold and flu.

Acts as a mood booster. Have you ever noticed feeling happier and more energetic after spending time in the sun? Studies suggest a link between vitamin D deficiency and mood disorders such as depression and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Getting enough vitamin D may help improve mood and combat feelings of sadness or low energy.

Contributes to heart health. Research has found a connection between vitamin D deficiency and an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases. It helps regulate blood pressure, supports blood vessel health and reduces inflammation, which all contribute to maintaining a healthy heart.

Enhances brain function. Vitamin D receptors are present in areas of the brain involved in memory and cognitive function. Some studies suggest that maintaining adequate vitamin D levels may help protect against age-related cognitive decline and reduce the risk of conditions like Alzheimer's disease. It's never too early to start prioritizing your brain health!

Improves muscle strength and balance. Vitamin D plays a role in muscle health and function. It helps maintain muscle strength, coordination and balance, reducing the risk of falls and fractures, particularly in older adults. By ensuring sufficient vitamin D levels, you can support your musculoskeletal system and maintain an active lifestyle.

How do you get your daily dose? Now that we understand the importance of vitamin D, let's explore how we can ensure an adequate intake. While sunlight is an excellent natural source, certain factors can hinder its production, such as living in regions with limited sunlight, having darker skin or using sunscreen. Fortunately, there are other ways to obtain this essential vitamin:

Dietary sources. Increasing vitamin D-rich foods help increase your intake. Some excellent sources include fatty fish like salmon and mackerel, egg yolks, dairy and plant-based milks fortified with vitamin D and certain mushrooms.

Supplements. If you struggle to get enough vitamin D through sunlight and food alone, supplements can be an effective solution. Consult with a health care professional to determine the appropriate dosage for your specific needs. They can assess your vitamin D levels and recommend a supplement that suits you best.

Continued on page 24

We have some brilliant long-term plans for valley health care.

And the future looks very bright.

At Eisenhower Health, we have a clear vision of what residents want and need in health care over the next few years. We know because we ask for input from patients, caregivers, and our community. In fact, the Community Health Needs Assessment conducted every three years helps us prioritize projects and shapes our plans. The Coachella Valley population is growing, so we're training more than 100 new doctors in our Graduate Medical Education program — in primary care, emergency medicine, and more. We earned accreditation as a Geriatric Emergency Department to deliver specialized care for older patients, and we are now designated as a Level IV Trauma Center. We're also adding state-of-the-art technology — we now have 13 robotic surgery systems! So, while nothing can outshine the desert sun, we're doing all we can to provide dazzling care for patients of Eisenhower Health.

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Be the Author of Your Own Story

By Susan Murphy, PhD

You may have heard the statement “everyone has a book in them.” *The Wall Street Journal* found that 80% of the population plans to write one someday.

Have you thought of writing a book? If so, there are several important reasons to write that book:

- Increases your credibility and position as a thought-leader
- Helps you market your products and services
- Acts as a written legacy
- Creates personal satisfaction
- Can generate prestige
- Becomes a gift you can give to clients as a thank you or introduction
- May lead to speaking engagements and sometimes money

So, what’s my story about becoming an author? The fact that I’m an author is still a surprise to me. I didn’t mean to be an author! In fact, when I was 15, I wrote a composition for my class about “raindrops” and called raindrops “petite bundles of H2O.” My whole class laughed at me. The nuns never forgot that description! It was even mentioned in my senior yearbook.

Yet, today I’ve written 12 books and am working on two more. All these books were written because there was a need for the information, and I felt compelled to write them. Before writing each book, I have felt haunted. One of my co-authors, Pat Heim, PhD, describes me as “relentless.”

My first book was written over 30 years ago. I was teaching in the MBA program at University of San Francisco (USF) and the course was “Quantitative Decision Making.” It was filled with statistics and mathematics - the textbook was 1,000 pages! So, for the benefit of my students, I re-wrote the course book to 125 pages. USF asked to publish the book for all students who took that tough course.

I wrote *In the Company of Women* because I wanted to understand women’s relationships. It didn’t make sense that women could be best friends or worst enemies. Men are often not as intense about relationships as women. We found that 95% of women have been sabotaged by another woman at least once in their career. It became a best seller, and we were on *Good Morning America* and featured in *Time* magazine. Our funny working title was *From Catfights to Colleagues*. Once again there was a need for the information, and I felt compelled to write it.



“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you.” - Maya Angelou

Another book was about leadership. There are over 10,000 leadership books published every year, and I felt compelled to write one that included every aspect of leadership - 23 chapters. Entitled *Maximizing Performance Management*, the book is used at both Harvard Medical School and Stanford University. Recently my publisher asked me to write the third edition! Again, there was a need for the information, and I felt compelled to write it.

I believe everyone wants to impact other people in a positive way. I love to mentor people, and writing a book is a vehicle to mentor others through your writing.

Here are some helpful tips for writing your book:

- Just start writing! Some authors say there is no such thing as writing, only re-writing!
- Consider joining other authors and have each write a chapter. Twelve is a good number. *Chicken Soup for the Soul* is a super example. This is becoming a popular way to get published as a best-selling author. Then when you launch your book, you’ll have your network along with the network of all other authors.
- There are lots of ways to warm up your writing such as articles, blogs, LinkedIn. On my website, I have many published articles written for *Forbes*, *Desert Health News*, *Journal of Public Health* and others that may help provide ideas (www.drSusanMurphy.com).
- Launch on Amazon, the world’s bookstore! Know that for book sales, the first 48-72 hours are important for the Amazon algorithm. Add Barnes & Nobles and other sites.
- Learn from others. Consider joining organizations like Palm Springs Writers Guild; listen to podcasts.
- Self-publish. Contract with people from FiveRR and Upworks for cost-effective formatting, graphics and editing, then post on sale sites.
- If you want to document your childhood for future generations, try “Storyworth” which sends you a question every week about your memories then publishes the compilation with optional photos for you.
- Marketing is a challenge. Find your niche.
- Hire an editor - worth their weight in gold!
- Always carry a notepad or dictate ideas into your cell phone. Stay curious!
- Designate a “writing place,” and schedule blocks of time on your calendar for writing.

Maya Angelou wrote, “There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you.” Remember, everyone has a book in them. I can’t wait to read yours! *Dr. Murphy is a best-selling author, business consultant and speaker specializing in relationships, conflict, leadership and goal-achievement. She can be reached at Susan@DrSusanMurphy.com.*



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Wildfires Impact Everyone

Helpful tips for remaining safe

By Sam DiGiovanna

Though most of the Coachella Valley is not in what we consider the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), where brush fires threaten hillside homes, we can still be affected by smoke particles released into the air from those fires. This reminder was recently made very clear with the effects of Canadian wildfires on air quality in New England.

Our desert landscape is also changing, and fire possibilities are growing. Just take a drive throughout the valley or along the 10 freeway near the Morongo pass or the windmills. Areas that used to be mostly sand and desert scape are now full of thick grass and vegetation from recent rains. These areas can easily catch fire and spread to homes and different structures which can actually become the fuel, like vegetation, during a wildfire. Of course, this is even more of a threat with the strong winds we receive year-round in our valley.

Fires that burn to the west of us will also produce smoke and harmful particulate matter which settles in the valley. This matter is the main public health threat during short-term exposure to wildfire smoke, so it's crucial to protect yourself.

Following are helpful tips:

- If you can see or smell smoke, chances are there are hazardous particulate matter in the air, so consider staying inside.
- Close all windows and doors; run your air conditioner if possible.
- Avoid vigorous outdoor and indoor activity.
- When smoke subsides, air out your home to clear any polluted matter that might be trapped inside.
- Those with respiratory difficulties or heart problems, as well as the elderly and young children, should make an extra effort to remain indoors.

If you must go outside, consider wearing an N95 or P100 respirator mask which can effectively help protect against fine particles in smoke (stock up sooner than later!) Paper or surgical masks are not effective in preventing inhalation of smoke.

Remember, a car should only be used to leave an area, not as shelter. If you're in a car, close the windows and doors and run the air conditioner making sure you're circulating the air already in the car and not pulling in new, smoky air.

Fire Chief Sam DiGiovanna is a 35-year fire service veteran currently with the Verdugo Fire Academy training center in Los Angeles. He has lived in the Coachella Valley for over 25 years and can be reached at sdigiovanna@cox.net.



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Dreams to Remember

Could they reflect your deepest wishes?

By Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos

The average person has three to seven dreams per night. Did you know that vivid early morning dreams, the ones you have just before awakening, are the easiest to remember? According to experts, this dream memory happens during the rapid eye movement (REM) stages of sleep, when brain activity increases and is not as deep. This is also the time when hypnopompic (falling asleep) and hypnagogic (upon waking) hallucinations occur.¹

These dreams are referred to as hallucinations because they can be vividly unforgettable, and some aspects can be "quite a wild ride."

Up to 70% of people experience brief but unforgettable psychedelic dream states at least once in their life. They may include 86% visual cues - like flashing lights or sensations of flying or falling - and 8% to 34% auditory, such as hearing voices, names or environmental sounds.¹

In REM sleep, the brain processes our emotions, desires and experiences and organizes them into memories that are a microcosm of our waking world. If you can imagine, experience or desire something or someone, it can become part of a dream message reflecting your wishes.

How can we retrieve those valuable golden nuggets? The acronym DREAM is my five-step tool for dream retrieval and interpretation:

- D**ream journals should be beside your bed within arm's reach.
- R**emain in your sleeping position as you awaken. Excessive movement causes dreams to dissipate like smoke.
- E**lusive dreams can be retrieved by returning to your sleep position to gently pull your dream back into your waking world.
- A**dd memories and emotions to your journal as they unfold.
- M**ood, places, people, colors, sounds, situations and dream words should be explored for meaning.

Our dreams speak to us with signs, symbols, emotions, pictures, smells, voices, numbers and colors. Journaling helps us decipher messages and dream riddles that may address our desires. The most common journal is a notebook; however, you can write, speak or paint your dream because a picture is worth a thousand words.

The next time you awaken from a vivid, early morning dream, use these tools to help discover your hidden golden nuggets. They may hold the answer to your deepest desires. And sometimes, to realize a dream wish, you simply have to write it down and see it. Then you can let it go so it can grow.

So, what's in your dream?

Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos of Rancho Mirage is a dream expert, cancer survivor, author, speaker, TV/radio host/producer and has been featured on Dr. Oz and The Doctors. Her new book *Dreams That Can Save Your Life* is available now. For more information, visit www.KathleenOkeefeKanavos.com.

Reference: 1) <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/23234-hypnagogic-hallucinations>



Setting Boundaries through Cancer and Beyond

By Shay Moraga

Going through cancer is such a personal and intimate choice for everyone, especially how you share your journey with others. Maybe you choose to keep it close to your heart until you can process and express your feelings, thoughts and even fears. After all, you must still live the day-to-day life of family, friends and work while hopefully still finding much-needed time for self-care.

Setting up healthy boundaries to protect your mind, body and spirit is key while going through cancer treatments, as well as in life after cancer. This applies to all those affected by the cancer diagnosis as well.

Boundaries are healthy and should be practiced because they can help you stay in control of your own journey. Those who have never had cancer do not understand the mindset of those who have. So many people want to help, and while they mean well, some words can hurt and confuse, while others can help, uplift and inspire.

As survivors, it is important to identify and understand our boundaries from the very beginning and how we wish to communicate with others when we do share.

When you feel like you have lost control, your mindset is something you can control. So, look within to understand what you wish your mindset to be during and after your diagnosis. Ask yourself: What boundaries do I want to set for myself and in conversations with others about my diagnosis?

Unless someone goes through what you do, they will never get it. So don't wait for their validation. What you are going through is tough; cancer plainly sucks, and your healing is not over when the treatments end. Cancer is traumatic, and only you alone can decide what your healing looks and feels like.

Boundaries are extremely important because without them people may unintentionally overstep and overshare. In an effort to connect with you (and often out of their own fear), they may share that their cousin just underwent cancer treatment, or that their uncle died of the same cancer you had, adding, "how lucky are you?!" not knowing you may already feel what we call 'survivors guilt.' The question can then feel like a punch.

