



Desert Health[®]

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May/June 2023

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HEAVEN'S DOORSTEP TO LONGEVITY HOTSPOT

Not too long ago Palm Springs was commonly referred to as Heaven's Doorstep or God's Waiting Room. Seniors from all over the country ascended in droves to bask in the sun, play tennis and golf and toast cocktails with friends for their "final act." Retirement in the palm-laden paradise offered idyllic living that was soon the envy of lifestyle seekers of all ages. Now hipsters, young and old, take pride in calling our modern desert oasis home.

Today, there are multiple efforts to take it up a notch and make our valley a "longevity hotspot," where the healthy choice is the easy choice and people live better and longer.

Both the City of Palm Springs and Riverside University Health System - Public Health (with a focus on six communities across the county including Coachella) have begun Blue Zones Activate to assess the readiness and feasibility of making these communities healthier places to live, work, grow up and grow old.

Blue Zones is an initiative that employs evidence-based methods to help people live better and longer. The principles are based on the work of Dan Buettner, a National Geographic Explorer and Fellow, who set out to discover the places in the world where people lived the longest and the healthiest and how they got there. He narrowed it down to five: Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Ikaria, Greece, and Loma Linda, California (accredited largely to their concentration of Seventh Day Adventists). Buettner documented his findings in the *New York Times* bestseller, *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest*.

Buettner and his team of researchers surmised that the common longevity was due to nine shared lifestyle habits which they dubbed the Power 9: Move Naturally, Purpose, Downshift, 80% Rule, Plant Slant, Wine at Five, Positive Pack, Loved Ones First and Belong. The most important discovery was that people in the Blue Zones were not trying to do these things; their surroundings and cultures nudged

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If you could know, would you?

Cancer blood test could be a game changer

By Lauren Del Sarto

If you could take a simple blood test to screen for more than 50 cancers, would you? It's an interesting question to ponder, and one I put out on social media when invited to do just that. We first wrote about the research behind the multi-cancer early detection blood test in 2021 as a cancer wellness trend, and I am truly interested in knowing whether people proactively want to know this sensitive information.

This statistic may help sway your decision. While we have effective screening tools for five leading cancers: breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and prostate, 70% of cancer deaths are caused by cancers for which we do not commonly screen,¹ and identifying any cancer early can be the difference between life and death.

It certainly helped me make the decision when the team from Galleri offered the opportunity as a journalist in association with their sponsorship of The Galleri Classic tournament in March at Mission Hills Country Club. Galleri is a simple blood test that can screen for a signal shared by more than 50 cancers and predict the tissue or organ where the signal originated.

I will admit that the 10-day waiting period for results was a little more nerve-racking than I anticipated. As

a breast cancer survivor and four years cancer free, I went from "no big deal" to "why is it taking so long?" Needless to say, the negative results received on day seven were a cause for celebration.

We are fortunate to have Galleri's elevated presence here in the desert due to their local PGA TOUR Champions sponsorship. At a town hall presentation held at the event, we heard from audience member Don who was one of the first to be diagnosed with active cancer as a result of the test. He had taken it proactively after it was prescribed by his doctor and had no idea he had advanced stage colon cancer. His doctors delivered the news with options for treatment, and he is now cancer free. "I would not be here today if not for the Galleri test," he said before asking the panel how long he had to wait until taking the test again.

"This has the potential to be a game changer in the cancer world," says Tim Tyler, PharmD, Director of Pharmacy, Lab and Oncology Supportive Care for the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional Medical Center (CCC) which now offers the test. "I am tired of treating patients at stage 3 and 4 when systemic therapies like radiation and chemo have to be performed, and even then, we often don't win.

Continued on page 3



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Creating Wellness

Hello, Friends! Thank you for picking up our latest edition. As I breeze through the final proof to reflect on how another incredible issue has come together, I can't help but pause with wonder at just how far "wellness" has progressed.

Mindsets and medicine are changing, and as Dr. Tyler says in our front-page feature, it feels like we just might be getting ahead of the game.

In "Longevity Hotspot," we share the significant progress in determining the feasibility of making our region a Blue Zone (p.1). Local governments are reviewing proposals to invest in evidence-based programs that help make healthier choices the easier choice for those in our community – all in an effort to help us live better longer.

We also welcome back The Plantrician Project whose international conference teaches doctors and health care practitioners the why and how to prescribe food as medicine (p.7). Imagine, Rx pads that prescribe nutritional plans and educational resources instead of pills. They're here; doctors who partner with coaches to help their patients make those prescribed lifestyle changes. You'll read about Dr. Bhatka's success with such a program (p.6).

But of course, those changes are ultimately up to each of us, and this edition has plenty of inspiration to help you personally move towards greater wellness. Are you ready to release the kraken – those things in life that may be holding you back (p.9); and to get comfortable in your own, solitary being (p.13)? Maybe it's time to start preparing that biodynamic garden – good for you and Mother Earth (p.14), or you can simply add *Chúla Artisan Eatery* to your plate (p.22).

As we usher in late spring, it's a good time to flourish. We thank our local governments and those doctors and health care practitioners in our community who are creating wellness. Greater wellness for all means greater health and happiness for each and every one of us.

With love and appreciation,

Lauren
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If you could know, would you?

Continued from page 1

If we could find more cancers at stage 1 or 2, the outcomes would be very different.”

Now a strong supporter, Tyler was understandably skeptical at first. “But when I looked at the science and learned that the false positive rate is less than 0.5%, and that 89% of the time it can also tell us where that cancer is in the body, I was impressed.” He was further encouraged by the fact that the Mayo Clinic had begun offering the test, and that England’s National Health System (NHS) is partnering with Galleri’s parent company, GRAIL, to conduct a four-year randomized, controlled clinical study to determine if the test, alongside standard cancer screening, can find asymptomatic cancers at earlier stages than they are found in clinical care today. Enrollment is complete at 140,000 participants,² and Tyler notes that if someone in the study does show a positive signal for cancer, they will be promptly treated if/once cancer is confirmed through diagnostic evaluation.

Doesn’t replace screenings

It’s important to emphasize that this test does not replace recommended single-cancer screenings. Mammograms, colonoscopies and others are still the gold standard of care and all should follow guidelines for their age group and risk factors. “This test is a snapshot of where you are today,” adds Tyler. “A negative test provides peace of mind, but is not a lifetime pass.”



Mobile testing pod at the Galleri Classic

of 150,000, there were approximately a dozen that had an odd signal. The pathologist wondered whether that strange signal could possibly be an indication of cancer. After further evaluation of the data, most (if not all) of the women with odd results were proven to have cancer of which they were previously unaware.

Illumina realized there was something to explore with detecting signals of cancer in the blood, and the idea of GRAIL was born. After seven more years of research on this discovery, the Galleri test was released in 2021.

Current availability

Galleri and other multi-cancer early detection tests are not yet FDA approved, and are therefore only available by prescription on a cash basis at this time. Approval could mean significant cost savings for the entire health care system, as well as coverage by insurance and Medicare.

A variety of doctors throughout the Coachella Valley are offering the Galleri test including the Comprehensive Cancer Center. Those 50 years of age or older, not pregnant, without active cancer and three years out from treatment are encouraged to speak with their primary care physician or may call CCC directly. A dedicated coordinator screens calls and takes medical history before directing patients to Tyler or Medical Director Elber Camacho, MD for the required physician referral. CCC offers the test for \$824 and no in-person visit is required prior to the blood draw. An email is sent if results are negative; if positive, a member from their medical team will call the patient to discuss next steps.

“Early detection saves lives and this specific test could save even more lives because it has the potential to identify cancers that would not be detectable until they were far more advanced,” adds Tyler. “If you have a specific risk factor, which includes being 50+, you should speak with your doctor about whether this test is right for you.”

Before my blood draw from Galleri’s onsite mobile unit, I was honored to speak with LPGA legend Juli Inkster, a Galleri spokesperson who played in The Galleri Classic Pro-Am. Turns out we had a few things in common, including an inspiration for taking the test. Her first love was horses before she took up golf at 15. We both called the San Francisco Bay Area and Coachella Valley home, and we both had fathers we lost to advanced stage cancer. Her dad fought a courageous two-year battle with stage 4 cancer, while mine was gone in a mere seven weeks from diagnosis. We both question what could have been done had their cancers been detected earlier.



Del Sarto with LPGA legend and Galleri spokesperson Juli Inkster

“If you can get ahead of the game on cancer screening, why wouldn’t you?” says Inkster. “Wouldn’t you want to know stage 1 instead of stage 4? Early detection through the Galleri test can help determine that.”

“If this could become a standard screening test and we can find cancers early, all of us in cancer care just may feel that we are ahead of the game for once in our lives,” concludes Tyler.

To learn more, visit www.galleri.com or contact Desert Regional’s Comprehensive Cancer Center at (855) 571.2582 or www.DesertCareNetwork.com/CancerBloodTest. Lauren Del Sarto is founder and publisher of Desert Health and can be reached at Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com.

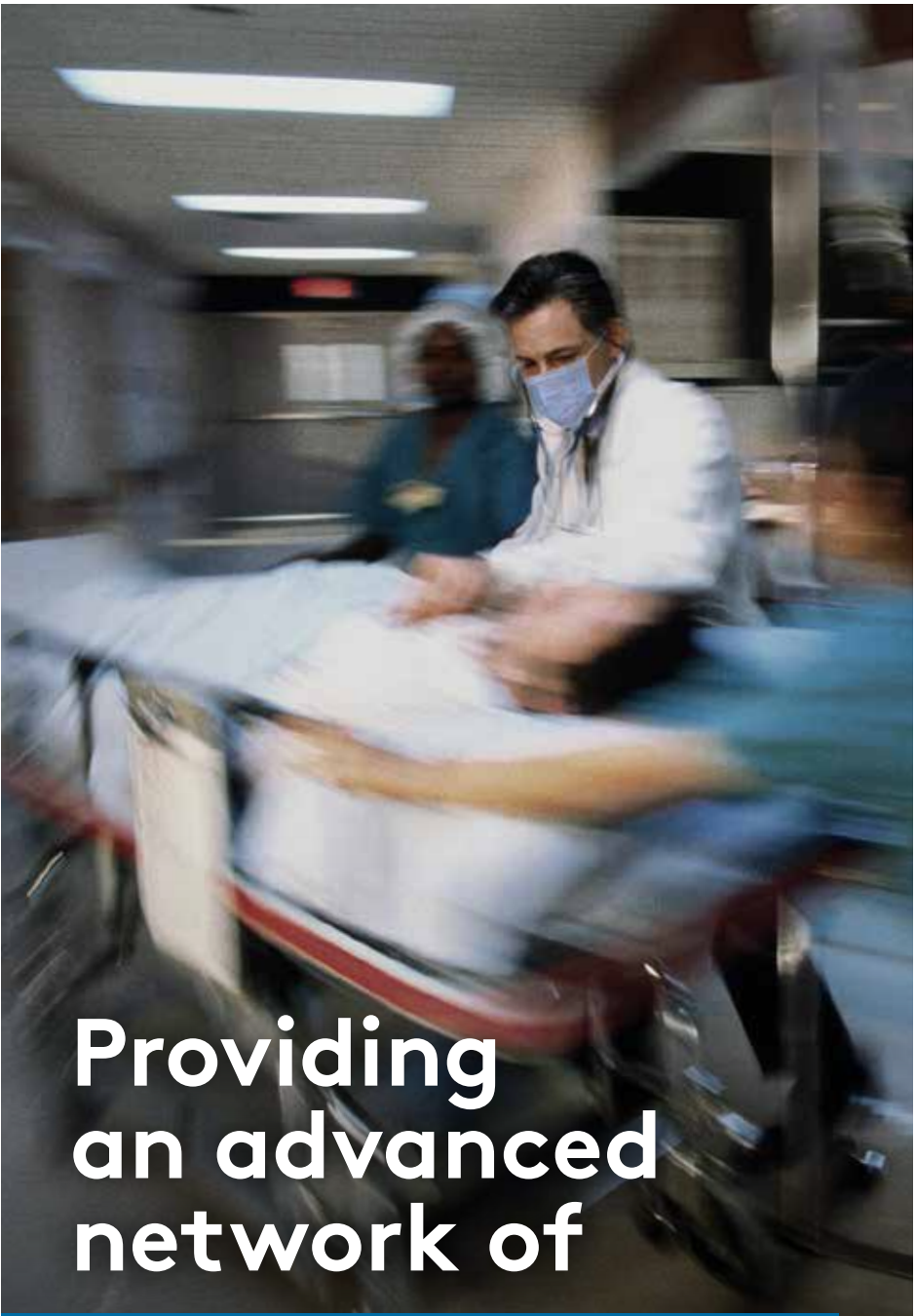
Reference: 1) Hackshaw, A., Cohen, S.S., Reichert, H. et al. Estimating the population health impact of a multi-cancer early detection genomic blood test to complement existing screening in the US and UK. Br J Cancer. 2021;125(10):1432-1442; Estimated deaths per year in 2022 from American Cancer Society Cancer Facts and Figures 2022.; 2) <https://grail.com/press-releases/grail-and-national-health-service-nhs-england-complete-enrollment-of-140000-participants-in-largest-study-of-multi-cancer-early-detection-test/>