As humans we just want to connect, but when something as fearful as the word cancer comes up, we often don't know what to say. Instead of just listening and letting a loved one know we are there for them, we often blurt out our first thoughts and opinions, impulsively putting the recipient in a hard position to listen to it all.



Setting boundaries with respect and kindness also helps guide friends and family.

Whether in or out of treatment, thoughts of setting boundaries for your own well-being often come with fears of discomfort or guilt. However, setting boundaries is a way of taking back your control and will be one of the healthiest decisions you ever make for your mindset.

Boundaries take practice; the keys are to consider kindness and respect and to set them firmly. Once you set your boundaries, here are some examples of how you can respond to friends and family. "Thank you for your intentions and opinions, but I need to make this decision on my own. Can I count on you to be there for me?" or "I am not comfortable sharing right now, I hope you can understand and still support me."

Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. If you set a boundary with someone, but aren't comfortable with the boundary, it just will not work. You and only you know what is best for your healing process, and that is always perfectly okay. Adjust your boundaries as necessary and be fine with doing so.

Remember, life after cancer is about you, and no one else knows the best way to navigate thoughts, feelings and boundaries better than you.

Shay Moraga, ERYT 500, is a stage 3 triple-negative breast cancer thriver. She is the visionary/ founder of Shay's Warriors - Life After Cancer. To connect, go to www.shayswarriors.org or reach out on Facebook or Instagram.



Identifying boundaries in conversations with others can help your cancer journey.



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The Importance of a Good Cry

By Amy Austin, PSYD, LMFT

I don't know about you, but I can cry watching a cute TikTok clip. But if people are around, I've noticed that I try to keep my emotions in check. Why do I hold back? Why not experience the agony and the ecstasy of shedding tears and having a good old-fashioned ugly-faced cry? With a whole host of mental health challenges plaguing so many today, is crying a helpful tool? Does expressing pent-up emotions have value? The answer is wholeheartedly "YES!"

Some children are raised hearing, "you want me to give you something to cry about?" or, "little boys don't cry," with many internalizing the message that it's not okay to talk, share or feel. The end result? Adults not knowing what to do with their emotions, not letting themselves have a safe place to experience being vulnerable, believing that crying is unbecoming and makes one look weak.

I believe it is crucial that any loss is acknowledged and mourned before we are able to pick up the pieces and find reasons to move forward and rejoice.

In Rabbi Maurice Lamm's book, *The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning*, he describes a ritual of tearing an article of clothing at the burial service of a loved one. The act of the ripping can gently encourage the mourner to openly weep, allowing a flood of tears to emerge.

Broken heart syndrome or stress-induced cardiomyopathy (also known as takotsubo syndrome), typically occurs after a physically or emotionally traumatic event such as the loss of a loved one, divorce, car accidents, bad fights or near-drowning experiences. A good heart-to-heart with someone you trust might just be what the doctor ordered.

Motivational speaker, spiritual healer and best-selling author Iyanla Vanzant is a survivor of abuse, neglect and abandonment. One phrase that has stuck with me through the years is, "I did that, but I am not that," allowing an individual to grieve, cry it out and take that first step into the next chapter of life. The pain of the past does not have to define one's reality. We can heal our wounds and breathe in all the richness that life has to offer.

I am ending this article with Vanzant's words from her book, *Yesterday I Cried*:

Yesterday, I cried for the woman that I wanted to be. Today, I cry in celebration of her birth. Yesterday, I cried for the little girl in me who was not loved or wanted. Today, I cry as she dances around my heart in celebration of herself. I pray that your yesterday tears be wiped, that you will find the courage to celebrate yourself and the lessons you have lived through, grown through, and learned through. The lessons that have brought you to a deeper realization of yourself, of the child within you...

And of the adult self that is searching for - and ultimately living in - your authentic self.

Yesterday's tears are a sign of renewal and hope. My advice on what to do with today's tears? Just go with the flow.

Dr. Amy Austin is a licensed marriage and family therapist (MFC# 41252) and doctor of clinical psychology in Rancho Mirage. Dr. Amy can be reached at (760) 774.0047.

Work-related Pain and Injuries

By Luke Gentry, DPT, OCS

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, many of us spend long hours at computers, often sacrificing our well-being for the demands of our jobs. However, neglecting our physical health can have serious consequences, leading to discomfort, pain and injury.

Cervicogenic headaches, neck pain, thoracic pain, low back pain and carpal tunnel syndrome are common work-related injuries that impair productivity and quality of life. Sitting for extended periods of time, coupled with poor posture and inadequate understanding of biomechanics, can lead to aches and pain, which if left unaddressed can become severe.

Unraveling the mystery of sitting pain. It's crucial to comprehend why sitting can become painful over time. The weight of gravity, muscle strain and poor circulation can contribute to discomfort and pain. However, the primary culprit is often poor posture and a lack of understanding about proper body mechanics. Ignoring these fundamentals can result in long-term damage to our musculoskeletal system.

The dangers of "text neck." One prevalent consequence of poor posture is the development of upper cross syndrome, commonly known as text neck. This condition is characterized by weak neck flexors, tight pectoral muscle, and weak rhomboids and serratus anterior. Text neck can lead to spinal wear-and-tear, degeneration and even the need for surgical intervention. Maintaining a neutral spinal alignment is vital in preventing such issues.

Essential tips for proper sitting posture. Adopting and maintaining proper sitting posture is crucial. Here are some guidelines:

- Use a proper ergonomic desk chair that can be adjusted to your body.
- Distribute your weight evenly on your buttocks.
- Sit with your buttocks all the way back in the chair and lean your back against the backrest.
- Ensure your spine is in a neutral alignment.
- Feet should rest on the ground or on a supported surface.

- Draw your shoulder blades down and back.

- Tuck your chin, aligning your forehead and chin, so you are looking at the top line of the computer (the www line).

- Make sure the arms are adequately supported by armrests.

- The hands on the keyboard or mouse should be at the same horizontal level as the elbows.

The power of taking breaks. Incorporating regular breaks into your work routine make a significant difference. Recommended consulting break times are 2.5 minutes for every 30 minutes of sitting or 5 minutes for every 60 minutes. For short breaks, go to the bathroom, grab a healthy bite to eat in the break room, drink water. For longer breaks, take a walk, visit the gym or climb stairs.

Embracing workplace wellness involves a holistic approach to maintaining a healthy work environment by consistently practicing good posture, having an ergonomically suited workstation, and incorporating exercise and frequent breaks to alleviate strain and promote circulation. If after taking these steps, the pain persists for more than a week, hampers daily activities or causes numbness or tingling in the upper or lower extremities, consider consulting a physical therapist. In California, direct access to physical therapy is available without a referral from a medical doctor.

Prioritizing workplace wellness is essential for maintaining a healthy, productive workforce. By understanding the impact of work-related injuries, adopting proper posture, taking regular breaks and seeking professional help when needed, we can prevent pain injury and foster a positive work environment. Remember, a healthy body leads to a healthier work-life balance and ultimately benefits both individuals and organizations alike.

Luke Gentry is a doctor of physical therapy with Movement for Life and can be reached at (760) 347.6195 (Indio) or (760) 202.0368 (Cathedral City). www.movementforlife.com/desert.

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Craniosacral Therapy: Listening to the Fascia

By Delaney Quick, ND

Unlike bodywork practices such as massage, chiropractic or Rolfing, craniosacral therapy (CST) applies very gentle pressure to effect change on the system. The pressure used is similar to the weight of a penny or a feather on the back of your hand. Patients who have not experienced craniosacral sessions often wonder how CST can effect local and systemic change with such a light touch on the body. Part of the answer lies in the mechanics of the fascial system of the body.

Most people know that fascia runs through our muscles in a web-like structure and that tension in the fascia can cause muscle tightness. What is less commonly discussed is that fascia actually runs throughout our entire body as a systemic structure continuous with muscle, tendons, ligaments, bones and organs. Zooming in to the microscopic level, it has been shown that the fascia is actually linked to structures inside our cells via connection to the cytoskeleton which is responsible for holding cell components in place and allowing for intracellular communication and nutrient disbursement.

This complex structure is responsible for a lot more than just holding our muscles and organs in place. Rather than a single strand of webbing, fascia is actually a double layer membrane system with fluid in between. This arrangement creates incredible strength while allowing adjacent structures to glide freely. The system serves as a pump and distributes fluid and nutrients throughout the body. It is also a living record of the influences that have been exerted on it, which touches on why tension associated with emotional responses can create holding patterns in the body.

Chronic imbalance in the system can be caused from muscle tension, emotional holding patterns, physical injury and infections. These disturbances cause restrictions to the fascia and disrupt its integral systemic communication network. To the patient, these restrictions can present as pain, disease and disorder in the body.

So, where does craniosacral therapy come in? As a therapy located somewhere in between mechanical body work (i.e. massage) and energy work (i.e. reiki), a CST practitioner can utilize the systemic communication network of the fascial system to identify restrictions. By listening to the fascial system and bringing awareness to restrictions, a CST practitioner works to make the patient's own body aware of disconnect. As awareness is spotlighted, the body can unwind and release on its own terms. In this way, CST is one of the most gentle and safe bodywork practices available.

Removing restrictions in the fascia can restore flow to the nervous, cardiovascular and lymphatic systems and results in a diverse range of positive effects on body physiology. Patients can expect to feel relaxed after a session as stress and anxiety melt away.

Dr. Delaney Quick is a primary care naturopathic doctor at Live Well Clinic in La Quinta which offers B vitamin injections, IV nutrients and functional lab testing for a personalized health plan. For more information, call (760) 771.5970 or visit www.livewellclinic.org.

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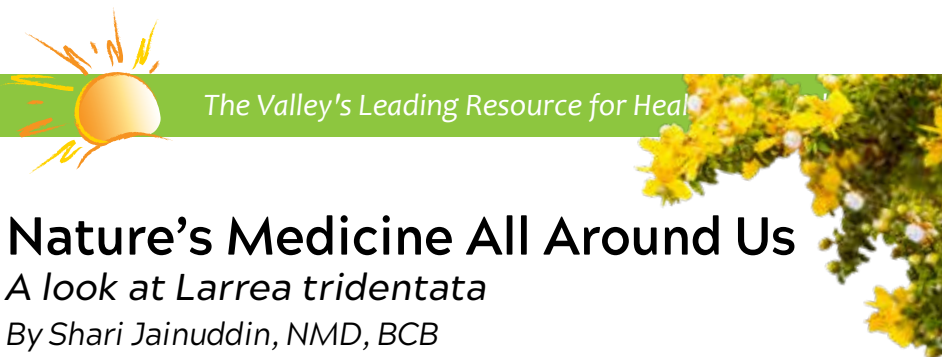
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Nature's Medicine All Around Us

A look at *Larrea tridentata*

By Shari Jainuddin, NMD, BCB

As you drive around the outskirts of the Coachella Valley and view the desert landscape, you will see one of the most resilient, oldest medicinal plants on earth. Native to Southwestern United States and northern Mexico, *Larrea tridentata*, commonly known as creosote bush and greasewood, covers this arid ground in almost a perfectly spaced pattern. It provides shelter for the desert tortoise, kangaroo rats, birds, and is a food source for jackrabbits, amphibians and reptiles. This woody shrub can be several meters high and similar in diameter. It has small leaves, and in the spring, produces small yellow flowers and subsequently seeds in early summer. The seeds are covered in trichomes that make them look like little snowballs. After a rain, their strong scent is quite unique. Rubbing a few leaves between your fingers will give you a fresh burst of their scent, which I liken to a rubber smell.