The Galleri blood test can effectively detect over 50 cancers and their location in the body.

Origin of the discovery

Like many medical breakthroughs, the multi-cancer early detection blood test stemmed from findings during other research. About 10 years ago, noninvasive prenatal tests (NIPT) were launched as an alternative to amniocentesis. These molecular blood tests for pregnant women could accurately detect whether a fetus had an abnormality in chromosome number. Illumina, the major DNA sequencing machine company, had performed about 150,000 of those tests at the time. As the GRAIL team explains, a pathologist at Illumina was reading test results and noticed that



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We Are All Ironmen

*By Students Kaela Martin (10th), Ifra Iyooob (10th),
Yejin Jung (10th), Katherine Justo (10th) (ft. Mr. Paiz)*

On December 4, 2022, 54 volunteers from the illustrious Palm Desert Health Academy, under the leadership of the wonderful Mr. Ron Paiz, participated in the local Indian Wells/La Quinta Ironman Triathlon. The Ironman Triathlon is a 70.3-mile course that includes a 1.2-mile swim in Lake Cahuilla; a 56-mile bike ride through La Quinta, Thermal and Indian Wells; and a 13.1-mile run through the Indian Wells Golf Resort and Tennis Garden. Each contestant has eight and a half hours to complete the strenuous course. Volunteers arrived around 6 a.m. and left at 4 p.m. Considering it was just after dawn, they were all drowsy. However, as time passed they gained some motivation from the contestants' energy.

With 2,500 competitors from 31 countries and 48 U.S. states, the Health Academy volunteers replenished the athletes' energy by passing out a variety of snacks, water and energy drinks. The stations were "Aid Station #3" and "Aid Station #4." Once they got there, the participants received lime green Ironman volunteer shirts. Some also received backpacks with the Ironman logo. Collectively, the group looked eager to help. To make sure the volunteers were also nourished to help do the same for the runners, pizza was provided for a filling lunch.

The helpers would attempt to rest, but the parched and famished runners that kept passing by their stations signaled that such a choice may not be an option. But since there were numerous volunteers, they were able to take shifts and eventually take a break.

As they received a plethora of "thank yous" and other forms of gratitude, the Health Academy volunteers were proud and able to regain some energy from this praise and subsequently began to work zealously. In the beginning, the volunteers found themselves confused because they had never participated in such an event. Nevertheless, they got the hang of their assigned work, and after a while, started to organize a system of passing out food and drinks.

At the end of the event, the volunteers were all exhausted. However, they felt accomplished that they were able to help out. They loved the event and according to fellow Palm Desert High School students, Kaela Martin, Yejin Jung, and Ifra Iyooob, they "would love to participate again with more volunteers." Additionally, the students remarked that they learned a lot from the runners and volunteering. "We learned how runners don't give up even if they run out of breath, and we also learned that volunteering requires passion and love."

With special thanks to teacher Ron Paiz. For more information on OneFuture programs, contact Kim McNulty at kim@onefuturecv.org.



Valuable lessons were learned by student volunteers at the Indian Wells Ironman.

Young Survivors: Life After Cancer

By Shay Moraga

You are cancer free! After chemo, radiation and multiple surgeries you are relieved to be done. Your family and friends are happy to celebrate your return to a normal life. But is that always the case? While weekly doctor appointments, checkups and blood draws are behind you, it can take a while to re-adjust from the fight and flight mode in which you've lived. As much as cancer sucks, you soon find it odd that you don't feel like celebrating this new lease on life. And, as a young cancer survivor, you can be plagued by many questions surrounding life after cancer.

Statistics tell us that you are more likely to get cancer as you get older. In fact, one of the biggest risks factors for the disease is age. So, hearing the words 'you have cancer' at young age can be a double-edged sword. On one hand, you have youth on your side to fight the disease, but on the other, there is a greater chance you may get cancer again in your lifetime. So, for those of us who get cancer in our 20s or 30s, this can derail the celebration that you are cancer free.

The harsh reality for a young cancer survivor is that standardly, we still need to work to live; we may not have expendable income or even have a job with good health insurance. Another reality is coming to understand your own mortality and that you are no longer invincible. You know what it's like to still be on post-cancer drugs or in between surgeries. You've experienced chemo brain, maybe struggled with body distortion or chemo-induced menopause. If single, you must come to terms with explaining to a new love interest that your body is filled with scars both physically and mentally. If in college, you may have had to postpone that degree, and with loss of money, may not be able to return until later in life.

Being "cancer free" also means that you will hold your breath until the next blood test, doctor's visit or health scan. PTSD is real and you seek connection with others who understand. I was a young parent with a uncertain future and quickly came to terms with death. I wrote my own obituary and letters to my daughter on her college graduation day, wedding day and the birth of her firstborn child. Being a mom was my primary purpose for fighting hard to live, and I desperately sought other women who understood my fears of leaving family behind. It was an odd comfort when I found them, but to this day, they are still the ones I turn to when fear creeps in.

You may be deemed cancer free, but the reality is you are never free from cancer. So, the next time a co-worker, friend or loved one is struggling with the aftermath of cancer, take the time to just listen to them. While you may think they look great and are back to their pre-cancer selves, you may not understand that the healing continues long after the treatments stop.

Shay Moraga is a TNBC Survivor and the founder and visionary of Shay's Warriors Life After Cancer, a non-profit community whose focus is to connect in life after cancer. For more information visit www.shayswarriors.org.



Finding peer support can be especially important for young people affected by cancer.



Hospital Staff and Community Benefit from Eisenhower's Simulation Lab

By Lauren Del Sarto

It is hard to imagine the breadth of scenarios medical staff face each day they come to work. To be confidently trained for as many of those scenarios as possible is the goal of Eisenhower Health's new simulation lab, the John Stauffer Center for Innovation in Learning.

With generous funding from the John Stauffer Charitable Trust and The Thomas and Elizabeth Grainger Family, and spearheaded by Medical Director Solomon Sebt, MD, the newly launched center is already training medical residents and staffing up to provide learning opportunities for all medical professionals.

Inspired by Dr. Sebt's collaborations with Loma Linda University, UC Irvine Medical Center, Cedar Sinai, Brooklyn and Brookdale Hospitals back east and Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the highly sophisticated center includes ICU, OBGYN/NICU, medical/surgical and emergency rooms, each fully equipped with the world's most advanced patient simulator manikins by Gaumard®.



Child manikin is used for pediatric care research and education.

"The manikins can make voice commands, perform functions that simulate real-life emergent medical conditions, sweat, bleed, cry, urinate, and use artificial intelligence to converse with learners in real-time using genuine responses," says Sebt, creating high-risk procedures in a low-risk environment.

The center also creates opportunity for teaching collaborations such as Eisenhower's recent inclusion in the Pediatric Emergency Care Applied Research Network (PECARN) – the first federally-funded multi-institutional network for research in pediatric emergency medicine in the United States. "Being a part of PECARN means that the standard of pediatric care in our community will be elevated as we are collaborating with leading academic pediatric centers who will come in to train us and bring us to their facilities as well."

The work is certainly a passion project for Sebt who has envisioned this goal since he was a resident. For years, doctors have received much of their training in real-life scenarios and that can be challenging, especially when people's lives are at stake, he says. "For ER doctors, it's not just clocking in and out, there is a lot of emotional investment that goes with the job. We share a little piece of every family member in those vulnerable times when they need us most, and if you don't have an answer for them, it's hard not to feel like you let everyone down."

"Those moments will happen, especially for residents, but if we can train better, harder and with the most realistic situations in advance of them really happening, then we can minimize those times and work towards the best possible outcomes," concludes Sebt. "That is the goal of simulation."

For more information visit www.eisenhowerhealth.org/news.



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Team Approach to Lifestyle Medicine *Innovative solution extends physician care*

By Katie Hill, MD

Did you know that 80% of chronic disease is preventable and curable with lifestyle change?¹ How stressed or depressed you are, how you eat, how you sleep, how you move and if you smoke or drink alcohol are the lifestyle choices that can cause heart disease, diabetes or hypertension. Sound depressing? The flip side is your behaviors can also cure heart disease, diabetes or hypertension and prevent them from invading your body in the first place.²⁻⁵

Most people know they need to exercise, eat more vegetables, drink less soda and turn off their phones, but change can be overwhelming and many are skeptical about how much difference any change can really make.

Imagine walking into your doctor's office to discuss your health and instead of a brief visit, the doctor spends an hour with you. And, what if your physician not only talked about medications but also about the people you love and why you want to be healthy. What if they brought an entire team of specialists in to form a plan to improve your nutrition, sleep, exercise, stress, anxiety or loneliness. Now imagine your physician told you that this entire interdisciplinary care team would stay connected with you to ensure the action plan you created together was enacted. Even more, your Medicare or Medi-Cal health insurance covers this care.

If you are a patient of Hetal Bhakta, MD at Desert Heart Rhythm Cardiology in Palm Springs, you don't have to imagine. Dr. Bhakta adopted a full lifestyle medicine program to help his patients prevent, reduce damage and even cure heart disease. His patients receive a prescription for lifestyle medicine and a care team that includes a personal health coach, behavioral health specialists, registered dietitians, exercise specialists and connected devices to monitor blood pressure, weight and blood glucose. This team customizes and tailors the program based on individual needs, even providing mental health care.



Virtual practitioners support doctor prescribed lifestyle changes.