It also is host to the *Tachardiella larreae*, an insect that makes and deposits lac, which can be compared to wax sealant, on its stems. When heated, it is pliable and hardens when cooled. Native populations have used lac to seal and line food containers.¹

The root system of the creosote bush is dynamic, sprouting both vertical roots downward and radial roots horizontally, contributing to its ability to last up to two years without rain. The reproduction of the plant is not completely understood. It produces both seeds and clones and grows at an extremely slow rate. One individual creosote bush can produce large, ring-shaped clones, which can become several thousand years old.⁷ One clone located in the Mohave desert is estimated to be 12,000 years old and rightly named the King Clone, putting it among the oldest living organisms on Earth.³

The creosote bush has been a valuable medicinal plant for native desert populations. There are varying methods of preparations, and uses are broad spectrum. Highlights of its historical medicinal application include urinary tract infections, respiratory tract infection including bronchitis and the common cold, arthritis, rheumatism and muscle pain, diabetes, digestive disorders and viruses, including venereal diseases, and chicken pox.^{2,4,5,6}

With the rise of antibiotic resistant organisms, science has refocused back to researching plant medicine for more insight (most of our modern pharmaceuticals were/are synthetically designed after what was thought to be the active component of a medicinal plant). Advanced research of the creosote bush supports antibiotic activity against Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and at a lower concentration than tetracycline.² Other compounds of the plant have been researched for antiviral (including HIV and herpes), antimicrobial, antioxidant and antitumorogenic properties.^{2,4,5}

Plants can pack a lot of power and should always be respected. As with most substances, improper use can be toxic. My hope is that the next time you see this ancient plant across our landscape, you will see it in new light of wonderment and respect for all it provides and all we have yet to learn.

Dr. Shari Jainuddin is a naturopathic primary care doctor at One Life Naturopathic and also offers biofeedback training and craniosacral therapy. This article is intended to be informative and raise appreciation of the medicine that surrounds us and is not provided as medical advice. For more information, call (442) 256.5963 or visit www.onelifenaturopathic.org.

References available upon request.



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Living Wellness

with Jennifer Di Francesco



Working From the Inside Out

Since early adolescence we have been primed to focus on our physical appearance. The world identifies who we are through our coiffed exterior presentation, and we spend a lot of time and money polishing the image others see.

Imagine a world in which the interpersonal work to which we dedicate time is met with society's deepest bow of adoration. The benefit of introspective work allows for deeper understanding of ourselves and then radiates out to others with whom we come in contact.

Self-care is marketed everywhere, and we can become sidetracked into imagining it is a bubble bath or necessary pedicure. But as we grow and evolve, many of us search for more radical self-care, deeper intentional work to develop personal emotional sovereignty. This experience can lead to a deeper sense of self-discovery, self-acceptance and personal empowerment.

In my own search, I discovered SoulCollage, a self-care tool created in the '90s by therapist Seena Frost. I found it to be a beautiful gift to help people explore the multi-faceted parts of their being.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. When we take time to sit quietly and curate photographic and artistic images that speak to us, we can create personal collages that embody individualized energy. The inner wisdom is brought to light when we allow this card to speak to us. We ask a question of the card, "Who are you?" We start the dialogue by looking deep into the nuance of the card and listening. With the preface to the answer, "I am one who..."; we write down all the answers that come to us.

This is where we begin. It is an insightful prompt for journaling or collaborating with another like-minded partner in dialogue. A common experience is one of astonishment and fascination as to where the "I am one who..." messages originated; it is as if the card unlocked something stored away in the soul.

We each have many parts to ourselves, and our inner tapestry has many nuances. SoulCollage touches upon the personal story of who we are and our larger story of why we are here. The collage cards we create can whisper to our soul and help point us to our future. As we explore the deep wisdom of life's precious resources, we are gifted with enough stardust to light the world.

Jennifer Di Francesco is a wellness explorer and certified SoulCollage facilitator and can be reached at coachellabellaboho@gmail.com. For more information, visit www.coachellabellaboho.com.



Susie Heimstra of Palm Desert contemplates and creates her personal photo collage.

Quiet the Mind and Find Inner Peace

By Dipika Patel, CHHC

We persistently find answers to what we are seeking, and there will always be others looking for the same answers. We will continue to find conversations and thoughts of turbulence if we search for them. If we are looking for mayhem, we will find mayhem. If we are looking for peace, we will find peace. Is this simply the Law of Attraction?

I believe for many of us, this can be a struggle. We have so many things to take care of; in some cases, this may be managing the superficial lifestyle of consumption, keeping up with the Joneses, or distracting ourselves by remaining "busy," as it is too painful to slow down and take care of our own deep mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

The important things in life such as health, living with purpose and being of service are difficult to do when we haven't cultivated inner peace. Volatile thoughts may keep you living in fear of the truth; the truth of who and what you are. Thus, the pressures and urgencies of life take precedence, leaving us running and feeling empty.

The practice of cultivating peace happens over time; it is not a one hit wonder. Working with people from all walks of life, I find that the desire for inner peace comes from the place of loving who you are, who you are becoming and who you want to be. It is all on the same plane. Clarity in who you want to be will help support you in cultivating peace for who you are currently. Simultaneously reflecting on who you have been will help bring forth love, compassion and understanding from the inside. You may not be perfect, but you, my friend, still deserve to live a life of peace.

Devoting yourself to the art and science of truly getting to know your whole self, not simply accepting the parts you like and discarding or avoiding the other parts, is a process of cultivation, growth and evolution.

Keep taking each small step towards self-awareness and self-care that is moving you forward and incrementally add in little changes that need to be made. This is a daily practice which can lead to great and enduring change from the inside out, and help you find your inner peace.

"If you are willing to look at another person's behavior towards you as a reflection of the state of their relationship with themselves, rather than a statement about your value as a person, then you will, over a period of time, cease to react at all."
– Yogi BhaJan

Dipika is a crossroads specialist and holistic health and lifestyle coach who empowers her clients to activate a balanced lifestyle of the mind, body and soul. She can be reached at health@LoveYourLifeHealthy.com or www.loveyourlifehealthy.com.



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The Transformative Power of Yoga

The practice beyond poses

By Jennifer Yockey

In today's fast-paced and demanding world, finding true health and well-being can seem like an elusive quest. However, there is a practice that has the potential to transform lives, heal the body and mind, and ignite the spirit. That practice is yoga.

As a yoga teacher, holistic life coach, athlete and someone in recovery from substance use disorder (SUD), I have personally witnessed and experienced the profound benefits of yoga. Below are a few observations and reasons that practicing yoga is not just a trend, but a powerful tool for cultivating lasting health and wellness.

Healing the Body

The Bhagavad Gita Hindu scripture quotes, "Yoga is the journey of the self, through the self, to the self." Yoga is a holistic practice that nurtures the body from the inside out. Through a combination of movements, breath work and mindful awareness, yoga supports physical healing. It improves circulation, enhances flexibility and strengthens muscles. Yoga can help repair the body's systems, reduce cravings and restore overall vitality.

Calming the Mind

"The day you decide you are more interested in being aware of your thoughts than you are in the thoughts themselves, that is the day you will find your way out." - Stephen Cope, psychotherapist, yogi, author

One of the greatest challenges in today's hectic world is finding mental peace and serenity. Yoga offers a sanctuary for the mind through breath-focused practices and meditation. The practice of mindfulness cultivates a calm and focused state of mind, reducing anxiety and stress. By quieting the mental chatter, yoga can help to develop greater self-awareness and emotional balance.

Embracing Self-Discovery

"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom." - Aristotle, Greek philosopher

Yoga provides a pathway to self-discovery and self-acceptance. Through the exploration postures, we can learn to listen to our bodies, respect our limitations and appreciate our unique strengths. Yoga teaches us that we are more than our past mistakes or struggles; it allows us to connect with our true essence and discover our inner resilience and potential.

Building Resilience

"When we learn how to become resilient, we learn how to embrace the beautifully broad spectrum of the human experience." - Jaeda Dewart, artist, writer, poet

Life requires resilience and the ability to navigate challenges with grace and clarity. Yoga cultivates resilience by teaching us to stay present, breathe through discomfort and find inner strength during difficult moments. Through challenging poses, we learn to overcome physical and mental barriers, cultivating a sense of resilience that translates into all areas of life.

Nurturing Connection

"We are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected in the deep." - William James, psychologist

Yoga provides an opportunity to build and nurture healthy connections. Practicing yoga in a supportive community setting offers a sense of belonging, acceptance and shared experiences. This sense of connection can be a powerful experience fostering a supportive network and creating a safe space for healing.

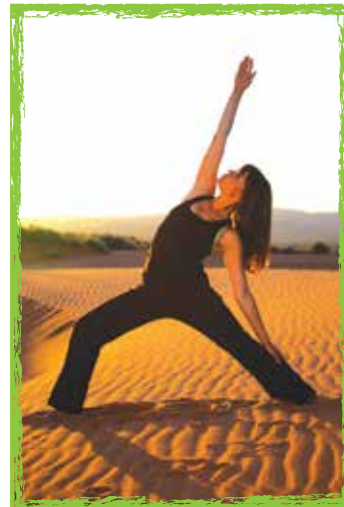
Cultivating Mindfulness in Daily Life

"The little things? The little moments? They aren't little." - Jon Kabat-Zinn, professor emeritus of medicine

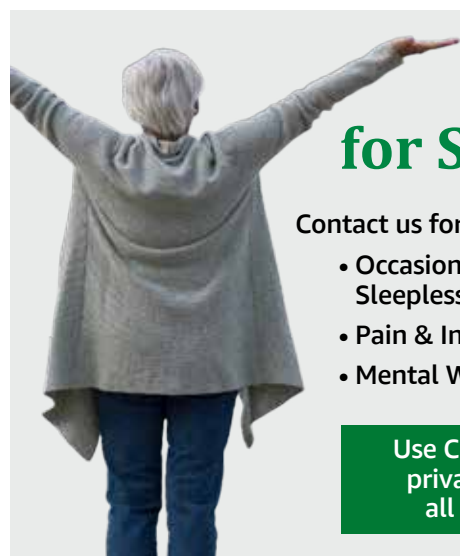
Yoga is not limited to the mat; it is a way of life. The principles and philosophies of yoga can be integrated into daily routines, fostering a mindful and balanced approach to life. By practicing self-care, conscious decision-making and living in alignment with one's values, we can enhance our overall well-being.

Yoga is a transformative practice that offers us a path to lasting health and wellness. It can heal the body, calm the mind and nurture the spirit. Through self-discovery, resilience-building and the power of community, yoga is a practice that supports all areas of life. Stepping on to the mat becomes an anchor, guiding us toward a life of holistic wellness and connection.

Jennifer Yockey is owner of Gather Yoga & Wellness which offers classes for everyBODY. She is an E-RYT yoga/meditation teacher and wellness coach and can be reached at (760) 219.7953, jennifer@gatherlaquinta.com. For more information visit www.gatherlaquinta.com.



Poses are not the most important part of a yoga practice.



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HIDDEN GEMS OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS

BY DESERT HEALTH





HIDDEN GEMS OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS

A renaissance is taking place in the city of Desert Hot Springs (DHS). Thermal therapies are emerging as a global wellness trend, and some of the most therapeutic waters in the world are found right here. As savvy investors embrace the many opportunities that exist in DHS, a variety of renovated retreats are being introduced, each with its own unique personality. A beautification project for the Miracle Hill spa zone is also underway to enhance the landscape surrounding these hidden gems.

While guests hail from all over the world, few in the Coachella Valley have experienced these magical springs. This special insert presents a few of our favorites, encouraging valley residents and tourists alike to visit time and again. Whether for a day of rejuvenation, a staycation escape or a complete reset, we invite you to come and explore.

What's in the water? The therapeutic benefits of DHS's mineral springs were first assessed in 1937. Immersing in the high concentration of earth's essential minerals creates a hydrostatic pressure inducing blood flow and nourishing joints, organs and every body part. Minerals are absorbed through skin, replenishing magnesium (nourishing brain, nervous system, heart and bones), calcium (healthy bones and teeth), sulfate (natural pain reliever; healthy skin, hair and nails), lithium (elevates mood and a sense of calm), potassium (vital for heart and kidney health), silica (hastens healing, promotes digestion) and more.

Hot springs in desert heat? With fewer people in town, summer is an ideal time to visit. At over 1,000 feet elevation, DHS is usually 10 degrees cooler than the valley floor with a slight warm breeze that enlivens wet skin. Many resorts offer multiple pools with different temperatures along with cold plunges or showers. Azure Palm even has an ice room available to overnight guests.


What to bring? A bathing suit, sunglasses, hat, moisturizer and good book. Each resort featured offers towels for day use and many provide robes; all offer spa services available to book in advance. Azure Palm, The Good House and Miracle Manor offer food and beverages along with beer and wine, while We Care Spa offers liquid nutrition in the form of vegetable juices and supplements for the ultimate reset. Ask about individual policies when making reservations.

While there, we encourage you to live in the moment. Feel the healing energy that surrounds you and let all else go. We hope you enjoy, and please share your experience with us at www.DesertHealthNews.com.

Cover photos: Azure Palm's reflexology walk (photo by Azure Palm); We Care Spa's mineralizing mud wrap (photo by We Care Spa); The Good House (photo by Michelle Steadman)

Sources (page 1 and above): 1) www.dhshistorysociety.org/our-town; 2) <http://energyvortex.net/>; 3) Excerpt from John J. Hunt's Waters of Comfort, 1993; 4) www.sclhealth.org/blog/2020/02/do-hot-springs-really-have-healing-powers

AZURE PALM HOT SPRINGS RESORT & DAY SPA OASIS



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Soak in the healing mineral water of the desert's only natural hot spring oasis.

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760.251.2000 • Desert Hot Springs
azurepalmhotsprings.com

AZURE PALM HOT SPRINGS

Walking through the doors of Azure Palm, the tone is set for the natural elegance you have come to enjoy. Sophisticated, earthly décor dons the walls and forms the furniture. Soft, neutral colors invite calm while glass windows before you display an outdoor courtyard overlooking southern California's largest mineral pool and the resort's one-acre natural oasis. Relax. You are here.

Azure is the latest creation by Managing Partner Maria Lease, who has been investing in DHS for over 20 years. She renovated and ran The Spring before setting her sites on this larger property to offer more people greater wellness. Her impeccable taste, attention to detail and knowledge of true health are on display. The natural décor extends to the 40 guest rooms, some with in-room mineral soaking tubs, the Himalayan salt and ice rooms, and the Azure Palm Café open to the public (7a-7p) offering a variety of healthy cuisine. Spa services including a complete line of wraps, scrubs and facials are also available.

Wander down to the beautiful oasis to explore an array of niches to rest, relax and immerse in the waters. Enjoy an outdoor sauna followed by a cool bucket plunge or a stroll through the reflexology walk. Through September 15, overnight guests will enjoy "Midnight at the Oasis" featuring extended hours with events and activities planned (seasonal rates start at \$189 and include access to the soothing salt and refreshing ice rooms).

Lease also created a program to give back to the city of DHS. Each guest volunteers \$1 towards "Inspiring Young Minds" which will create cultural experiences for area youth. "Many children in this community don't get exposure to the arts and experiences outside of DHS," she says with hopes that other resorts will take part in the new program. She believes this can change a child's perspective and help enhance the future of DHS.

LOCALS WILL LOVE: The Oasis Day Pass (8a - 8p) offering access to all pools and mineral baths, the one-acre oasis, two saunas, cold bucket plunge and reflexology walk: \$62 weekend/ \$56 weekday; full experience including robe and slippers: \$74 weekend/ \$68 weekday. Locals Card offers a greater discount with each visit and the sixth visit free. Special summer rates on accommodations.

(760) 251.2000
www.AzurePalmHotSprings.com

Finely appointed rooms contain many natural elements.

Simply appointed rooms are inspired by nature and mineral soaking tubs are available to all guests. (Photos by Michelle Steadman)

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One-acre oasis offers a variety of mineral water features to explore.



Hotel guests can enjoy the Himalayan salt and ice rooms.



Azure Palm Café presents healthy offerings.



Finely appointed rooms contain many natural elements.

MIRACLE MANOR BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA

On the top of Miracle Hill, you'll find Miracle Manor, one the first mineral spring spas built in 1949. The boutique property was recently purchased and beautifully renovated, retaining classic features while adding cozy comforts to present today's intimate wellness retreat.

Nine modern rooms are simply appointed and inspired by nature. They come together at the communal breakfast table and living room which offers coffee and fresh brewed teas, a snack bar, drinks in a cold case and even vegan date shakes. Healthy meals are available for breakfast (included with accommodations) and lunch at your leisure.

The property boasts some of the most spectacular views in the area along with a flow through mineral pool and hot tub, lounging areas with misters, concrete soaking tubs with twinkle lights, a yoga lawn, full list of spa services and Danielle, their delightful manager and attentive host. Day passes and overnight accommodations are offered along with buyouts for retreats, weddings and events. Sunset dinners under the misters are also planned for summer.

LOCALS WILL LOVE: \$45 Day Pass (summer hours are 8a until sunset) includes \$10 towards spa services or meal. Summer specials include up to 40% off weekday accommodations.

(760) 329.6641 • www.MiracleManor.com



We Care is the crown jewel of our hidden gems. This stunning retreat offers guests the ultimate reset in a natural setting with the largest variety of amenities to “detoxify, revitalize and restore.”

The resort grew from founder Susana Belen’s own self-exploration and earned her the name “Gandhi of GoodHealth.” Through liquid nutrition, mind, body and spiritual classes, spa treatments and hydro colon therapy, We Care has transformed the lives of thousands from all over the world for over 37 years. The lush property has recently gone through its own transformation



The 20-acre resort is designed for relaxation and contemplation.



soaking tubs with dry brushes and signature mineral scrubs and a fridge filled with liquid nutrition to enjoy during your stay.

We Care is now offering day passes which graciously include all amenities beyond accommodations, but it is important to note that whether you are there for a day or a week, everyone is doing a liquid fast; no food is permitted. A variety of 12-14 different shakes, teas, vegetable and supplement juices, along with flavored water, are available at your discretion. Juice bar servers educate you on each drink which is purposely designed to be beneficial for specific body parts. The philosophy is to transfer the 30% of energy standardly used for digestion to cellular repair. Classes on meal prep, gut health, breathwork, yoga, sound healing and more are included, along with a 60-minute massage or facial. Additional services may be added; if you wish to have a colonic, preparation instructions are sent in advance.



All guests receive a gift bag upon arrival.



Luxurious guest rooms meld with nature.



LOCALS WILL LOVE: \$375 day pass (summer hours 7a-9p) includes a 60-minute aromatherapy massage or 60-minute Body Deli facial, access to all facilities, all liquid nutrition and a welcome gift bag. Locals can also take part in multi-day or weekly programs without overnight accommodations.

(855) 396.6244 • www.WeCareSpa.com



The Spring is a lovely little resort with European flare. The French doors of the 11 white-curtained guest rooms line the crystal blue mineral pool. Bougainvillea adorns wooden posts, and lounge chairs take center stage in this whisper-tone property that renders relaxation.



The additional hot tub and cold plunge shower offer a rotating thermal experience. Guests can enjoy a vast array of services from their serene spa which boasts the Phytomer line of all-natural skin care products containing farmed minerals from the sea of France. The spa also features both a Finnish and infrared sauna with chromo therapy.



This whisper-tone property offers a full spa and European flare that renders relaxation.

The resort offers two larger off-property villas which sleep 4-6 and include access to all facilities. Day passes are available or come for a spa service which includes two hours of soak time. Overnight guests receive breakfast. Complimentary cheese and fruit platters are found in the relaxation room along with wine and champagne for purchase. Keep in mind that guests must adhere to the whisper-tone policy.

LOCALS WILL LOVE: \$100 Day Pass (Sunday through Thursday) includes four hours of soak time plus use of saunas. Overnight stays are discounted 25% in July and 30% in August.

(760) 251.6700 • www.The-Spring.com



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— SANDY C.

“I love that I can take what I learned at We Care back home and it still works in my crazy life. We Care has truly changed my lifestyle, my energy, and my soul.”

— JULIANNE HOUGH

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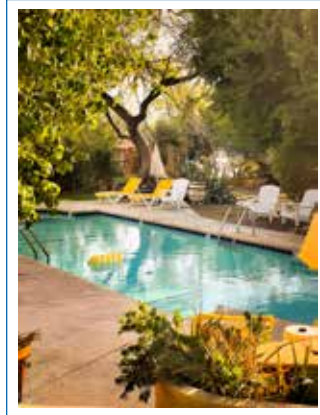


More Information & Day Spa Availability





sets in as soon as you stop and absorb the serene surroundings of this boutique property. Maybe it's the historic feel of mature shade trees that transcend you from desolate desert to plush oasis, or the peaceful faces of relaxing guests, inviting staff and the occasional wagging tail.



Mineral spring waters and organic cuisine welcome wellness.

preparing both healthy and indulgent dishes made to order, with much of their organic produce coming from Coachella's Temalpakh Farm. Sip on a fresh juice with medicinal spices and herbs, or relish in a glass of their house rosé. Overnight guests have 24-hour access to facilities and may cook their own meals on the outdoor stove to enjoy in-room or at the communal table. The property is available for buyouts (perfect for weddings!) and events as well.

LOCALS WILL LOVE: \$60 Day Pass (11a - 5p) including access to pools, sauna, facilities and food, or \$40 Soak Pass offering 2-hours of soaking and a \$10 credit towards food and beverages.

(760) 251.2885 • www.WelcomeToTheGoodHouse.com

Welcome home to The Good House. This quaint, rustic modern retreat offers seven stylish rooms, a mineral spring pool and hot tub, dry sauna, full spa, peaceful grounds with a fire pit and yoga lawn, and an in-house chef serving farm-to-table style meals.

You don't need to enter the waters to feel the magic of The Good House. A special sense

It's as if you've walked into someone's home and can feel the love and care they are extending.

Formerly Hacienda Hot Springs, this beautifully renovated resort is all about inclusion, diversity and community. Co-founder Brian Edson is one of southern California's only Black resort property owners, while Wolfgang Puck-trained Van Stevens is one of the country's few LGBTQ chefs. And yes, well-behaved four-legged friends are welcome.

"All of our guests become part of The Good House family," says Stevens who

prepares both healthy and indulgent dishes made to order, with much of their organic produce coming from Coachella's Temalpakh Farm. Sip on a fresh juice with medicinal spices and herbs, or relish in a glass of their house rosé. Overnight guests have 24-hour access to facilities and may cook their own meals on the outdoor stove to enjoy in-room or at the communal table. The property is available for buyouts (perfect for weddings!) and events as well.

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(760) 251.2885 • www.WelcomeToTheGoodHouse.com



Colorful rooms inspire positive vibes.



Lush grounds transcend and transform. (Photo by Michelle Steadman)

Something for everyone, so go explore!

These are just a few of the many mineral spring retreats found in DHS. Each has its own unique personality, and while we've previewed our favorites here, there is something for everyone - with more on the way.

The important thing is to take in the waters, feel the energy and let the healing begin, so go explore...

For those on a budget, day passes as low as \$10 can be found at the midcentury landmark, **Desert Hot Springs Spa Hotel**, built in 1950, and **Miracle Springs Resort & Spa**, home to local favorite **Capri Italian Restaurant**.

Hope Springs Resort, originally built in 1963, is another midcentury marvel beautifully maintained and recently transformed into a minimalist utopia. With 10 rooms and three pools, this whisper-tone resort welcomes overnight guests and buyouts (no day passes) and attracts a common clientele of "artists and creative people from the entertainment industry."

For a close escape to Casablanca, check out **El Morocco Inn & Spa**, where much of the décor was flown in from the North African mecca. A colorful Palm Springs vibe resides at **The Aqua Soleil Hotel and Mineral Water Spa** whose owners have begun renovations on additional properties in the area and are close to completing the new camper resort on Park Lane.

If you prefer to smoke cannabis, consider **Desert Hot Springs Inn** which has a large outdoor area and is both dog and cannabis friendly. There are those that cater to families, and of course, the beautiful and historic **Two Bunch Palms** which is only open to overnight guests.

It's all about discovery and finding your perfect escape.

"I've lived in the Coachella Valley my entire life and never knew about these boutique resorts and how they cater to healing," said *Desert Health's* Social Media Manager Michelle Steadman on our latest visit. She spent much of her childhood in DHS and recalls playing in local mineral pools, but has just recently rediscovered the waters for wellness.

Please save this special insert so you can explore again and again. A group of entrepreneurs has recently formed the Hoteliers Association of Desert Hot Springs, so we are sure to hear more as the area continues to grow.

Let us know what you discover along the way! Leave your comments by searching "Hidden Gems of Desert Hot Springs" at www.DesertHealthNews.com.