"Clinical evidence shows that mental health and lifestyle choices are modifiable risk factors for heart disease. I monitor the physical condition and my patient's emotional health, nutrition, sleep quality and exercise," stated Dr. Bhakta. "During the pandemic, many patients became more stressed, depressed and isolated. This directly worsened their heart health. Many needed more assistance than I could give them, so I brought in the Nudj Health team to help them make lifestyle changes and achieve health."

Dr. Bhakta's extended virtual care team is a partnership with Nudj Health, a lifestyle medicine company that partners with physicians to deliver mental health and lifestyle interventions virtually.

Yuri Sudhakar, CEO and co-founder of Nudj said, "If you have a chronic condition like heart disease, diabetes or cancer, your mental health and behavior choices can be deeply affected. We use an evidence-based model called collaborative care to work with physicians like Dr. Bhakta to treat the whole person and not just the physical disease."

To study the effects of the lifestyle medicine virtual care, Dr. Bhakta and Nudj Health partnered with the Inland Empire Health Plan, a large Medi-Cal provider in the Coachella Valley. They treated 158 patients, 64 of whom participated in a Nudj Health Lifestyle and home-based blood pressure monitoring program (called Remote Patient Monitoring or RPM) and 94 of whom participated in an RPM-only program.

The patients, many of whom struggle with the high cost of living in the area and have food and housing insecurity, were 48% Spanish-speaking only and had common cardiac conditions such as hypertension, atrial fibrillation and coronary artery disease. Enrollment took place between August and November 2022, the results shared here represent care from August to December 2022.

Compared to the RPM-only program, patients in the Nudj Health Lifestyle + RPM program saw reductions in blood pressure and major improvements in depression, anxiety and insomnia. These results are clinically and statistically significant:

- Blood pressure decreased by 6.98 mm Hg systolic and 3.87 mm Hg diastolic in only four months of treatment, which has been estimated to lower the risk of death by 9% for cardiac-related deaths, 14% for stroke-related deaths and 7% for deaths of any cause.⁶
- Treatment with the Bhakta-Nudj team allowed 43% of depressed patients, no matter how severe, to experience half as much depression as when they started. Further, many patients found they no longer had any depression.
- For patients experiencing anxiety, 35% decreased their symptoms by at least half. The symptom decrease occurred with patients with mild, moderate and even severe symptoms.
- In people suffering from insomnia, 27% experienced an improvement in sleep by 50%. This improvement was experienced by even the most severe insomniacs.

All this improvement happened rapidly, taking patients, on average, three months to experience a 50% decrease in symptoms, much faster than the typical 21 months needed for symptom improvement in a normal outpatient treatment setting.⁷

One patient whose life was changed with the Bhakta-Nudj Health coaching was Francisco Garcia Macias, 53. He lives in Palm Springs but commutes to Los Angeles to work. During the pandemic, he contracted COVID and nearly died. He spent three weeks in the ICU and three months in the hospital. Afterwards, he suffered from memory issues, daily pain, weakness and nightmares and was unable to work.

"When I talked to Dr. Bhakta and then met my care manager, it was like a gift from God," said Macias. "Instead of carne asada every week, it was only once a month. No coffee at night helped me sleep. I started losing weight. The burning sensation in my stomach and my pain improved. I want to have my purpose back. I can almost go back to work. I want to get back in the mix for my wife and my children."

Dr. Bhakta said, "Treating patients like this and seeing their lives change is why I became a doctor. And now I have the tools and the team to be more effective than I was before."

Dr. Katie Hill is the Chief Medical Officer of Nudj Health. For more information, visit www.nudjhealth.com.

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International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference Returns

Registration is now open for the 11th annual International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference (PBNHC) taking place September 8-11 at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa in Palm Desert.

This annual CME-accredited medical event brings together health care professionals from around the world to learn the latest research on the power of nutrition to suspend and reverse lifestyle diseases. All health care professionals (or any interested persons) who are passionate about improving the health of their patients and staying up-to-date with the latest developments in the field are encouraged to attend.

This year, PBNHC will welcome back many of the field's foremost experts including Dean Ornish, MD, T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Michael Greger, MD, Koushik Reddy, MD and William Li, MD. Attendees will not only learn about the science that supports the efficacy of whole food, plant-based nutrition to suspend and reverse disease, but also about practical applications for empowering patients to transform their lives. International leaders in the field will share valuable insights into the latest scientific evidence, and this year's keynote speaker is The Plantrician Project's Co-Founder and Chief Medical Officer Scott Stoll, MD.

The PBNHC conference features some of the most respected and accomplished experts in behavioral change and the practical aspects of sustainable change. Attendees will gain a better understanding of how to apply this knowledge to their patients/clients, as well as their own health goals via topics including Effective Communication Techniques for Dietary Intervention, How Not to Age and Making Financial Sense of Lifestyle Medicine Practices.

PBNHC consistently introduces new and promising experts in the plant-based field through its conferences and other educational sessions. Many of today's renowned industry experts had their breakthrough speaking opportunity at this very event.

There will also be comprehensive workshops covering a wide range of topics in plant-based nutrition and lifestyle medicine. Four special workshops on Friday, September 8, include Healthy and Delicious: Cooking with Chef AJ and Healing From the Inside Out with Ken Kaufman, DC.

Networking opportunities

Many have shared that the inspiring community of attendees is one of the most compelling reasons to attend PBNHC as it brings together a community of health care professionals who are passionate about improving the health of their patients through plant-based nutrition as the foundational pillar of their practice.

Continued on page 17

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Oral Cancer Screening

By Sarah A. Khoshniyati, DDS

Just as an annual medical checkup is essential to ensure the body is healthy, a regular oral checkup is crucial to maintaining a healthy mouth and detecting any abnormalities. Regular screenings by your dentist should include an oral cancer screening which aims to discover cancer or precancerous signs early enough to be treated successfully. Oral cancer which can be quite dangerous if not treated at an early stage, making checkups extremely important.



During screenings, dentists look for discoloration, sores or patches that could indicate oral cancer.

Risk Factors. Adults over the age of 20 should have an oral screening at least every three years, while adults over 40 should have one at their annual checkup. Individuals with risk factors, no matter the age, should be screened each year.

There are multiple known risk factors of oral cancer, with smoking as the leading known cause. In fact, individuals who use smokeless tobacco such as chew or dip are also at a higher risk especially in areas of the cheek, lip lining or gums. Excessive alcohol consumption is another associated risk factor. Human papillomavirus, also known as HPV, is a sexually transmitted disease that has been linked to an increase risk of precancerous and cancerous oral lesions and cancer in the oropharynx. Another risk factor is excessive sun exposure, as this can lead to a higher risk of cancer in the lip lining/lip area. Therefore, it's crucial to wear sunscreen. Lastly, a family history of oral cancer can be a risk factor as well. If possible, determine family history of any type of cancer, and provide this information to your medical and dental providers.

Signs. Oral cancer may or may not be associated with symptoms which may include pain upon swallowing, discoloration or patches in the oral cavity, and persistent sores or lumps.

What does an oral cancer screening entail? A clinical exam of both the patient's mouth and throat will be performed using a mirror and/or tongue depressor to look for abnormalities such as areas of discoloration, ulcerations, bumps/patches and swelling. All areas of the tongue, roof of the mouth, inner lining of the cheeks, tonsils and gums also will be examined. Additionally, the dentist will check your lymph nodes in the head and neck area and palpate the jaw for any unusual areas. If abnormal areas are found, the dentist will determine if it should just be monitored or sent out for a biopsy. Occasionally referrals will be made to an oral maxillofacial surgeon for further evaluation.

How can you reduce your risks? Annual dental visits for routine checkups are the best way to minimize risk in addition to a healthy lifestyle. Limit smoking and alcohol intake and wear proper sun protection. Determine your risk factors and establish a schedule for regular oral cancer screenings. Lastly, conduct self-examinations and if an area looks suspicious or symptoms arise, contact your dentist for further evaluation.

Sarah Khoshniyati ("Dr. Sarah") is a dentist with Palm Desert Smiles and can be reached at (760) 568.3602. Visit www.PalmDesertSmiles.com.



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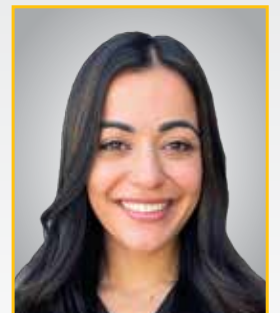


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Living Wellness

with Jennifer Di Francesco



JOMO: The Healthy Alternative to FOMO

The emotional state FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) took center stage as social media came to fruition. Looking at pictures of fancy trips, friends beaming with accomplishments and individuals' alluring pastimes may leave us yearning for similar experiences. We might work to keep up and fill our schedules to appear as if we have substantive pursuits. However, there is a healthier option than reacting with FOMO. Moving into JOMO (Joy of Missing Out), may truly feel like a relief and a much needed reprieve.

JOMO invites us to lessen our fixation on activities in the outside world, and to hold a level of consciousness about our inner world and what truly pleases us. It requires being present in the moment, stepping away from social media and practicing exploratory work to identify true joys.

My personal experience with FOMO and JOMO allowed me to synthesize this lesson, leading to a personal gift. I was feeling as if I was one of the last to see the new Acrisure Arena, so I purchased tickets to a concert that I had already seen elsewhere. While I appreciated the beautiful new venue, I arrived home depleted and playing catch up to recharge my battery on subsequent work nights. Seeing the same performer again fell short of my expectation, and I caught myself longing for a restful night at home. My home is my happy place, yet I allowed others to influence my actions.

Sometimes FOMO is a catalyst to move out of one's comfort zone and connect with others, yet true satisfaction in the moment is a noble goal. Life is too short to not have mindful fulfillment. The only true way to know where, when, why and with whom to be is to find the answers within ourselves. Here are some habits to help build our own unique blueprint for JOMO:

Feel true intention coming from within. Lessen multi-tasking and the urge to be distracted by external stimuli such as scrolling social media, news feeds and phone calls.

Ground in Nature. On a morning walk, stop and note subtle experiences of nature and your groundedness to earth. When we are reminded that not everything has to be a stage performance, we become more apt to return to nature and the feeling of our body in the moment.

Be in the moment. Minimize decision paralysis, commit to a pastime and be grateful and "all in" to the experience. Sometimes having choices leads to an unsettled nature and a shift to FOMO. My daughter experiences FOMO when she can't decide what to eat and wishes she had chosen something else. Lean into decisions with no regrets. Practice gratitude, and in times where FOMO might set in, be thankful you are embracing the moment with awareness.

Life is a series of trade-offs, and we cannot be immersed in over the top and desirable experiences all the time. Sometimes the true joy of life is taking the road less traveled and knowing it made all the difference.

Jennifer Di Francesco is a wellness explorer and desert adventurer and can be reached at www.coachellabellaboho.com.

Are You Ready to Release the Kraken?

By Rev. Laura Shackelford

Do you know people who seem to get everything in life they desire - the perfect relationship, an incredible job, financial abundance - and their lives are filled with joy and happiness? They seem to have the Midas touch.

Are you one of these people? If so, you probably don't need to read any further because you have tapped into your inner power. However, if you want to create a more fulfilling life, whether it is deeper relationships, peace and tranquility or physical or mental healing, it's time to "release the kraken" so you can create what you want right here and now.

What I am referencing is releasing negative beliefs that are unknown to us but trapped in our subconscious mind. Some of you may remember the documentary *The Secret* (2006) which focused on the Law of Attraction. It was new and exciting at the time, and everyone was talking about it, however, since then, science has made leaps and bounds in discoveries of the power of our subconscious minds.