Midcentury minimalist Hope Springs Resort is a whisper-tone property.



Desert Hot Springs Inn is dog and cannabis friendly.

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Azure Palm Hot Springs mineral pool

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Look Up, Lean Back

By Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH

We all look down too much. Our modern culture has us frequently looking down at devices, keyboards, papers and books. However, our neck is designed for us to be looking in the opposite direction. All the muscles in the back of the neck are erector muscles; our hunter-gatherer bodies should be looking forward and up.

Almost all neck pain and arthritis in the back of the neck are a consequence of our world today and the many factors which have us looking down.

The same is true of the lower back. Pain in this area is the most common medical problem for men and women over age 50, and the frequency increases with age. An enormous amount of medical care is devoted to treating low back pain, which is the most frequent cause of disability.

Both our neck and lumbar spine have a convex curvature with erector muscles to support looking up and leaning back. While there is a mismatch between our evolutionary body and our modern lifestyle, problems are avoidable and if caught early enough, very curable.

Robin McKenzie may be the most famous physical therapist of all time. He practiced in New Zealand and early on learned from his patients what worked. He spent over 40 years perfecting what is known today as the



It is recommended to incorporate inverted poses into your exercise regime.

McKenzie Method, exercises designed to counteract all the looking down we tend to do. While he passed away in 2013 at age 82, his work continues at McKenzie institutes all over the world. He is the author of the bestselling books *Treat Your Own Back* and *Treat Your Own Neck*, which have gone through many editions, even after his death.

For clients with back and neck pain, I regularly recommend the McKenzie Method as photos and videos of his simple exercises (similar to those pictured here) are readily available online.

Attention to posture for both the neck and back with frequent “looking up and leaning back” will help keep a person’s neck and back healthy for a long time. Simple breaststroke swimming is also an ideal exercise for neck and low back pain and maintenance.

Dr. Scherger is founder of Restore Health Disease Reversal in Indian Wells, a clinic dedicated to weight loss and reversing chronic medical conditions. To schedule a consultation or for more information, visit www.restorehealth.me or call (760) 898.9663.

Understanding Vertigo

By Austin Orozco, LAc, LMT

Dizziness, or vertigo, is a frequently reported symptom among those seeking medical attention. Patients often describe their symptoms as their body moving in a swaying or rotating motion, the environment around them appearing to do so or both. Vertigo can have a diverse range of causes and presents with varying characteristics. However, certain factors can help narrow down the type of vertigo experienced, including the frequency and duration of attacks, potential triggers and accompanying symptoms.

Types of vertigo. There are several types of vertigo, each with distinct sensations. Rotational vertigo, commonly linked to vestibular neuritis, an inner ear disorder possibly caused by a viral infection, and other disorders, produces a merry-go-round sensation. Postural vertigo, which can give the sensation of being on a boat, may be caused by bilateral vestibulopathy which can be a chronic condition. Finally, some people experience dizziness or lightheadedness without any sense of movement, which is sometimes linked to drug intoxication or use.

Duration of episodes. The duration of vertigo episodes can vary greatly. Some attacks such as vestibular paroxysms, which can occur from compressed nerves, last only a few seconds or minutes; others can persist for hours, as in Meniere’s disease, a buildup of fluid in the inner ear, or vestibular migraine. Persistent episodes lasting for days to weeks can be a symptom of vestibular neuritis. Postural vertigo lasting for a few minutes and up to an hour may be due to brainstem transient ischemic attacks (TIA) and should be taken seriously.

Triggers. Numerous triggers can result in vertigo including rest (vestibular neuritis), walking (bilateral vestibulopathy) or turning your head to the left or right (vestibular paroxysm). Additional common triggers include turning in bed (benign paroxysmal positional vertigo or BPPV), pressure, coughing and exposure to loud tones at specific frequencies (Tullio phenomenon). Certain social or environmental triggers

can also lead to phobic postural vertigo.

Additional symptoms. Several accompanying symptoms may be associated with vertigo. Meniere’s disease can cause intense tinnitus, hearing issues and pressure in the ear. Brainstem issues may cause diplopia, sensory disturbances and paralysis in the arms and legs. Headaches or migraines may be linked to vestibular migraine, brainstem ischemia or hemorrhage.

Vertigo is a complex condition that extends beyond dizziness or a spinning environment. Fortunately, with proper diagnosis and treatment, most cases of vertigo can resolve themselves. However, 20% to 30% of patients may experience vertigo for extended periods.

If prescribed medical therapies are not providing relief, acupuncture may offer an alternative. Chinese medicine considers vertigo to be caused by either an excess or deficiency in the head. Too much pathology in the form of wind, phlegm, qi, blood or yang can disrupt normal function, while not enough of these life forces can also lead to issues. To treat vertigo, it is necessary to maintain balance within the body.

As a licensed acupuncturist, I have successfully helped alleviate vertigo symptoms in patients, and there have been many clinical studies on the treatment. In 2015, a pilot study of over 60 individuals in an emergency room found that acupuncture significantly improved vertigo symptoms compared to the control counterparts. Additionally, a practitioner who treated 50 cases of vertigo with acupuncture reported a success rate of 78% in treating vertebrobasilar ischemic vertigo.

Further research is necessary to fully comprehend the effects of acupuncture on vertigo. However, there is potential for positive outcomes. If you are open to exploring alternative forms of treatment, acupuncture is a safe option to consider.

Agustin Orozco is a licensed acupuncturist with AcQpoint Wellness Center and can be reached at (760) 345.2200 or www.acqpoint.com.

Sources available upon request.



This simple stretch can aid common neck and back pain.

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In a profession that rewards doing, it is so very hard to just be

Continued from page 1

know if that was from curiosity or fear. Like the saying goes, keep your friends close and your enemies closer. Maybe if I worked with death each day, my fear of it would subside. I was drawn to being with suffering because I wanted to fix it.

In palliative care, we care for those who suffer at the most vulnerable and difficult times of their lives. We are expected to provide relief from symptoms and the distress associated with illness. We may not be able to cure, but we should be able to relieve their suffering. Our training tries to give us tools to do this; we are taught communication skills, how to build rapport and how to name emotions. We are taught how to skillfully navigate difficult and emotionally intense conversations with our patients and their families.

But how often are we taught that really, we *cannot* fix the suffering of our patients? I know I had heard that occasionally through my training, but this did not help when I sat with a young man with metastatic cancer who was crying when thinking about how his two-year-old will not remember him, or when I was with the young woman who will not watch her daughter graduate high school.

No matter what I have been told, every part of me wants to fix that suffering. I want to take away that pain, grief, loss, sadness and fear - just like I wanted to do for my mother. I tried setting my mother up with a counselor, with legacy work, with integrative medicine, everything I could think of to fix this intolerable suffering. Similarly with my patients, I offered medications, psychotherapy and mindfulness. I was constantly searching for the missing tool I could use to ease their suffering.

While all these techniques helped to an extent, what I have learned through experience and training in contemplative medicine is that there is no intervention I can offer to take away all the suffering.

The first noble truth in Buddhism is that everyone suffers. For so long I felt that the suffering I witnessed in my patients was what real suffering looked like - the physical suffering of metastatic disease, the emotional suffering of losing a child, the existential suffering of facing death. I often told myself that I did not suffer like this, so I did not suffer. I needed to always be grateful for what I have, for my health, for my profession and for my family.

But through contemplative practice, I was able to see more clearly that all of us suffer; it is an innate human commonality we share. When I sit with my patients who carry such intense sadness, I realize that I suffer too. I suffer when I feel like there is nothing I can do to fix their grief. I suffer when I give all my compassion and emotional energy at work and have none left for my family. I suffer when I fear that I too will end up like my patients, dying too young with unfinished life tasks. I suffer when I feel like what I can do is not enough. Suffering is not a competition, and I no longer compare one suffering to another.

I had often heard that our role in palliative care is to sit with suffering, to bear witness. But it has been so important for me to realize that the suffering in front of me is not mine. I did not cause it, and I cannot fix it.

While I can optimize management of my patients' physical and emotional symptoms, a level of suffering will continue no matter how skillful my communication or how expert I am in the protocol to manage distress. The person in front of me is human, and suffering is a human experience.

This understanding gives me the freedom to sit with and to come alongside the patient - not worrying about the next words I say or what medication I should prescribe - just being present with openness, curiosity and loving kindness.

In a profession that rewards doing, it is so very hard to just be. I still want to do for my patients, and I must have constant reminders that being is OK; being is enough. Authentic, wholehearted being is always what I can bring, regardless of which other medical interventions I may be able to offer.

But just as important is the ability to let this go and not continue to carry others' suffering, as the weight of this is too heavy to bear.

Despite the challenges, working with these patients and their families is a gift. Being with suffering teaches us the preciousness of life. It teaches us about the beauty of relationship and the rawness of emotion. It teaches us that we do have this one precious life and that we must awaken to our full potential; not potential measured by publications or relative value units, but by how well we love and how we show up for others.

The lessons I have learned from my patients are innumerable, and so yes - we chose a profession where we are surrounded by suffering, and yes, it is difficult and sad and complicated, but it is also beautiful, honorable and saturated with meaning.

My mother and my patients have taught me that the process of dying is not easy. Contemplative medicine has taught me that suffering is inevitable. If I had this understanding of suffering when my mother was sick, I would have been different. I would have spent more time being, sitting with her with openness and curiosity. I would have asked more questions about her life and spent more time embracing and honoring who she was, and less time on a mission to stop or fix her suffering. I would have recognized that the suffering I witnessed was hers to carry, and although I could not bear that load for her, I could be right next to her holding her hand along the way.

Deirdre Pachman, MD is a palliative care specialist at the Mayo Clinic and a 2022 Contemplative Medicine Fellowship graduate. For more information on this fellowship program, visit www.zencare.org.



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Adding Life to Your Years and Years to Your Life

By Scott Stoll, MD

"Healing is not just a matter of time, but also opportunity." - Hippocrates

Most of us have grown up in a world where processed foods and fast foods are the norm. Soda and sugary cereals for breakfast, donuts and coffee with cream and sugar at break time, candy bars and bagels in the afternoon and a fast-food meal on the way home. Without a second thought, we eat the way we were raised and programmed by our culture.

The industrialized food system has coded our subconscious with automatic responses and habits that drive daily food choices. Until one day when you wake up, press pause and begin asking the right questions:

- Why am I eating this right now, and where did it come from?
- What does my body actually need to be disease resistant and fully alive?
- Is the sacrifice of my health and vitality worth the short-term pleasure and perceived convenience of processed and fast food?
- What is the comprehensive cost of lost quality of life due to disease, now and in the future?
- Is there a better way to eat that can prevent and reverse common diseases and restore my health?

The global pandemic of chronic, lifestyle disease is not caused by some unknown threat that will take science decades to discover and billions of dollars to develop a novel treatment. It is caused by the industrialized lifestyle and diet. Today, diet-related diseases like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease impact more than two billion people worldwide. According to numerous large studies, an unhealthy diet is the number one cause of death and disability globally.

It has been said that the truth can set you free, and a validated scientific truth is that *the food you choose to eat every day is one of the most powerful forces for comprehensive healing*. The right choices can prevent, suspend - and even reverse - most common lifestyle-related diseases like heart disease and type 2 diabetes; they can dramatically improve your immune system, protect you from infections, improve your mood and memory and enhance your quality of life.

Truthfully, the "cure" is one of the most exciting, energizing lifestyles. It includes full plates and stomachs, abundant food choices, normal body weight, more energy, less pain, more mental clarity, reversal of many of the most common diseases and hope for a brighter future. It is backed by thousands of research studies, and millions of people around the world have stories of life transformation and disease reversal. It is not patented, nor does it require expensive prepared meals or special supplements. *The solution is a full plate of delicious, whole plant-based foods and a lifestyle promoting health.*

Your body's natural state is health. According to research, more than 90% of diseases are caused by outside influences like diet, stress, disrupted sleep, inactivity and toxins that injure cells and deplete body resources. Every bite of unhealthy food, stressful, inactive days and sleepless nights, results in the accumulation of incremental cellular injury, similar to credit card debt that accumulates one swipe at a time. Initially, you may experience early warning signs (like the check engine light on your car) such as fatigue, pain, exhaustion, indigestion, inflammation or constipation that typically precede a measurable, clinical diagnosis. If someone tries to silence the warning signals with medications to reduce symptoms, caffeine to overcome fatigue and food, alcohol or substances to treat stress, they are likely on their way to a major breakdown.