Many people have challenges in physical healing, creating or bringing what they desire into their lives because of deep-seated subconscious traumas and beliefs which are blocking their power to create a fulfilling life. A powerful book which further explains the blocks in our subconscious is *The Emotion Code* by Bradley Nelson, DC. Nelson's theory suggests that negative emotions from past experiences can become trapped in the body at a cellular level causing physical and emotional discomfort. These trapped emotions can be released through a process of identifying the specific emotion and using various techniques to release it, such as magnetic therapy or visualization.

Healing the subconscious is a powerful tool for personal transformation and inner growth. It is a process of becoming aware of and releasing subconscious patterns, traumas and limiting beliefs that are blocking us from our highest potential. It is based on the understanding that our subconscious holds the answers to our emotional, physical and mental well-being. By becoming more aware and releasing old patterns, we can break free from cycles of repeated patterns and gain clarity on our life's path. Healing the subconscious can also uncover new potentials and create positive new patterns in our lives. It can help us reach our goals faster and create healthier, more harmonious relationships with ourselves and those around us.

Working with the subconscious involves utilizing techniques and methods that can help access and influence the deeper layers of the mind beyond our conscious awareness. Common techniques include mindfulness, visualization, affirmations, meditation, breathing and sound therapy which are intended to help individuals identify and overcome psychological barriers, limiting beliefs and negative thought patterns that may be holding them back. These methodologies can help individuals relax their conscious mind, allowing access to deeper levels of awareness and a greater potential for positive change.

Working with the subconscious mind can be useful for personal growth, healing emotional wounds, achieving goals and "releasing the kraken" that is keeping you from manifesting all you desire.

Reverend Laura Shackelford is the co-spiritual director of Spiritual Center of the Desert in Palm Desert. She has been a spiritual minister at the Center welcoming all faiths for over 20 years. For more information, visit www.PDSpiritualCenter.org or call (760) 346.4649.



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Celebrating Naturopathic Medicine

By Delaney Quick, ND and Sonja Fung, ND

In May, we celebrate Naturopathic Medicine Week to spread awareness on how naturopathic doctors (ND) provide safe, effective and individualized health care to our diverse patient population. Naturopathic medicine is a holistic approach to health care that emphasizes prevention and seeking the root cause to promote health and wellbeing. It encompasses modalities from both conventional and traditional health care models, using the six naturopathic principles below and the therapeutic order to guide clinical decision making.

First Do No Harm. NDs apply the therapeutic order (described below) to utilize the least invasive therapies needed for each condition. Doing no harm also means NDs refer to other medical providers when the case is outside their scope of practice.

The Healing Power of Nature. NDs recognize the innate healing force that drives our bodies towards homeostasis and wellbeing. This principle asserts that if we remove offending agents and provide the body with the building blocks it needs, whole health can be achieved.

Identify and Treat the Causes. NDs discover and address the root cause of illness in order to remove obstacles to healing. This can be done alongside symptom suppression, when warranted by severity.

Doctor as Teacher. NDs spend extra time with patients to explain the physiology and pathology of their presentations in order to empower them to take the steps needed to improve their health.

Treat the Whole Person. NDs zoom out and acknowledge the connection between body systems, emotional wellbeing and our environment.

Prevention. NDs seek to optimize lifestyle factors in order to prevent illness and suffering while promoting longevity.

The therapeutic order is a pyramid shaped framework that NDs use to advise the application of these naturopathic principles. This model emphasizes addressing the underlying cause of symptoms while using the least force necessary. The bottom of the pyramid is establishing a strong foundation for health and removing obstacles to cure by addressing core lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise, sleep and stress management. The next tier involves stimulating the body's innate healing mechanisms by supporting its natural processes through therapies such as herbal medicine and hydrotherapy, which can help to strengthen the body's immune system and restore balance. The top of the pyramid consists of suppressing symptoms through natural or conventional therapies. These are considered higher force interventions because they work against the body's healing processes to reduce symptoms.

Simply prescribing supplements and herbs is not a goal of naturopathic medicine. While these are amazing tools, they should only be used as needed to support the body's healing - as are pharmaceuticals. When your body heals, the goal is to be on minimal supplemental support with the foundation of diet, movement, sleep, digestion/elimination and stress management. Additionally, the economic burden of multiple supplements can be staggering. If patients are still on daily capsule overload for years, our job as NDs is far from done.

As natural health care continues to trend and grow, revisiting the core tenants of the naturopathic model emphasizes why NDs have effectively helped patients restore whole health for over a century.

Drs. Quick and Fung are primary care naturopathic doctors at Live Well Clinic in La Quinta and can be reached at (760) 771.5970 or visit www.livewellclinic.org.

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Still Counting Sheep?

Cannabis products may help

By Lewis Lustman

If you miss sleeping like a baby - sans the crying, bed wetting and screaming - then you're with us. Getting older and getting a good night's rest seem to be mutually exclusive. But we know why you're having issues and believe some simple suggestions and appropriate use of CBD tinctures may help you get back those much-needed zzzzzs.

Let's look at why you aren't sleeping well anymore. One major reason is that your brain is aging. Within your hypothalamus - that little structure deep within your brain that keeps your body in a balanced state - is your suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN)¹. Think of it as your master clock that controls your 24-hour cycles which, in turn, influence hunger, hormone release, sleepiness and alertness. As your SCN ages, it becomes less effective. It doesn't produce melatonin as effectively. As you may be aware, melatonin is normally produced in response to darkness; it helps promote sleep by coordinating circadian rhythms. Get out into the sunshine; your SCN will thank you.

As we age, many of us experience a weird phenomenon called phase shift²; your body's circadian rhythms shift forward in time. That's why you get tired earlier in the afternoon and wake up earlier in the morning. Think of it as Daylight Savings Time gone berserk.

The architecture of your sleep also is changing³. Older adults spend more time in the earlier, lighter stages of sleep and less time in the later, deeper stages. These shifts may contribute to waking up more often during the night⁴ and having more fragmented, less restful sleep.

Then consider that almost 40% of adults over the age of 65 take five or more medications⁵. Many over the counter and prescription drugs such as antihistamines can contribute to sleep issues by causing daytime drowsiness, while antidepressants and corticosteroids may keep older people awake.

Then of course there's anxiety, depression, aches and pains, sleep apnea, restless leg syndrome, having to pee and REM sleep disorder that may keep you up. It's a wonder we get any sleep at all.

Select cannabis products may help. CBD by itself can produce calm. CBD products that contain small amounts of THC, which address pain, have earned a reputation for delivering good sleep. Many active adults enjoy gummies, however it's safest to cut a gummy in quarters to gauge the amount that produces the best results for you, since every body reacts differently. And remember that gummies take up to two hours to kick in; *do not take more* if you don't feel the effects quickly! Others may enjoy inhaling by taking 1-2 hits from a vape pen. The onset will be quicker, but the effects will wear off faster than edibles. If you *do* wake up, you may want to simply take one more hit to fall back asleep promptly.

Please use caution when trying cannabis for sleep. The body can build up a tolerance, causing you to need more to enjoy the same results. Doctors with whom we have spoken recommend taking cannabis only occasionally for sleep, not every night. And again, start off low and slow. Sweet dreams!

Lustman is with Senior-High Education and can be reached at (760) 459.4593 or visit www.Senior-High.com.

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California Naturopathic Doctors Face Legislative Challenges

By Shannon Sinsheimer, ND

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) in the state of California (CA) have been practicing as licensed health care providers for the past 20 years and have held state licensure rights for several decades prior. NDs function as primary care providers designated by the state to diagnose and treat medical conditions, order and interpret lab work and imaging and to dispense pharmaceuticals with some restrictions. With state licensure solidly in place, NDs are poised to provide naturopathic medicine and expand opportunities for patient care. However, annual legislative initiatives to alter naturopathic doctors' titles and scope of practice are commonly enacted. While the industry does gain political advancement and enhanced scope, such as a bill signed into place this year enabling NDs to hire LVNs to assist in office, more often than not, the profession is faced with concerning and pointed legislative initiatives that limit those advancements.



Current legislation could potentially make the use of the title 'doctor' by any practitioner other than an MD or DO a misdemeanor.

Most recently, a bill was written by Assemblyman Jim Wood to remove the use of the title 'doctor' by any practitioner who did not hold an 'MD' or 'DO' license (AB 765). While the intent of the bill was to protect anesthesiologists, initial language was broad-based and would also impact naturopathic doctors as well as dentists, pharmacists, chiropractors, PhDs, etc. NDs are the more vulnerable and less staffed organization affected by this change, which means less finances and manpower to fight such bills. With a small legislative team of five, a single lobbyist and financial support from donations, a lobby day in Sacramento this past March was successful in gaining approval of suggested language changes to the bill which will allow NDs to keep the title designation of 'doctor.' This is great news, and at the time of writing this article, the bill has passed its initial hearing and moves forward in the legislative process with a strong understanding that the language of the bill will be amended as discussed at lobby day.

While this is positive news and hopefully a continued success, it underscores critical issues with legislative pressures that attempt to withhold the progression of naturopathic medicine. The California Naturopathic Doctors Association (CNDA) has an action plan and timeline to expand both doctor and patient rights in CA, such as insurance coverage for naturopathic medicine and expanded medical scope of care; however, when the CNDA and its legislative team spend all their resources and time protecting the ND title and license against bills like this, little is left to progress legislative initiatives.

As patients and consumers of naturopathic medicine, there are steps you can take to support these efforts. First, if an ND sends you an email asking you to send a pre-formed letter to your state representative supporting a bill in their favor, please take five minutes to do so. If you are not on an email list for these updates, please sign up at www.calnd.org. Secondly, send in your receipt and superbill from your patient appointment with your ND to your insurance provider. It is a small step, but the more pressure there is for in-network coverage and the more out-of-pocket coverage is requested, it can be impactful for insurance providers. Unfortunately, legislative pressure is best to gain insurance coverage for patients, but consumer advocacy can still be effective. Also, consider contributing financial support to your NDs state association, CNDA (www.calnd.org) to fight for your rights to receive quality health care from your preferred provider. Lastly, stay in touch with your ND even when your health relationship is annual versus monthly as this allows your ND to contact you when a letter campaign to state representatives is taking place.

Naturopathic doctors in the state of CA have had excellent relationships with many state representatives and allied health care providers. Legislative initiatives aimed at changing NDs' success in providing health care in the state are often initiated by outside forces. With the help of ongoing communication with key state representatives, NDs have thus far been successful in protecting, and at times even expanding, license scope, but it is time to move forward and break barriers which limit patient access to naturopathic medicine.

Dr. Sinsheimer of Optimal Health is a member of the CNDA executive legislative team and spends her time lobbying in Sacramento with the organization. She can be reached at (760) 568.2598 or drsinsheimer@optimalhealthpd.com.

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– Shannon Sinsheimer, ND



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Go(A2)t Milk?

By Dr. Shari Jainuddin

Maybe you are like me, and although you don't have a full-blown dairy allergy, you consciously consume dairy and have earmarked which forms affect you and how - stomach grumbles, maybe a bathroom trip and/or sinus congestion. I've tried alternatives, each with their pros and cons (taste being a theme in the con column) and never getting that satisfaction of dairy. Even the lactose-free dairy option didn't seem to solve my post-consumption issues.

In walks goat milk. Not knowing my world would change forever, it was a delightful acquaintance. I grabbed it off the shelf thinking, "Why not? I like goat cheese and have tried everything else." By that point, my dairy adventures had dwindled down to mostly just cream in my morning coffee. I couldn't have been happier. The creamy richness of dairy without the typical symptoms! But why? This sent me down the road of comparing cow milk to goat milk.

Combing through the data, I found evidence of nutritional values of both cow and goat milk that would support either one coming out on top. A lot of the discrepancies resulted from the breeds they used for comparison, as different breeds of each animal produce slight variations of nutrients which then gets spun into claims such as "(cow/goat) milk has more protein" when in fact it is a minimal value (9g vs 8g). Nothing jaw dropping.



There are a few other aspects that do make their profiles unique. One exception is that the fat in goat milk contains smaller molecules than cow milk, offering more surface area for our enzymes to access and break down the molecules, aiding in improved ease of digestion. Another variable is the ratio of A1/A2 β -casein proteins. The A1-casein molecule resulted from a genetic mutation in cows about 8,000 years ago when a single amino acid changed from a histamine to a proline in its molecular structure. This one structural change is postulated to change the functionality of this milk. Also, the digestion of the A1 version produces a fragment called β -casomorphin-7 (β CM7), an opioid peptide that has been debatably linked to increased rates of heart disease and type 1 diabetes, digestive issues and inflammation. There are other differences that set them apart and continue to be researched, including formation of micelles, chaperone molecules and abilities to aggregate (form curds).

The A1 mutation did not happen in non-cow dairy, such as goat. You may have noticed that there is an A2 version of cow's milk in stores. The breed of cows that produce this type of milk has been bred to contain only the A2-casein, which was universal prior to the mutation. If you have dairy sensitivities, this may be an option worth trying. It could be your answer. Unfortunately, as with lactose-free cow milk, the A2 version didn't resolve my sensitivities either.

Goat milk has brought full enjoyment to my morning coffee again. If you have struggled with cow milk and are okay with consuming animal products, I encourage you to give goat milk or other non-cow dairy options a try. Hopefully it turns out to be a productive journey!

Dr. Shari Jainuddin is a naturopathic primary care doctor at One Life Naturopathic and also offers biofeedback training and craniosacral therapy. For more information, call (442) 256.5963 or visit www.onelifenaturopathic.org.

Sources available upon request.

A Look at Light Therapy for Wellness

By Lauren Del Sarto

When I was a little girl and got sick, my mother would bundle me up in a blanket and place my face in the sun. To this day, if I'm not feeling well, she'll say, "go out and get some sun." Enhancing my health and mood with sunlight is so ingrained, I built a little beach in my backyard so I can sit with my feet in the sand and face in the sun whenever I can. I just love the way it makes me feel.



Del Sarto regularly practices red light therapy for its many benefits.

With light therapy as a global wellness trend, I thought I'd explore how it is used in this realm. While we have featured several articles by practitioners on its medicinal use, it wasn't until my introduction to red light therapy at Restore Hyper Wellness that I learned of the benefits for overall wellbeing. So I did some research.

It was interesting to learn that light and color were some of the earliest healing modalities. Ancient Greeks were the first to document the practice and built healing temples like those in the "city of the sun," Heliopolis, which used light and a variety of colors to treat specific medical conditions.¹ Fast forward to 1903 when physician Niels Finson received a Nobel Prize in Medicine for his use of red light therapy to heal smallpox and lupus vulgaris, a form of skin tuberculosis.² Since then, light therapy has been widely used medically for skin conditions, cancer therapy, wound healing, sports injuries and more.³

In wellness, the use of red light therapy, which encompasses beneficial light rays versus harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, is said to boost energy and mood, rejuvenate skin, increase circulation and reduce inflammation. It is thought to work by producing a biochemical effect in cells that strengthens the mitochondria, our cell powerhouses. By increasing the function of the mitochondria, a cell can make more energy (adenosine triphosphate or APT), allowing it to function more efficiently, boost cell rejuvenation and growth, and to repair damage.⁴

Energized cells stimulate collagen production (providing skin structure, strength and elasticity), increase blood circulation to tissues, reduce inflammation at the cellular level and just make us feel better. The recommended 10-12 minutes are all you need to start feeling the benefits.

Looking into this certainly helped me better understand why I enjoy this therapy - and why my mother's prescription always seemed to work. If you are interested in trying red light therapy, remember it is always best to speak with a qualified health care professional first.

Lauren Del Sarto is founder and publisher of Desert Health and can be reached at Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com.

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Overcoming the Feeling of Being Alone

By Dipika Patel, CHHC

I often experience clients struggling with being alone or feeling loneliness. With this article, my goal is not to get into the semantics of this word, but to bring awareness to what this may mean for you.

The experience of loneliness can often stem from unresolved issues or trauma from the past, particularly from childhood. The feeling may show up in your life at any age, presenting as abandonment, rejection, anxiety, etc. When it does, you may not understand where it is coming from and feel you don't fit in, cannot find the right person to be a part of your life, or that you have nobody with whom to share your life, leaving you feeling unworthy, insecure and out of control.

With these emotions, some of us may have the reaction to pull away even more, creating a life of isolation which leaves us feeling bitter, angry and resentful about how life is hard and how unsupported or misunderstood you feel by those close to you. This is a dysregulation of the mind, which in turn, can create dysregulation of the body, causing dis-ease and disconnection.

Your loneliness may also have you over- or under-doing things, rushing through life, hurrying your daily duties or hurrying others by presenting impatience. You may be filling your day with things to do, but not really allowing yourself the time and space to enjoy them. With this, the outcome may be clumsiness, procrastination, having

accidents or issues with others; there is much dysfunction.

My dear friend, trying to fill your loneliness by looking for a companion or anything outside of yourself is not the solution; it will never be enough.

I am not here to fix you; you don't need fixing. I am here to let you know that you are worthy of being loved; you are strong enough to handle life on your own terms. And I want to invite you to move to the melodious rhythm of your own beat, embrace it even if you think it may be a bit off. You don't have to run away from the sadness and pain anymore. Look at it, allow yourself to see that it is only a thought; bring that thought back to your body and recognize it; feel where you are tense, blocked and not acknowledging the discomfort; breathe and let it pass; come back to the present.

Keep doing this until you find yourself in a place that you can see that you are exactly where you need to be - and life is a blessing. Allow yourself to see that you, too, can be happy. This, my friend, is mindfulness.

As actress Ellen Burstyn so eloquently said, "What a lovely surprise to discover how un-lonely being alone can be."

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

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Dr. Shari Jainuddin, NMD, BCB
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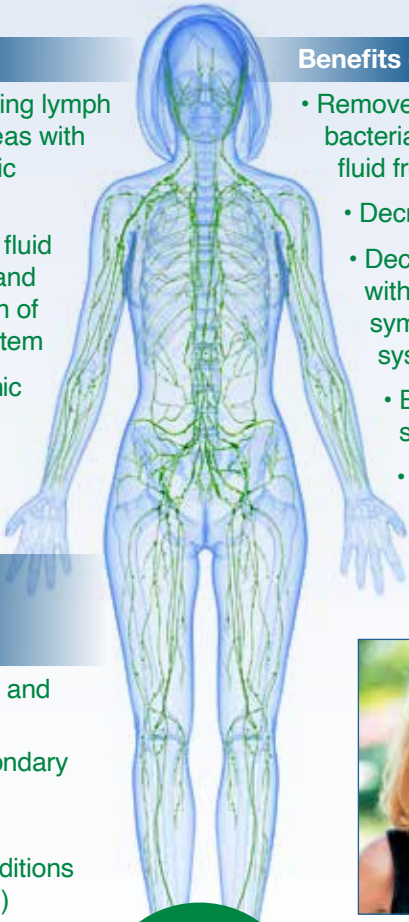
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How Does Your Garden Grow? The philosophy of biodynamic farming

By Candice Nicole

Season has come to a close, hopefully allowing for less hectic schedules and more time for sharing healthy and leisurely meals at home with family and friends. Wouldn't it be special if some portion of your feasts came from your very own organic garden?

While May and June are not the most ideal months to plant a plethora of healthy harvests in our desert, it is a good time to start learning how to prepare your soil to maximize mineral nutrition. One of the best ways to do that is through bio-dynamic gardening, because the healthier our soil, the healthier our gardens and the healthier our food.

Bio-dynamic farming uses 100% self-made organic compost from reused and recycled foods within the same environment, along with pest and contamination-controlled practices to produce healthier, nutrient-dense foods and to greatly aid our planet.

Biodynamic agriculture is considered by many to be the most advanced and holistic form of organic farming and gardening on the planet. It was developed in the early 1920's by Rudolf Steiner, trained scientist, respected philosopher and creator of the spiritual philosophy anthroposophy. As farmers at the time were concerned with the decline in healthy soils, plants and animals, they sought the advice of Steiner who spent most of his life researching the subtle forces within nature. From a series of lectures and conversations, the fundamental principles of biodynamic farming and gardening emerged as a unified approach to agriculture that relates the ecology of the farm organism to that of the entire cosmos.

Steiner was the first to bring awareness of the dangers of synthetic fertilizers, the perspective of the farm as a single, self-sustaining organism that thrives through biodiversity, integration of crops and livestock and the creation of a closed-loop system of fertility. The result was a comprehensive approach to soil, plant, animal and human health that recognizes the importance of the healthy interplay of cosmic and earthly influences. He developed a set of homeopathic preparations used by biodynamic farmers on soil, compost and plants that help build up the farm's innate immune system and vital forces. In the 1980s, biodynamic farmers in the northeast used Steiner's economic ideas to pioneer the concept of community supported agriculture (CSA), which has since been adopted by thousands of farms across North America.

Biodynamic farming or gardening's purposeful goal is to create a diverse, balanced eco-system that generates healthy and fertile soils as much as possible from within the farm itself (or your home). It's simple: healthy soils = healthier mineral nutrients = healthier foods = healthier humans. And healthier foods taste better! Compost preparations are made from fermented manure, minerals and herbs which aid, restore and harmonize the vital life forces of the farm and enhance the nutrition, quality and flavor of the food being raised or grown.

Biodynamics is a spiritual, ethical and ecological approach to agriculture, gardens, food production and nutrition. Happy and healthy feast, and perhaps, farming or gardening days ahead.

Candice Nicole is a health advocate and founder of HUmineral food derived mineral nutrients. She can be reached at info@HUmineral.com or (888) 765.0087. For more information visit www.HUmineral.com.

Sources: 1) Farmer Jack; One Gun Ranch, Malibu, CA; <https://onegunranch.com/pages/one-gun-ranch> 2) M. Nesteruk, Master Gardner

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Bee Dreams: Messages From Mother Goddess

By Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos

"The dream is a continuation of the waking state," Sigmund Freud famously said in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. As we move from April showers to May flowers, I thought it might be fun to consider what the presence of honeybees in our dreams may signify.

Have you ever heard, "Do you have a bee in your bonnet?" The translation of a bee-in-your-bonnet dream might mean obsessive ideas buzzing around in your head. The saying is first found in a mid-1500 translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*.¹ Buzzing bees often symbolize love and can be found in messages of affection: the Valentine's Day note requesting "Bee Mine," or "You've been stung by the Love Bug!"² The good news is that obsessive thoughts of business and love together often manifest solutions in dreams.