Continued on page 26

Do You Know Your (New) Numbers?

How body composition helps achieve goals

By Marly Paulus

Many of us set an ideal target weight based on what our scale tells us. But, that's only a fraction of the story. Here's how testing your body composition gives you the full story and how to most effectively improve it.

Beyond weight and height, body composition considers your individual muscle, organs, bone, fat, tissue and water. It also provides insight into a person's specific body fat percentage. This is a much better indicator of health risk than body mass index (BMI) which only measures one's weight in relation to height.

To put this into perspective, a 5'10, 200-pound bodybuilder may have 10% body fat, while a 5'10, 200-pound person who leads a sedentary lifestyle may have 38% body fat. Their height and weight are the same, but the person with 38% body fat is more likely at higher risk for heart attack, stroke, diabetes and related diseases.

Some medical grade body composition analyzers have the capacity to look at deeper health parameters such as visceral fat, hydration, inflammation and cellular health which provide an even more comprehensive view of an individual's overall well-being.

Now, let's say you want to improve your weight and/or overall health. Where do you start? As we know, diet and exercise are key factors, but what "diet" is right for you?

The answer is a plan based on what your individual body needs. This can be done by measuring your oxygen consumption and CO2 output to determine your resting metabolic rate (RMR), as there is a direct correlation between oxygen consumption and calories burned. This will determine how many calories you need in a day. There is even advanced testing equipment with a CO2 sensor that tells you if you are more of a carbohydrate burner or fat burner.

There are generic calculations used to estimate your RMR, but again, they do not take individual information into consideration. Prior dietary and exercise habits, genetics and muscle mass also play a role. Muscle is also metabolic, which typically means the more you have, the faster your metabolism should be.

Another number to know is your ideal target heartrate during exercise. Typically, as an individual's heart rate increases, they transition into burning less fat and burning more carbohydrates for energy. So, if your ultimate goal is fat loss, this is an important number to know.

Understanding these "new" numbers can be prolific in building a comprehensive meal and movement plan that is custom to your body's needs. We also recommend consulting with a board-certified dietitian or nutritionist to aid in optimizing your diet and exercise efforts in relation to your goals.

Once you have all the pieces to your puzzle, you can stop spinning your wheels and hit the target every time with a unique diet and exercise regimen built especially for you.

Marly Paulus is owner/founder of BodymetRx in Palm Desert and can be reached at (760) 835.3401. For more information, visit www.BodyMetRx.com.



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The Healing Power of Forgiveness

By Reverend Dale Olansky

When most people hear the word forgiveness, they grimace at the prospect of having to let someone off the hook who has caused them harm. Let's face it - letting go of anger and resentment doesn't come easily to most of us. However, holding on to it is harming only one person: ourselves.

It is common knowledge that our emotions produce chemicals that affect our body and our health. Many authors, including Louise Hay and Gabor Mate, have shown a light on the link between illness and negative emotions. While positive emotions open up our energy and enhance our health, negative emotions constrict our energy which can be very damaging; clinging to anger and resentment only poisons us.

What is the antidote? Forgiveness. As reluctant as we may be to pursue it, it is worth the effort to unleash the healing power it affords.

There are many myths and misunderstandings around forgiveness, so let's take a look at what forgiveness is and what it is not.

Forgiveness is not condoning bad behavior. This is probably the number one reason why we resist forgiveness. There is an underlying belief that if we forgive, we are saying that what was done to us is acceptable. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We are simply freeing ourselves from living in the pain of the past.

Forgiveness doesn't mean you have to forget. It is very unrealistic to think we could ever forget the harmful experiences we have had over the course of our lives. Remembering protects us from repeating painful experiences. However, we can remember those experiences without re-living the pain.

Forgiveness is a process. Forgiveness is a journey and may take some time to complete. All you need to do is make the commitment to forgive, and everything will unfold in the right way and time.

As a spiritual counselor, I have guided many people through the forgiveness journey. Here are three simple steps you can use if you are ready to forgive but don't know where to begin:

1. Set the intention to forgive.
2. Write a "no-send" letter to the person you want to forgive. Write the letter, but don't actually send it to the person. This letter is your opportunity to let it all out! There are no rules or restrictions, so express *all* your feelings. The purpose of this step is to completely release the negative energy you have stored in your body so you can empty yourself out.
3. Then, write a second "no send" letter to that person telling them you are forgiving them for good and state that your energetic bond is now severed.

Always remember that forgiveness is an inside job. It will improve your health and well-being and bring you peace of mind. Enjoy the journey!

Rev. Dale Olansky is the co-spiritual leader at Spiritual Center of the Desert in Palm Desert and author of *Fear to Faith: A Daily Guide to Finding Solace in an Uncertain World*. She can be reached at revdaleo@gmail.com.

Making Sense of Cannabis Packaging

By Lewis Lustman

Sometimes it feels like you have to be Indiana Jones to decipher all the information on a cannabis product packaging (or be a chemist named Jeff Spicoli). So, to help our Senior-High students better understand what they're buying, we offer this handy explanation of those numbers and nomenclature.

Ratio. The most common products sought as medicinal medicine are those containing both CBD and THC. The large numbers on the label indicate how much CBD is contained in the product in relation to the amount of THC. Both THC and CBD offer their own unique benefits, but how they're combined makes a world of difference in their efficacy and what ailments they most appropriately treat.

Some manufacturers state which number is CBD and which is THC; others may not, thus understanding the ratios may be confusing, yet is quite important. Ratios are standardly presented as CBD:THC (CBD is the first number). Manufacturer Papa & Barkley does a good job of explaining the ratio. For example, their 120 mg jar balm has a 1:3 ratio which means you're getting 30 mg CBD and 90 mg THC in the full jar (second number, THC, is higher). Their 180 mg balm has a 3:1 ratio which means you're getting 135 mg CBD and 45 mg THC (first number, CBD, is higher). This is extremely helpful in letting consumers know exactly what they're getting.

Triangle, CA with exclamation mark. If the product you're buying does not display this label and warning, it may not be legal and you may want to steer clear.

In 2020, California's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHHA) added marijuana smoke and THC to the state's Proposition 65 list of chemicals known as reproductive toxins. This warning must be visible on all cannabis product packaging and labeling. Depending on the type of product, the package may also state, "WARNING: This product can expose you to marijuana smoke, which is known to the state of California to cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive harm." This may appear on its own label or sticker separate from the primary panel and information panel.

Some other California state requirements for cannabis include:

- Product packaging cannot be designed in a way that's appealing to children
- All print must be clear and legible
- Labels must be printed in at least six point font
- All labeling must be visible on the outer layering of the packaging
- Peel-back labels or inserts may be used on small packaging that can't accommodate all the information up front
- All required information must appear on the packaging; it's not acceptable to direct buyers to a website
- County names may not be included on the packaging unless the product was 100% grown in that county
- Misleading information and unproven health claims are strictly prohibited
- Photos of the product may not be included

Again, if the product you're buying doesn't adhere to these requirements, it may not be legal and we recommend avoiding.

Lustman is chief marketing office with Senior-High which offers education and resources on medicinal marijuana and can be reached at (760) 459.4593 or visit www.Senior-High.com.



First number (1) and blue represent CBD; second number (3) and white represent THC, thus it is higher in THC.





YOUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

By Michele T. Sarna, CFP®, AIF®



Our Future with A.I. and ChatGPT

At a recent business conference, every session talked about ChatGPT and A.I. which made me question, should mankind be concerned? Will procedures and policies be put in place to manage the technology and potential threats? Recently, AP News reported that a couple of lawyers were fined for using falsely produced case references that ChatGPT had cited. According to AP News, the lawyers apologized and acknowledged they didn't validate the noted cases thoroughly. What about producing content as an individual's idea without citing the use of ChatGPT? Where is that validity? I wanted to learn more...

ChatGPT, an advanced language model developed by OpenAI, has revolutionized the way we interact with artificial intelligence. Its ability to generate human-like responses and engage in dynamic conversations has opened up new possibilities across various fields.

The future of ChatGPT lies in its ability to comprehend and respond to context more effectively. With continued research and development, ChatGPT can become even better at understanding nuanced conversational cues, maintaining coherent dialogue threads and accurately interpreting user intent. This progress will enable more seamless and natural interactions, making ChatGPT an invaluable tool for personal assistance, customer support and other communication-intensive tasks.

In the future, ChatGPT could evolve into a collaborative problem-solving tool, capable of engaging in multi-party conversations. By integrating multiple instances of ChatGPT or enabling seamless cooperation between different AI models, users can benefit from collaborative brainstorming sessions, generating innovative solutions, and tackling complex challenges together. This collaborative approach will facilitate teamwork and creativity across various disciplines, leading to breakthroughs and advancements that were previously unimaginable.

As the deployment of AI technologies becomes more widespread, addressing ethical concerns and mitigating biases are crucial factors in the future development of ChatGPT. Future iterations of ChatGPT will continue to prioritize ethical considerations, implementing safeguards against discriminatory behavior and enabling greater transparency in decision-making processes.

The future of ChatGPT holds immense promise for transforming how we communicate and collaborate with AI. As developments unfold, we can anticipate a future where ChatGPT seamlessly integrates into our daily lives, augmenting our abilities and opening up a world of limitless conversational potential.

In conclusion, the above five paragraphs were generated with minimal editing by asking ChatGPT to write an article on the future of ChatGPT.

Michele Sarna is a certified financial planner™ with Beacon Pointe Advisors and can be reached at (760) 932.0930 or msarna@beaconpointe.com.

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Sources: 1) <https://chat.openai.com>; 2) <https://apnews.com/article/artificial-intelligence-chatgpt-courts-e15023d7e6fdf4f099aa122437dbb59b>



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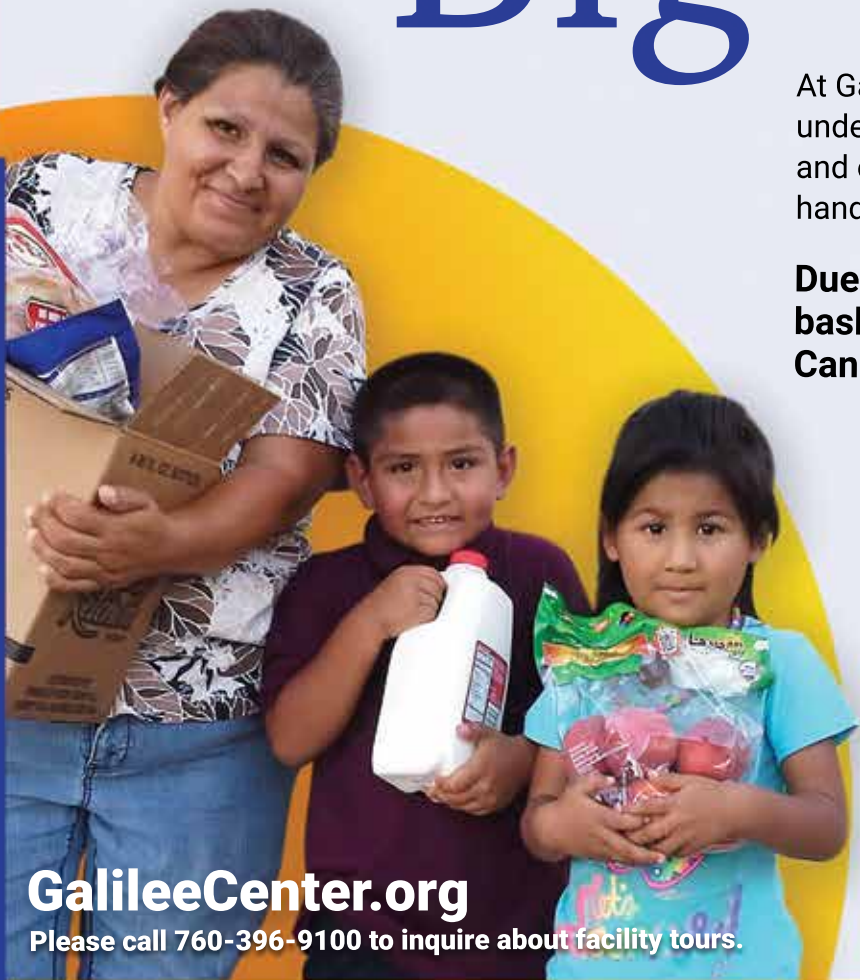
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Staying Home vs. Assisted Living: A True Story

By Tammy Porter, DNP, MLS, RN-BSN, CPHQ, CCM

John* had been living on Mimosa Street* in the desert for nearly 30 years and had grown to love it. He had lived alone since his partner passed away, remaining in the same house, with the same neighbors and the same memories. However, as John aged, it became more and more difficult for him to take care of himself. He no longer drove and hired caregivers for cleaning, grocery-shopping and other errands. After multiple falls, he was transferred from a local hospital to a rehab facility, and the doctor recommended he move to an assisted living facility to get the 24-hour help he needed. As his nurse advocate, I escorted John to visit a few local assisted living facilities until he chose one that suited him. I helped him move most of his belongings, but each time we visited Mimosa Street, I think we both felt a deep sadness as he chose which possessions to take with him and which to donate to a local charity.