In the dream world, the spiritual significance of the bee represents the wise use of nature through pollination and honey as food and love. It has been said to represent female intuition and wisdom applied to the universal intelligence of a united community, which without, a bee cannot survive.⁴

The healthy hum of hive life symbolizes community, continuance, regeneration and a connection to our ancestors. Many scholars believe early cultures of the Mediterranean worshiped the bee as a mother-goddess, as honey in food represents sweetness, healing and love.

So, might bee dreams be a mother-goddess message to find common ground, spread love and contribute goodness in our community? As critical pollinators, bees certainly do just that. In fact, they are responsible for \$30 billion a year in crops, and pollinate 70 of the 100 crops that feed 90% of the world.⁵

The reality is that bees are a dream come true, and life without them would be unimaginable.

As we move deep into spring, our daily lives and dreams reflect the shift from winter's sleep to a full energetic reawakening in business, life and love. With the spring equinox, we balance equal amounts of daylight and darkness,⁶ thus, our busy-bee daily lives might be reflected in our nightly dreams as the bee-mother-goddess reminding us to pollinate our community with goodness and love.

Kathleen O'Keefe-Kanavos of Rancho Mirage is a survivor, author, dream expert, 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.

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Heaven's Doorstep to Longevity Hotspot

Continued from page 1

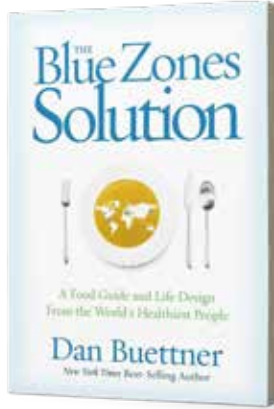
them into these healthy behaviors as they moved throughout their days.

Based on this research, Blue Zones makes healthy choices easy through permanent and semi-permanent changes to human made surroundings, policies, systems, and social networks. Instead of a focus just on individual behavior change (diet and exercise), it improves the places and spaces people spend the most time so healthy choices are easier.

Partnerships with more than 75 U.S. communities over the past 20+ years have dramatically improved overall population health and well-being with double-digit drops in obesity and smoking rates, economic investment in downtown corridors, grant funding awards to support policies and programs to improve health equity, and measurable savings in health care costs along with many individual lives changed.

There are three stages towards becoming a Blue Zones community: 1) **Activate Readiness Assessment** (4-9 months), currently nearing completion in both the City of Palm Springs and Riverside County; 2) **Foundation** (9-11 months) in which the Blue Zones team creates a foundation and works with local organizations and individuals to develop a blueprint to ignite transformation; and 3) **Transformation** (3-7+ years), the full community-wide movement to change surroundings, systems, policy, accessibility and behaviors.

"We don't go into communities and say, 'here's what you do,' but rather take the time to understand the strengths and challenges when it comes to well-being," says Blue Zones' Vice President of Community Engagement Nick Buettner. "Then we explore what we can do to support the solution using evidence-based strategies, expert recommendations and proven successes." It is a true partnership, he adds, emphasizing that leadership, worksites, non-profits and organizations need to come together to ensure success.



A sense of community or "tribe" is part of the Blue Zones' Power 9.

Many who worked with the Clinton Health Matters Initiative (CHMI) from 2013-2018 may recognize words like blueprint, stakeholders and policy changes and wonder if this is a reincarnation. According to Tricia Gehrlein, former regional director of the CHMI who now works with the Blue Zones team as a community improvement expert, the differences are significant.

"With the CHMI, we wanted the community to identify and lead the work. Blue Zones conducts assessments and offers specific recommendations based on expert advice and proven successes," she says adding that they

also have many more boots on the ground. "Whereas I was the one representative in the market for the CHMI, Blue Zones hires and trains a local team who deploys the work on the ground, organizes volunteer groups, and oversees the blueprint implementation plans."

Blue Zones also works at street level encouraging grocery stores to alter design and layout that make healthier choices easier, like changing items in the checkout lines and showcasing nutritious offerings. They encourage restaurants - who can become Blue Zones Approved - to add and highlight healthier menu items and worksites to create beneficial programs for employees. Restaurants and grocery stores in other communities have seen improvements in their sales and customer base.

"To me the biggest difference is Blue Zones' focus on individuals and a sense of purpose," states Gehrlein. "They offer resources and workshops to help individuals identify and find new purpose, and while they don't endorse any specific religion, faith and having a sense of community or "tribe" with shared beliefs is part of their Power 9."

The concept of a like-minded tribe comes from Okinawa, Japan, where upon birth people are assigned social support networks called *moais* in which they remain throughout their life. These friends come together weekly or a few times a week to gossip, gather and share life experiences, advice and even financial assistance when needed.

In late May, both the City of Palm Springs and the six other Riverside County communities will receive their Blue Zones Readout and Proposal, the culmination of months of research, analysis, community engagement, one-on-one interviews and discussions with community leaders and partners that outlines the direction for future stages of the Blue Zones work. Each will have a 60-day period to review and determine if they have the capability, resources, funding and support to move forward.

Discussions on our region becoming a Blue Zones community have been underway for years, and it is wonderful to learn of this progress. While funding for the entire Coachella Valley would be ideal, starting with opposite ends of the valley increases the opportunity for our entire community to adopt policy, programs, attitudes and habits for healthier, happier - and longer - living.

Lauren Del Sarto is the founder and publisher of Desert Health and can be reached at Lauren@DesertHealthNews.com. For more information visit www.bluezones.com.

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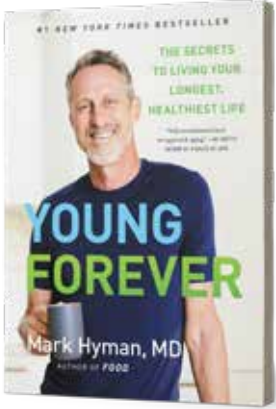
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Mark Hyman, MD's Young Forever

A Review by Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH

More than 10 years ago I became interested in two areas of alternative medicine: functional medicine and anti-aging. Functional medicine addresses the present health habits of a person to prevent or reverse disease. Anti-aging medicine addresses the future and seeks greater longevity and health span. As I attended conferences in both areas, I was impressed that the anti-aging community tended to look at scientific breakthroughs but did not pay much attention to what people were eating or doing today. Pastries were served during the breaks!

Mark Hyman, MD is a pioneer of functional medicine. In addition to running his own clinical practice, the UltraWellness Center in Massachusetts, he is also founder of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine and board president for clinical affairs for the Institute for Functional Medicine (ifm.org). He has written over 20 books in nutrition and healthy lifestyle. His latest, *Young Forever*, bridges functional medicine with anti-aging, a most welcome development.



In my Restore Health Disease Reversal office, I have a shelf of books on anti-aging and *Young Forever* is a welcome addition. It is the most current and comprehensive of these offerings. The book is divided into three parts and 18 chapters. The first part is "How and Why We Age" looking at both the science of aging and our current nutrition and health habits. Compounds such as rapamycin discovered on Easter Island, and melatonin (not just for sleep) are discussed. There are 10 known hallmarks of aging and Hyman discusses how we can address these with nutrition and supplements. Think cleaning up the damage to our cells and taking out the garbage.

The second part of the book is "Optimizing Your Health Span and Life Span." Seven core biological systems are described:

1. Nutrients, digestion and the microbiome
2. Immune and inflammatory systems
3. Energy, keeping our mitochondria healthy
4. Detoxification and elimination
5. Communication systems - hormones, neurotransmitters and cell-signaling molecules
6. Optimizing circulation and lymphatic flow
7. Structural health and imbalances

The third and final part of the book provides a program for staying "young forever." Testing, nutrition (including supplements) and lifestyle practices are discussed in detail. The recommendations are comprehensive and practical. This book is a guide to the latest science and health practices to avoid aging as much as possible today. If everyone followed Dr. Hyman's *Young Forever* program, I suspect life expectancy would increase by 20 years and even more for the number of years we are healthy. I am certainly on board with this.

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

Fiber: The Carb You Should Be Counting

By Regina Basterrechea, MS, CNC, FNL

Average American adults eat 10-15 grams of fiber daily, significantly less than the 22-34 grams recommended to prevent common health maladies including obesity, cardiovascular disease, digestive disorders and colon cancer. Current research supports even higher recommendations of 50 grams daily for ideal metabolic health, which includes optimal blood sugar (fasting glucose), triglycerides, HDL cholesterol, blood pressure and waist circumference.

Despite the health benefits of lower-carb diets, fiber is a carbohydrate, so fiber intake is reduced when eating fewer carbohydrates.

Fiber's best-known role is supporting the movement of food and nutrients through the intestinal tract for regular bowel movements, lowering LDL cholesterol and raising HDL. Fiber also helps slow down blood sugar absorption, reducing insulin levels so your body can use stored fat for fuel and suppresses a hormone called ghrelin that signals hunger to the brain.

There is also new research on its benefits in significantly improving acid reflux. It's hypothesized that increasing motility in the intestine and strengthening the contraction of the lower esophageal sphincter helps prevent acid from backing up.

Lastly, soluble fiber is a prebiotic and feeds the gut microbiota, the habitat of microorganisms, such as fungi, bacteria, archaea, protists and algae in the large intestine. As food passes, these microbes take the phytonutrients and fiber to produce neurotransmitters, fatty acids and vitamins and regulate gene expression to support our overall physical and mental health.

These microbes thrive on variety, so strive to eat 30+ unique, colorful vegetables, leafy greens, mushrooms, onions, garlic, fruits, nuts, seeds, herbs, teas and spices weekly. Great sources of fiber are berries, lentils, nuts, seeds like chia and ground flaxseeds, chickpeas, quinoa, avocado, apples, winter squash and broccoli.

Using an app like Cronometer or MyFitnessPal to track your fiber intake for a few days will give you a good starting point. From there, gradually increase your intake by no more than 5 grams daily since increasing too quickly may cause GI distress. Soluble fiber requires water to move through the gut, so aim for half your body weight in ounces of water daily, preferably 16 ounces or more between meals and no more than 8 ounces with meals to prevent diluting stomach acids from breaking down foods. Generally, getting fiber from whole foods is better than through supplements.

Note that fiber has a beneficial anti-inflammatory effect and aids in digestion in most healthy people. Still, researchers have found that select unfermented fibers increase inflammation and worsen symptoms in some inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) patients with missing or malfunctioning gut microbes. So, it's wise to work with a practitioner and to start slow and track carefully to figure out what works best for you.

The good news is the gut microbiota responds quickly to dietary changes in as little as three days, so start tracking and please share your experiences with me via email. I would love to hear what you've discovered.

Regina Basterrechea is a functional nutrition and lifestyle practitioner with Nutrition on a Mission and can be reached at regina.basterrechea@gmail.com or (760) 799.6550. For more information, visit www.PersonalNutrition.Coach.



International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare

Continued from page 7

Attending the conference allows you to connect with this community and gain the support and motivation needed to continue making a positive impact in the world of health care.

The conference offers a variety of networking opportunities and many build valuable relationships while exchanging ideas and best-practices. It is a wonderful opportunity to make new friends, find new business partners or even find a new job in the industry. For those with a product or service in-line with The Plantrician Project's message, the conference is a great way to promote your offerings.