Choosing to stay in your home or move to assisted living is one life's most challenging decisions.

He had high hopes for his new living situation, but soon found it wasn't quite what he had expected or as portrayed in the brochures. He looked forward to learning how to use a computer and other activities, as well as meeting new people since he had lived alone for over 10 years. Unfortunately, computer classes were not available, his cherished painting time was offered as paint-by-numbers and many of the residents living near his room were unable to communicate or interact with him. Although he was deeply disappointed with his new living situation, he was determined to make the best of it. He tried to stay positive and find ways to make the most of his days.

In our later years, our living arrangements play a significant role in our overall well-being. One of the most challenging decisions older adults and their families face is choosing between assisted living and living at home alone with help. Each option has its advantages and drawbacks, and the choice ultimately depends on individual needs and preferences.

Following is a checklist to help you decide if you are ever faced with this challenging decision:

- Evaluate your current living situation and determine if it is safe for you to live alone, or have you been advised by health professionals to consider other options?
- Consider daily needs such as bathing, dressing, meal preparation, housekeeping and transportation.
- Do you require assistance with medication management or medical care?
- Assess your social needs. Would you benefit from interaction with others? (*John shared that it is best to develop a "charitable attitude" in assisted living, as you will share space with others who may not be "your type.")
- Can you afford assisted living (\$3,500-\$5,500+/per mo.) or hired help at home (\$25-\$39/hr.)?

Continued on page 26

Understanding Vascular Dementia

Compliments of Alzheimers Coachella Valley

Vascular Dementia (VaD) is the second most common type of dementia, behind Alzheimer's. While Alzheimer's accounts for 60%-70% of cases of dementia, VaD accounts for 20%.

Unlike Alzheimer's, VaD is not marked by a buildup of protein plaques in the brain, rather it's diagnosed by looking closely at how blood moves through the brain. VaD can be diagnosed using an MRI to identify abnormalities, in conjunction with cognitive assessments. These include signs of stroke, thinning blood vessels and changes in brain connectivity. In addition, some tests will measure blood vessel stiffness and elasticity.

Causes. VaD is caused by blocked or reduced blood flow to the brain that deprives neurons of critical nutrients, eventually causing them to die and the brain to shrink. Common contributors to this kind of dementia include stroke, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hyperlipidemia (abnormally high concentration of fats or fatty acids in the blood) and hypertension (high blood pressure).

Symptoms. VaD symptoms differ depending on which part of the brain the vessels and blood flow are obstructed. Common indications include:

- Slowness in thinking and thought
- Memory problems
- Problems with perceiving objects and visuospatial skills
- Frequent disorientation and confusion
- Problems with making decisions or solving problems
- Symptoms of stroke such as sudden weakness and trouble speaking
- Personality and mood changes (e.g., depression, agitation, anger, anxiety)
- Problems with balance, walking and gait

Treatment. Because different disease processes can result in various forms of VaD, there may not be one treatment for all. While there is no cure, the disease is often managed with medications to prevent strokes and reduce the risk of additional brain damage. Some studies suggest that medications used to treat Alzheimer's might benefit some people with an early form of VaD.

Treating modifiable risk factors like high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol and problems with heart rhythms can help prevent additional stroke. Living a healthy lifestyle is important to help reduce risk factors.

As a caregiver for someone with VaD, you may face challenges in providing care and understanding behavior changes. Coping strategies include having realistic and attainable goals, controlling vascular risk factors, enjoying the good times and being flexible.

It is important to note that VaD usually worsens over time - in sudden steps or with periods where symptoms remain static. It is likely that your loved one will require increasing levels of care and support with daily life as the disease progresses. There are many online tools and community resources to help your family cope. Also, be sure to ask their physician about developing a care plan that allows your loved one to be as independent as possible.

Editorial by Patricia Riley, board member of Alzheimers Coachella Valley, a community resource for dementia support and education. For more information, call (760) 776.3100 or visit www.cvalzheimers.org.



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Bridging the Generational Gap

OLLI program fosters health and connection

By Amanda Michelle Reigle

In the heart of Palm Desert, a remarkable eight-week program is quietly making a profound impact on the lives of older adults and college students alike. The Sages & Seekers program, created and administered by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) Palm Desert Campus, offers a unique opportunity to bridge generational gaps, promote mental health and combat loneliness. Through a short-term commitment, Coachella Valley residents engage in meaningful interactions and shared experiences that transform lives and foster a stronger sense of community.

At the core of the Sages & Seekers program is the connection between two diverse groups: older adults (sages) and college students (seekers). Through lightly facilitated conversations, shared activities and mentorship, the program helps to create a nurturing environment where meaningful relationships can flourish, boosting overall life satisfaction.

The mission of the program is to explore how intergenerational communication can alleviate feelings of loneliness and improve overall well-being. It is a component of CSUSB's OLLI program and is affiliated with the international Sages & Seekers non-profit based in Los Angeles. This organization connects generations in six countries, providing a proven platform for the shared pursuit of purpose and belonging. Since its inception in 2009, the Sages & Seekers program has connected more than 6,000 seniors and young adults from diverse sociocultural backgrounds.

For sages, the program offers CSUSB OLLI members the opportunity to share their wealth of life experiences, wisdom and expertise with younger generations. Members meet with students for one hour per week during the eight-week course. The meaningful connections formed bring joy, companionship and a renewed sense of belonging for all, potentially improving mental and emotional well-being.

At the same time, seekers gain unique insights and perspectives from sages, contributing to their personal and academic growth. Participation in the program can even earn students credit toward their undergraduate degrees. Engaging in intergenerational communication helps to broaden horizons and develop empathy and cultural competence. These valuable skills are transferable to various aspects of students' lives and future careers, setting them up for success in an interconnected world.

The Sages & Seekers program has shown promising results in improving mental health and well-being for both generations, as evaluated in 2017 by the University of Southern California's Gerontology Department. During this time, the Centers for Disease Control and the American Psychological Association had also identified that major depression and suicide rates were at an all-time high for both young adults and seniors. By fostering companionship, the Sages & Seekers program attempts to combat these rising rates of mental illness by creating a supportive network that promotes resilience, self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

Under the leadership of Dr. Robert Leo, a communication studies lecturer at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, the Sages & Seekers program is conducting a groundbreaking research study entitled, "Examining the Impact of Intergenerational Communication on Loneliness." This study explores the transformative power of meaningful interactions between sages and seekers in alleviating loneliness and enhancing overall well-being. Research will consider the connections cultivated at the community level through the program while contributing to the broader field of intergenerational studies.

The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus has become a hub for this transformative program attracting dedicated faculty, staff and volunteers who are passionate about creating positive change in the community. The campus' commitment to intergenerational communication studies has facilitated collaborations with local senior centers, health care organizations and academic institutions, enriching the program and ensuring its responsiveness to the evolving needs of our community.

As the CSUSB Sages & Seekers program continues to grow, its impact will extend beyond the boundaries of the campus. The university envisions expanding to other educational institutions, community centers and senior living communities in the Coachella Valley. By promoting health, well-being and a sense of purpose across generations, the program is creating a ripple effect that strengthens the fabric of our community.

If you are a lifelong learner eager to share your wisdom and life experiences, we encourage you to enroll in OLLI and join the waitlist to become a sage where you can make a positive impact on the lives of college students. Together, we can bridge the generational gap, combat loneliness and foster health and connection.

Amanda Reigle is the Sages & Seekers student program coordinator and lead researcher for the "Examining the Impact of Intergenerational Communication on Loneliness: A Comprehensive Study." To become an OLLI member or for more information about the OLLI program at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, visit www.csusb.edu/olli.



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How to Layer Skin Care

By Brook Dougherty

No one is quite certain where the concept of layering began. Was it when Estee Lauder told us to “layer up with confidence”? Or, was it when Sunday Riley told us to “reveal radiant layers”? Is layering grounded in science or is it a marketing ploy to encourage people to buy more product? The answer is a little bit of both.

If a brand is offering a routine that suggests layering its products in a certain order, it’s a good idea to follow that order as their formulas may build ingredients one on top of the other, but here is the most traditional way to layer:

Cleansing

In an arid climate, it’s good to choose a cream-based or oil-based cleanser to maintain your skin’s moisture barrier and prevent dryness. Never spend more on a cleanser than you would on a moisturizer; it’s just going to be washed off.

Hydrating Mists or Toners

The buzz about toners is that they help your skin regulate its pH. The truth is that your skin is brilliant at regulating its own pH. Your own enzymes, proteins and lipids work to maintain your acid mantle and protect your skin’s overall pH balance. As far as a toner removing residue, if your cleanser is working, you shouldn’t have any residue.

What you do need in the desert is a hydrating mist preferably infused with hyaluronic acid and hydrating botanical extracts like wheat and quinoa. It’s also great if the mist has a touch of acid in it to help gently exfoliate cells that need to go bye-bye.

Spray on your face or in the palm of your hand and pat into the skin. Let it sit for a minute while you do something useful like putting in your earrings or giving your dog leftover bacon (like there ever is any leftover bacon).

Serums

The word “serum” on a bottle tells gullible buyers that there is a miracle hiding inside that will be worth every penny - exactly like getting a facelift. Be wary. Even though it may feel good and smell great, if it isn’t blessed with a bounty of active ingredients like peptides, oils and vitamins such as C, B and A, it’s a total waste. Remember, on skin care labels, ingredients are listed by amount included (until 1% or less; then it’s free game).

Use gel serums after mists; use oil serums either first or last. A quick routine may simply include a cleanser, a mist and an oil serum warmed in the palm of your hands and pressed onto your skin.

Moisturizing

On the label, look for at least a few words you recognize like shea butter, ceramides and perhaps adventurous oils like tamanu or andiroba. Great moisturizers for mature skin may also contain peptides and vitamins to help with wrinkles and fine lines.



Knowing which beauty products to apply in which order can be beneficial for best results.

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Balms

For desert dwellers, a last step should be a balm. Between pickleball, golf, tennis, dog walks and just existing in the heat, we often find dry patches, flaky skin, bites from unknown insects and scrapes from projects we shouldn’t have been taking on in the first place. Look for a balm that is anhydrous, meaning no water. Look for real oils and butters that have a history of soothing and repairing skin disasters. Apply as a last step.

Eye Cream and Neck Cream

A good serum, a good cream and a good balm gently patted into the skin around the eyes is usually enough. The only reason you might want to consider a separate product is if it has an ingredient especially for puffiness, like a calming gel, or a peptide that specifically addresses darkness.

As for the neck, nothing is going to match a neck lift. Period. Feel free to buy creams dedicated to the neck, but unless they have a huge amount of tightening peptides, you won’t see nirvana. The best option is to find a serum with heavy actives and use sparingly on your neck. Then, quit staring at it in the mirror.

Sunscreen

Opt for a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher; those with natural ingredients are recommended. Reapply every two hours if you’re outdoors; wash off when you’re in for the day.