Continuing medical education credits

By attending PBNHC, health care professionals can earn valuable continuing medical education (CME) credits and gain unlimited, on-demand access to the conference presentations for one year. Not only does the cost of attending the PBNHC conference cover all the sessions, CMEs and materials, it also includes nine delicious plant-based meals. This presents an excellent opportunity to experience the advantages of a plant-based diet firsthand as you savor delectable plant-based cuisine and discover new recipes and cooking techniques.

Each year, PBNHC presents a Luminary Award for outstanding contributions to the field of plant-based nutrition. This year's honoree is John McDougall, MD, a



Industry leader and award-winning author Dean Ornish, MD will present this year.

true pioneer in the field who has spent over four decades advocating for a whole food, starch-based diet as a means of achieving optimal health and wellness. His research and advocacy have helped to advance our understanding of the role of nutrition in preventing and reversing chronic disease, and his work has inspired countless individuals to make positive changes in their own lives.

For those unable to attend in-person, virtual registration is available. Attendees may enjoy all CME-accredited sessions online at the time and place of their choosing. Please note that pre-conference

workshops will not be available virtually. Members of the Plantrician Provider's Directory are entitled to \$200 off in-person or virtual registration. To learn more about becoming a Plantrician Provider, visit www.plantrician.org.

For the full agenda and more information on the 11th annual International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference, visit www.pbnhc.com. For questions, please email info@pbnhc.com or call (561) 810.6713.



Friends, colleagues and plant-based luminaries Caldwell Esselstyn, Jr. MD, Michael Greger, MD, Dean Ornish, MD and Michael Klaper, MD



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SCAN ME



Think Good and It Will Be Good

By Amy Austin, PSYD, LMFT

Why is it so difficult to delete, refresh or update the 60,000 thoughts we have daily? We can clear the cache of our computers and the data is instantly gone. Our thoughts seem to be hardwired into the hard drives of our consciousness; stored forever in a cloud called our past. This documented history can show up and negatively impact our lives and interpersonal relationships. We can easily be triggered and get caught in the web of, "I think, therefore I am," spiraling down and leaving us spent.

You are not your mind. You are not your thoughts. You are a rich, deeply layered unique being that does not have to be ruled by negative fixed beliefs, the "Stinkin' Thinkin'" that can hold you emotionally hostage. The messages we are given as children, such as don't talk, don't share, don't feel, can negatively affect the present, leaving us feeling helpless to elicit positive change.

A child approximately 5 to 11 years is a concrete thinker. Life situations are seen as either black or white, all or nothing. As a child grows, they are able to think abstractly or outside the box. If there is turmoil around them, they might internalize it, wondering what they did wrong, if they are good enough, smart enough, pretty or handsome enough and when in survival mode, might ask, "What will happen to me?" In adulthood, maladaptive behaviors such as angry outbursts (rage) and other issues with mood lability, depression, anxiety, panic, post-traumatic stress, addictions, as well as anti-social behaviors can negatively impact adulthood and keep positive thinking and a positive sense of self at bay.

It is imperative to decide what hill on which you are going to die. This takes consciousness. Instead of feeling like a hamster on a wheel, become more cognizant of your thoughts. *The Power of Now* author Eckhart Tolle posits, "The beginning of freedom is the realization that you are not 'the thinker.' The moment you start watching the thinker, a higher level of consciousness becomes activated...You realize that all the things that truly matter - beauty, love, creativity, joy, inner peace - arise from beyond the mind. You then begin to awaken."

- **Make a list of core feelings** such as joy/happy, anger, fear, lonely, sad, shame, guilt, confused, frustrated. Check this list daily as a 'feelings check' exercise. This can help you become more contemplative, self-aware and able to handle stressful situations.
- **Challenge your thoughts.** Question if your thoughts are true and how you feel when you think the thought. Then reframe the thought to decrease shame, pain or fear to create a more positive and empowering life experience.
- **Ask yourself what you need to do in the moment to take care of you.** Utilize compassion and sensitivity for the self that has been hurt in the past. You are now your inner child's safe parent.
- **Visualize your thoughts** like an ocean wave. Your thoughts can now gently flow in and flow out as you consciously do not get in your own way.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe said, "Tracht gut vet zein gut." Think good, and it will be good. Easier said than done, but all it takes is the first thought. I'm thinking you can.

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.



Childhood experiences can cloud positive thinking.

YMCA Offers Senior Fitness Program

YMCA of the Desert (Y) is working to bring senior fitness to our community by hosting Vitality Forever's Senior Classes three days per week in their space at The Shops at Palm Desert (formerly Westfield Mall). The classes are open to any person 55+ whose goal is to move and feel better.

The classes, which start in June, will be held Monday, Wednesday and Friday and will provide a variety of activities that incorporate equal doses of flexibility, balance, coordination, gate mechanics and strength training.

"The vision of the Family YMCA of the Desert is to strengthen community through youth development, social responsibility and healthy living for all ages," says CEO Paula Simonds. "We are excited to now offer this fun and effective fitness programming for seniors in our community."

Each session will be unique, says nationally recognized exercise specialist Carly Belle of Vitality Forever who created and will lead the program. "Our tools and practices enable people to keep and develop autonomy through specialized movement and exercise as medicine," she adds. "We believe that posture is the beginning and end of all movement, and it is of paramount importance, because when the body is in symmetry, every system in our body is healthy."

As part of the collaboration, offerings will include Parkinson's specific classes and private training to help those affected. "Exercise and movement are the leading ways to delay this disease," says Belle. "Experiential evidence has proven that the more movement is performed, the less severe the symptoms. We offer a fun environment to help clients take control of their symptoms and learn to live positively and constructively with their disease."

Classes are open to anyone 55 and older. A donation of \$10-\$20 per class, or \$160 per month for unlimited classes, is suggested but not required. Participants are asked to bring water and a towel and caregivers are requested to attend as needed.

"Vitality Forever empowers people to realize that we are all in charge of our bodies; our body is not in charge of us," adds Belle. "Whether you are a seasoned exerciser or just beginning, we encourage all to join the Y's healthy fitness community. Whether you're here for a day or committed to years, we've got precisely what you need and are passionate, determined and supportive."

Vitality Forever Senior Classes will be held at The Shops at Palm Desert | YMCA space located at 72-840 Hwy 111. For more information and to register, please email Carly@vitalityforever.org or call (208) 720.2242. www.vitalityforever.org.



Program will focus on balance, flexibility, strength and coordination.



Pros and Cons of Therapeutic Lying

Compliments of Alzheimers Coachella Valley

“Don’t tell lies.” It’s a lesson your parents likely taught you at a young age. And yet, compassionate communication when interacting with someone with memory loss sometimes necessitates the need for “therapeutic lying.”

Therapeutic lying or fibbing, as it is sometimes called, is when you tell a fib or bend the truth to fit the reality of a person who has dementia. This compassionate act is not about deceiving your family member; you are simply helping your loved one to feel safe, secure and comfortable.

Individuals with memory loss are often scared and acting out of fear. They are frightened because they no longer recognize their surroundings or believe their family members are strangers, and unfortunately, in some cases, honesty is not always the best policy. This is because their brain may experience a different version of reality. Dementia damages the brain and causes progressive decline in the ability to understand and process information. Forcing someone to abandon their version of reality and join “our real world” can cause confusion, pain, anxiety and anger. As a caregiver, you can address and eliminate some of these fears through therapeutic lying. Here are some examples in which the fib is used so as not to cause unnecessary pain, anguish, worry and/or agitation:

- Person with cognitive impairment: “Where is my husband?”
- Caregiver (knows the person’s husband is deceased): “He’s not here right now, but I’ll let you know when he arrives.”
- Person with cognitive impairment: “I don’t have a doctor’s appointment. There is nothing wrong with me.”
- Caregiver (knows the appointment is with an oncologist): “It’s just a regular check-up.”
- Person with cognitive impairment: “Why can’t I drive my car?”
- Caregiver (knows the car was sold because driving would be dangerous): “Your car is in the shop for repairs.”

Using therapeutic lying as a technique to communicate with a loved one with dementia can take some getting used to. Telling even a small lie to your loved one can leave you with feelings of guilt. Even in the advanced stages of dementia, your loved one may experience moments of lucidity and there is a risk he or she will realize you lied and feel angry or betrayed. Some dementia experts believe lying under any circumstance is demeaning and shows a lack of respect. Therapeutic lying can take a toll as the caregiver may have a natural reflex not to lie, especially to a parent, and the emotional hurdle of overcoming that feeling can be difficult.

Dementia experts advise caregivers to use their intuition to determine if therapeutic lying is appropriate when providing care for their loved ones. If you do not feel comfortable using this communication technique, other approaches to consider include:

- Instead of agreeing or disagreeing with your loved one’s statements, try distracting or redirecting him or her to another topic.
- Allow your loved one to believe his or her reality as long as he or she is happy and not in danger.
- Only use therapeutic lying when it is necessary for your loved one’s safety or when it will enhance his or her quality of life.

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Mindful Meditation Mantra and the Markets

These days, many individuals are seeking ways to be calm and in the present, appreciate their lives and develop practices to stay focused. The financial events over the past few years have provided a perfect opportunity to practice these tools.

Mindfulness. According to mindfulness.org, “Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us.” The recent bank failures are a good example of when to put practice into play. Mainstream’s first reaction was to panic, wondering if the U.S. banking system was failing. However, when we look at the variables, we can breathe easier. The Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) situation was largely due to the bank’s low interest treasuries on their balance sheet; the bank needed to raise cash to meet its obligations in an increased inflation environment, which forced SVB to sell their treasury holdings at a loss, igniting a domino effect. Once a bank shows signs of instability, depositors want to withdraw their money as soon as possible. However, the banking system, as it works today, allows for banks to lend a majority of depositors monies, so when the demand for withdrawals increase, they are forced to raise the cash through the sale of assets. Too many demands for withdrawals will ultimately put the bank’s margins out of compliance and the Feds step in. To note, a few months prior, SVB was deemed having a solid balance sheet.

How can we be mindful in this situation? First, gather all the facts. Second, look at where you bank and how much you have on deposit. For example, if you have more than \$250,000 in an individual account, the FDIC insurance limit, it behooves you to diversify among other institutions to ensure you are fully FDIC insured.

Meditation. There are many types of meditation. Just being present is one. Another is to close your eyes, and practice clearing your thoughts in a space with no distraction. As a beginner, thoughts will constantly fill your mind. Simply acknowledge them and go back to the breathing. The same exercise works for your investment portfolio. All the “noise” of the markets can pull you out of focus and distract your well-balanced portfolio. Assuming, you are properly diversified, it’s important to acknowledge the news of the day, but remember events of the markets are short-term. Although some have long-term effects, a properly diversified portfolio will weather the storms.

This is where having a mantra can help. A mantra is a repeated word, sound or phrase such as “stay calm,” “remain focused,” “it’s just noise.” Of course, it’s just as important to check your portfolio and your financial plan to ensure you are still on track to meet your goals. Just remember to relax, practice your mantra and stay focused.

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

Source: 1) <https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started>

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Travel Health Insurance

By Randy Foulds

Packing for your summer vacation means finding room for all the essentials. One that many might forget is travel health insurance.