The most important thing about a layering routine is to stick with it twice a day and give it a couple of months. Rome wasn’t built...and all that.

Brook Dougherty of Indio is the founder of JustUs Skincare and welcomes your questions. She can be reached at (310) 266-7171 or brook@justusskincare.com. For more information, visit www.justusskincare.com.

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Why is Vitamin D so Important?

Continued from page 4

Safe sun exposure. While it's essential to protect your skin from harmful UV radiation, a few minutes of sun exposure on bare skin can help your body produce vitamin D naturally. Aim for brief periods of sun exposure, typically in the early morning or late afternoon when the sun's rays are less intense. Remember to balance sun exposure with sun protection practices, such as wearing sunscreen and protective clothing.

What are the signs you need vitamin D? Deficiency is a common concern, especially for those who have limited sun exposure or follow a restrictive diet. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of vitamin D deficiency is crucial for taking proactive steps towards maintaining optimal health. Here are some indicators that you may need more vitamin D:

Fatigue and low energy. Feeling tired and lacking energy can be a sign of vitamin D deficiency as it plays a role in cellular energy production; inadequate levels can leave you feeling sluggish and fatigued.

Frequent illness and weakened immune system. If you find yourself catching every flu or cold, it could be a sign of compromised immune function due to vitamin D deficiency. As it is essential for a robust immune system, insufficient levels can make you more susceptible to infections.

Bone and joint pain. Vitamin D is closely linked to bone health, and deficiency can lead to weakened bones and an increased risk of fractures. Unexplained bone or joint pain may be a result of low vitamin D levels.

Muscle weakness and aches. Vitamin D plays a role in muscle health and strength. Deficiency can lead to muscle weakness and aches, and an increased risk of falls. If you notice unexplained muscle pain or find it harder to perform physical activities, vitamin D deficiency could be a contributing factor.

Mood disorders and depression. As previously stated, research suggests a connection between low vitamin D levels and an increased risk of mood disorders. Persistent feelings of sadness, low mood or a lack of motivation may be attributed to vitamin D.

Impaired wound healing. Vitamin D is involved in the process of wound healing and tissue repair. If you notice that your wounds are slow to heal, or if you experience frequent infections in the affected area, it may be an indication of insufficient vitamin D levels.

Hair loss. Although not always the primary cause, vitamin D deficiency has been associated with excessive hair shedding or thinning.

If you experience any of these signs or symptoms, it's essential to consult with a health care professional. They can assess your vitamin D status through a simple blood test and provide appropriate recommendations for supplementation or lifestyle adjustments.

In conclusion, vitamin D is an essential nutrient that plays a significant role in maintaining overall health and well-being. From supporting bone health and the immune system, to promoting heart health, brain function, and muscle strength, the benefits of vitamin D are far-reaching.

Pam Gossman is a doctor of nursing practice and owner of Desert Glow Medical Aesthetics and Wellness. She offers medical wellness programs and aesthetic procedures and can be reached at (760) 565.3990 or pam@desertglowspa.com. For more visit www.desertglowspa.com.



Fiesta Frijole Ensalada and Bites

By Chef Anthony Cruz

This colorful, cool salad is refreshingly satisfying. Bold flavors and bright in-season vegetables bring this dish to life. Scoop onto romaine hearts for the perfect pool party app, or enjoy as a nutritious bowl on a warm summer day.

Ingredients:

- 1 pint of cherry tomatoes quartered
- 1 carrot chopped
- ½ cup pickled red onion chopped
- 1 red bell pepper chopped
- 2 ears of grilled corn kernels
- ½ cup zucchini diced
- 1 cup cooked black beans
- 1 cup cooked white beans
- ¼ cup fresh oregano minced
- 1 small bunch of cilantro chopped
- 2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 lime juiced
- Salt and fresh ground pepper
- Romaine hearts (center leaves of the lettuce)
- Microgreens



Combine the tomatoes, cilantro, oregano, oil, vinegar, light salt and pepper in a salad bowl. Refrigerate for 15 minutes to develop the flavors. Add the remaining ingredients and stir gently to combine.

Season with lime juice, salt and pepper. Scoop into bowls or serve on romaine shells and garnish with microgreens.

Anthony Cruz, owner of Alimentos is a plant-based wellness chef focusing on nutritional education for all ages through cooking classes, community collaborations and private culinary experiences throughout the Coachella Valley. He can be reached at (619) 674.8918 or chefanthonyecruz@icloud.com.

Cauliflower Cheese Bread

By Barbara Hankey-Rogers

From one of our favorite books, *It's A No Grainer* (Jan/Feb 2023), this grain-free, low-carb bread is a tasty and satisfying alternative. Great as an appetizer to dip in marinara or as a simple side dish. Makes 10-12 servings.

Ingredients:

- 1 large cauliflower head (7-8" wide) or already-riced cauliflower
- ¼ cup egg whites from 2 large eggs
- 1-¼ cups cheese: mozzarella, cheddar or manchego (goat)
- 1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning or any dried herbs like rosemary, basil, parsley
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch of sea salt
- Cooking spray

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Rinse cauliflower, remove outer leaves and separate into florets with a paring knife. Place florets in a food processor and process until "rice" texture. Some coarse chunks are fine. If using already riced, follow directions on the package for preparation. Packaged riced cauliflower is uncooked, so once prepared, skip the next step and work on cooling it down before eliminating liquid.

When using fresh cauliflower that you have riced, place in an ovenproof baking dish and bake for 20 minutes. Removed cooked cauliflower from the oven and transfer to a bowl lined with a tea towel (paper towels work well too).



Let the cauliflower cool down until it is safe to touch, about 15 minutes. Fold the towel, holding the ends, and squeeze out the liquid. I squeezed out 1 cup of liquid. Do this a few times until barely any liquid comes out of the cauliflower "ball." Be patient.

Increase oven to 450°F. Transfer cauliflower to mixing bowl along with egg whites, ½ cup cheese, herb seasoning, black pepper, pinch of salt and mix to combine.

Place the cauliflower mixture onto a well-greased aluminum foil-lined baking sheet. Flatten with your hands into an approximately 9 x 7-inch rectangle and ¼-inch thick. Bake for 18 minutes; remove from oven and top with remaining ¼ cup cheese. Bake for another 5 minutes and then broil until cheese turns golden brown.

Cut into 12 sections and serve hot with warm marinara sauce for dipping if desired.

Roger's *It's a No Grainer* features over 180 delightfully gluten-free, grain-free, low-carb and keto-friendly recipes and is available on Amazon. For more information, visit www.ItsANoGrainerLife.com

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Desert Health 2023 Speaker Series

Desert Health, in partnership with Restore Hyper Wellness, proudly presents our 2023 Living Well Speaker Series. The monthly presentations showcase esteemed valley doctors and health care professionals starting in July and running through December. The complimentary educational program is open to everyone interested in learning about vitality and proactive well-being.

Guest speakers include integrative doctor Joseph Scherger, MD of Restore Health Disease Reversal, speaking on “Aging Gracefully” (7/19); functional medicine specialist Jeralyn Brossfield, MD of Brain Performance Center and XO Health, educating us on “Reversing and Preventing Cognitive Decline” (8/2); and naturopathic doctor Shannon Sinsheimer, ND of Optimal Health Center, discussing “How and Why to Detox Naturally” (9/20).

In October, we bring back our well-received panel of professionals discussing natural options for pain management including physical therapist Vince Kambe, DPT; naturopathic doctors Sonja Fung, ND and Delaney Quick, ND; and acupuncturist Diane Sheppard, PhD, LAc (10/25).

Attendees can also learn about Restore Hyper Wellness’s many healing and wellness modalities including cryotherapy, mild hyperbaric, red light therapy, nutritional and NAD+ IVs, biomarker assessments and more. The national franchise, which promotes proactive wellness services, was recently opened in Palm Desert by local health advocates Jeff Smith, DO, Alma Smith of Orangetheory, along with Will and Katy Norris and Keith Brown.

Guests will enjoy complementary beverages and nutritious, light plant-based appetizers by Chef Anthony Cruz, owner of *Alimentos*.

All are invited to join us for these complimentary presentations; space is limited and reservations are required. Taking place at Restore Hyper Wellness located in the Jensen’s Plaza, 73-567 Highway 111, Suite G-1, from 5 - 7p on each noted date. To RSVP for the Living Well Speaker Series, please call Restore Hyper Wellness at (760) 505-3000. For more information, visit our Sponsored Events section at www.DesertHealthNews.com.

Adding Life to Your Years and Years to Your Life

Continued from page 19

Your body diligently works to keep you going. It does so every day by making small withdrawals from precious reserve accounts until one day they are depleted, and your body faces a crisis of disease. Eventually, cellular injury reaches a critical tipping point, much like a credit card that is maxed out. This is the point when disease symptoms manifest: the chest pain of heart disease, elevated blood sugars of type 2 diabetes or the joint pain of rheumatoid arthritis.

The good news is that if an unhealthy lifestyle causes the system failure, in most cases, an intensive lifestyle intervention can turn back the clock and jump start the healing process.

Hippocrates said, “Healing is not just a matter of time, but also opportunity.” A whole food, plant-based lifestyle provides the opportunity to help your body reverse the harmful effects of the western lifestyle. It adds years to your life and life to your years.

Diseases are diagnosed based on a constellation of medical data and findings. As the body heals, these characteristic findings can also resolve. Essentially, the disease condition goes into remission with no further symptoms or measurable evidence. Essentially, the epigenetic susceptibility was silenced through healthy lifestyle choices. But, if someone returns to their old lifestyle, the disease condition may return.

Health care systems have limitations and can’t accomplish what *you can* when you decide to change what’s on your plate, sleep and move more, and stress less. Your health future truly is in your hands.

At The Plantrician Project, our mission is to educate, equip and empower our physicians, health care practitioners and other health influencers with knowledge about the indisputable benefits of whole food, plant-based nutrition to help their patients reverse disease and restore lost vitality.

Now in our 11th year, we invite you to join us in Palm Desert this September for our International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference (PBNHC) open to the general public, students and all health care practitioners and professionals alike. Learn from world-renowned faculty and experts such as Dean Ornish, MD and Michael Greger, MD, as well as the recipient of our 2023 Plantrician Luminary Award, John McDougall, MD.

At PBNHC, you’ll not only find answers about a whole food, plant-based lifestyle for disease reversal and prevention, but also a supportive, welcoming and enthusiastic community of individuals who are eager to take control of their own health and future.

Choose wisely, live abundantly.

Dr. Stoll is co-founder of The Plantrician Project, The International Plant Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference, the International Journal of Disease Reversal and Prevention and the Regenerative Health Institute. He is an international leader in lifestyle medicine, member of the 1994 Olympic Team and member of the Whole Foods Scientific and Medical Advisory Board. For more information, visit www.plantricianproject.org.

Source: 1) Includes excerpts from *The Power Of A Plant-Based Plate* by Scott Stoll, MD

Staying Home vs. Assisted-Living: A True Story

Continued from page 22

- Research and visit assisted living in your area. Attend some activities as a visitor; eat a meal while you’re visiting.
- Evaluate the level of care provided at assisted living and its additional cost to monthly rent (note that the charges are separate).
- Consider proximity to where you currently live or close to family and/or friends.
- Will the facility offer the level of independence you desire compared to living at home with help?

John still misses his old home on Mimosa Street. In fact, he is hanging on to it “just in case” he changes his mind, which is always an option. However, I notice he is finding joy in decorating his new space at assisted living. I take him out once or twice a week, he’s purchased some new furniture, and all is arranged to his liking. Staff are kind and caring, he has more people to talk with now than when home alone, and he always has a hilarious story to share about his new experience “at the home!” Our visits to the doctor show that his health has improved overall and a recent luncheon with friends revealed, “John is back!” John is back to living, albeit in a new environment, and making the most of this precious time. He makes me smile as I write this, what a gift to share in this life experience.

Dr. Porter is CEO and founder of MyHealth.MyAdvocate in Palm Desert. She is an experienced health care professional with over 30 years of nursing practice dedicated to unraveling the mysteries of health care processes and advocating for patients, families and caregivers. Immediate assistance is available by calling (760) 851.4116. www.myhealthmyadvocate.com.

* Names have been changed for privacy.

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