Now, keep in mind that trip insurance and travel insurance are very different. Trip insurance, usually purchased from your agent or online booking site, insures you against loss for having to cancel or postpone your trip. Travel insurance, or international health insurance, insures you against loss for health emergency or accidental injury while traveling abroad. Most group or individual health plans offered in California have no coverage beyond U.S. borders. Some Medicare supplements do have a \$50,000 lifetime coverage for international accidental injury, but this coverage may not be enough and may be somewhat difficult to use. This coverage is also limited to pay just what Medicare would have approved and covered if the condition happened in the U.S.

Travel insurance covers many costs we might not think of in an emergency: medical evacuation (medically supervised flight home), family visitation (flight for family member to see you if you are confined to a foreign hospital alone), even repatriation of remains if the insured dies overseas.

While health care costs in many countries are less than here at home, they are rising. It is becoming common to now see foreign hospital stays in the tens of thousands. So what should you look



Travel health insurance coverage may vary from country to country.

for in an international health plan?

- A 24-hour help line or app that can assist in quickly receiving medical attention.
- Contracted doctors and hospitals at your destination that will bill your insurance, reducing the upfront costs to you and avoiding having to wait for a claim reimbursement.
- Downloadable policy and ID card, often necessary to enter some countries.
- Medical evacuation to your home airport, not just nearest U.S. port.
- The option of multi-trip coverage, which can greatly reduce your per-day cost.

Finally, be aware that every international health insurance plan will have specific countries that they will not cover and may have sports activities that are excluded. For instance, one client specified that he wanted to be covered while cliff diving in Mexico. We soon discovered this is specifically prohibited on every policy we have seen.

At an average cost of \$10 per day, travel health insurance is worth considering as an essential part of your next summer vacation.

Randy Foulds of Foulds Health Insurance Agency is an independent broker and Medicare specialist in La Quinta (license #0G69218). He can be reached at (760) 346.6565. This is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended to substitute for professional advice.

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Sunblock, a Hat and Botanical SPFs

By Brook Dougherty

As summer approaches, it's essential to protect your skin from the sun's harmful rays. Some folks won't walk out the door without sunblock, while others loathe the stuff and rely on a hat or choose inside activities like bowling or bunco. If you do choose to wear sunscreen, it's important to check the labels and not just grab a brand because you've been using it for many years.

Sunscreen ingredients are either physical blockers or chemical absorbers. Physical blockers, such as zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are generally considered safe while chemical absorbers, such as avobenzone, oxybenzone, octinoxate, and octocrylene have raised concerns about their potential effects on human health and the environment. All of these are approved by the FDA; it's up to you to decide how vigorous you want to be about what you put on your skin.

While wearing sunscreen is a great way to shield your skin, you might not know that certain oils offer natural UV protection. There are a few lesser-known ones from the Amazon Rainforest that are treasures.

Here are some oils to consider adding to your summer skincare routine:

Red raspberry seed oil has an SPF of up to 50 and is rich in antioxidants that protect against environmental stressors. This oil is perfect for people with sensitive skin because it's non-greasy and doesn't clog pores, although it can often smell a bit fishy.

Carrot seed oil has an SPF of up to 40 and is high in antioxidants, vitamins A, C and E. It also contains carotenoids, which help protect against free radicals that can damage the skin.

Coconut oil has an SPF of up to 10 and is a natural moisturizer that's great for all skin types. It contains lauric acid, which has antimicrobial properties that can help fight against bacteria and fungus on the skin. Coconut oil can also help soothe sunburned skin.

Buriti oil is a deep, dark orange. If used alone, light skin may look like it has a bad fake tan. On darker skin, it creates a gorgeous glow.

Andiroba oil is also native to the Amazon and has a natural SPF of 6. It is rich in fatty acids that help protect against UV damage and nourish the skin.

Acai oil, derived from the acai berry, is native to the Amazon Rainforest. It has a natural SPF of 2-4 and is rich in antioxidants, which help protect against UV damage and promote healthy skin.

Passionfruit oil is easy to find with a natural SPF of 6. It is rich in antioxidants, vitamins A and C and fatty acids, which help protect against UV damage and promote healthy skin.



Options for natural sun blockers may be greater than you think.



Adding these oils to your skincare routine can provide an extra layer of protection against the sun's harmful rays, but it's important to note that they're not a substitute for sunscreen. Using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 is still the best way to protect your skin. That and a hat. If you are devoted to outdoor activity when the sun is blasting, using a sunblock with questionable ingredients for a short time might be a better choice than using a "cleaner" product that might lead to skin damage due to its lower SPF.

Our skin is our largest organ. We really don't want ingredients that may or may not cause cancer hanging around on it any longer than necessary. An easy work around is to wash your face or take a shower as soon as you get home from tennis, golf, pickleball, basketball, riding or wherever. Bye, bye bad stuff. Then moisturize, relax and know you've done the best you can to defend against the rays while healthfully nourishing your skin.

Brook Dougherty of Indio is the founder of JustUs Skincare and can be reached at brook@justusskincare.com. For more information visit www.justusskincare.com.



Sustainably harvested buriti oil has the highest natural content of beta-carotene (vitamin A) and a natural SPF.

PRP: The Fountain of Youth?

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

Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy has been used by orthopedic surgeons for many years as a less invasive option to surgery and to enhance athletic recovery. PRP uses a person's own platelets (blood) to stimulate healing and is widely known to be an effective solution to injury. Due to its unique healing abilities, PRP therapy has gained popularity in other modalities as well, including skin rejuvenation, hair restoration and enhanced sexual health.

The quest for youth

Collagen production, which is the leading factor in aging skin, begins slowing down around age 25. Add in environmental factors such as UV rays, smoking, stress and age-related hormonal changes, and collagen degradation is greatly impacted. As collagen decreases, fine lines and wrinkles begin to form which, in today's society of selfies and Zoom meetings, leads many to seek rejuvenating solutions.

Enter the "Vampire Facial"

The PRP facial, widely known as the vampire facial, has gained intense popularity, not only due to its intriguing name, but also for its ability to increase collagen production and stimulate skin healing with little-to-no downtime. This simple, three-step procedure has shown dramatic results in the areas of premature wrinkles, sun damage and uneven skin tone.

Our blood is made of white and red blood cells along with platelets which help our blood clot and produce growth factor proteins that are essential to healing. The PRP facial involves a simple blood draw, separating the platelets from the rest of your blood in a centrifuge, then re-introducing them into the skin. By penetrating deep into the skin, collagen production and connective tissue regeneration are stimulated resulting in a more tightened appearance- all by using your own blood to help heal and renew. Additional results may include reduced sun damage, more even skin tones, reduced acne damage and scarring, reduction in under-eye circles and an overall healthier appearance.

Because PRP involves use of your own plasma, adverse reactions are greatly reduced; downtime is minimal and results typically last 6 - 12 months. A long-term skin care plan is often preferred to obtain the longest lasting results. Your genetics, lifestyle and other factors will also play an important role in longevity and success. Some professionals suggest the best results are obtained by having one PRP facial per month for three months in a row which can vary depending on how well skin responds to the injections.

PRP may not be the fountain of youth, but its unique healing properties and collagen stimulating abilities make it a safe and effective anti-aging option. As always, it is best to discuss concerns and procedures with a qualified health care provider before having any type of treatment.

Pam Gossman is a doctor of nursing practice and owner of Desert Glow Medical Aesthetics and Wellness and can be reached at (760) 565.3990. For more visit www.desertglowspa.com.

Sources: 1) www.garzasurgery.com; 2) www.dermalfountainofyouth.com; 3) www.aad.org



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Welcome home to Chúla

A Review by Lauren Del Sarto

Whenever we travel, we are always on the lookout for that colorful, quaint café that seems to say, “Come in. Get comfortable and make yourself at home.” That is precisely the feeling you get when you walk through the door of *Chúla Artisan Eatery*. You are always greeted by smiling faces, many who have been “part of the family” for years, and a delectable display of handcrafted goodies. And to top it off, their locally sourced, farm-to-table menu is “100% real food” and one of the healthiest in the valley.

Hidden next to *Louise’s Pantry* off Washington in La Quinta, this little gem is the made-from-scratch first child of Chef Katherine Gonzalez who attributes many of her recipes and the spoonful of love served in each and every dish to her mom who hails from Mexico. Her father is of Spanish decent and both come from very large families, so weekends were spent gathering around homemade meals and sharing a love of fresh- from-the-earth ingredients. “There were always fresh salsas and tortillas, green chilies, tamales and a big pot of beans and rice on the stove. It was all good, simple stuff.”

You can taste those fresh ingredients in every “heritage-inspired” dish like the cucumber honeydew gazpacho and ever-popular huevos rancheros. Their late spring, summer offerings were just introduced

Huevos rancheros with a twist

featuring café favorites like mom’s chilaquiles - homemade corn chips topped with chicken, pork or veggies, mom’s red chile or green tomatillo sauce and a sunny up egg; and two of my favorites, the vegan bowl with black beans, hummus, toasted quinoa, organic greens, grilled veggies, sweet potato, cucumber and avocado (yes all that!) topped with a tangy citrus cilantro vinaigrette, and the gluten-free *Chúla* fritters packed with veggies and topped with microgreens.

New additions include the black bean white corn burger handmade with sweet potato and garbanzo bean flour, topped with fresh veggies and served on a vegan bun with homemade sweet potato fries, and the green chile cheeseburger made with grass-fed beef.

You can’t visit *Chúla* just once, and although you’ll be craving your favorite upon your return, you have to try something new! Satisfying small plates include fried green tomatoes, sticky bacon dates, stuffed squash blossoms, mini shrimp tostadas and the tamale bowl, to name a few.

Mom’s chilaquiles are popular at the quaint café.

Gonzalez also has a strong sense of community and locally sources her ingredients. Much of their produce comes from Mark Tador’s biodynamic Aziz Farms where *Chúla* owns four rows of fresh produce and herbs grown-to-order just for them. Their white corn comes from Junior Enterprises in Coachella and the edible flowers and microgreens from Mario Garcia of Coachella Urban Farms. “These are the people you want to support,” says Gonzalez, “those who get up at four in the morning and put their heart and soul into it.”

The heart and soul of her family, her parents, who are in their 80s and have been together since they were teens, will be coming to stay with her kids for a month as she prepares to open her second location this summer in Culver City. “My kids are going to be so spoiled because mom still cooks everything from scratch.” It will be a family affair as her collegiate daughter and eldest son will be helping with this new venture name *Mija Handcraft Kitchen* (MEE-ha means “little darling” in Spanish).

In the fall, she will deliver her third bundle of joy, *Chúlita Brunch/Lunch/Cocktail Café* next to Kitchen Kitchen in Indian Wells. Offering a more Mediterranean style menu designed for adult dining, *Chúlita* will be a great place for a glass of bubbly and cured meats and cheeses or fresh fish dishes, says Gonzalez, and dinner will be served Friday and Saturday nights by reservation.

Chúla is open for breakfast and lunch seven days a week and also offers grab-n-go, market goods and catering. They serve beer and wine and mixed drinks with soju, distilled rice wines, in rum, vodka and tequila flavors, so plan to relax and stay a while. I know you will agree that everything about this place is “oh, so bueno”!

Chula Artisan Eatery & Marketplace is located at 47150 Washington Street in La Quinta. It is open Sunday - Thursday, 7:30a.m. - 3p.m., and Friday and Saturday 7:30a.m. - 4p.m. They will be closing for August. For more information, visit www.ChulaEatery.com.



Pulled pork tacos and the vegan black bean white corn burger



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