



A Citizen Voice for the
Aging Experience

ENGAGING NH NEWS

Guest Opinion

COVID-19 and the Grief Process

by Robert Weiss, Ph.D., MSW

Today we are all grieving. We are grieving the loss of our freedoms, a predictable future, and the lives and roles left behind in our communal rush away from the coronavirus. Our grief equally involves our captains of industry and those who make our sandwiches. All of us are fearful about work, health, our families, and our shared future in ways that were unimaginable just a short time ago. We are afraid for our parents and grandparents, our children, our jobs, our country, our way of life, and, perhaps most deeply, our own mortality. That said, our individual responses to these fears can vary quite a bit. I'd like to suggest, however, that by using the universally shared experience of grief, perhaps we can gain a bit of insight into our individual as well as our collective reactions.

In her book, *On Grief and Grieving*, Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross gave us our first clinical insights into the somewhat universal process of how human beings grieve. Essentially, she provided us with a listing and explanation of the five common stages of

The power of art to soothe, empower and socially connect

grief. Denial; Anger; Bargaining; Despair; and Acceptance

As the years went along, Dr. Kübler-Ross revised her theories to acknowledge these stages are fluid, not fixed. In other words, they might or might not occur in the order presented, and some people may experience variations of the same stage multiple times, while some may skip a stage (or stages) altogether. But as a

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general rule, these are the basics of our grieving process.

Denial is the intellectual and emotional rejection of something that is clear and obvious. Interestingly, denial is actually a much-needed survival mechanism – an evolutionary imperative developed over the millennia. Consider our hunter/gatherer ancestors. If one of them was out foraging for food and a sabretooth tiger attacked, and the full pain of the tiger’s attack was immediately experienced, this unlucky ancestor would have been unable to either fight back or flee and seek assistance. Luckily for our hypothetical ancestor, the ability to temporarily ‘deny’ physical pain evolved, providing that person with a fighting chance at survival.

Emotional pain can be denied in the same way. Evolution has created in humans the ability to deny both physical and emotional pain for a short period of time in the service of self-preservation. Today, denial sounds like:

This whole thing is so overblown. What a media circus. It’s the same as the flu. People get the flu every year and hardly anyone dies. I’m not (old, immune-compromised, susceptible to lung ailments), so I’ll be fine.

Anger The feeling of anger is empowering. We move toward anger in an attempt to gain control over our fears. Rather than accepting and dealing with the problem, we turn hostile, blaming others, engaging in power struggles, externalizing the issue, and, sometimes, and refusing to comply with the rules. Today, anger sounds like: This is all China’s fault. If they’d quarantined earlier, we wouldn’t

be having this problem. I don’t care what the governor of my state says about sheltering in place, I’m going to work today. Forget what they told us. I’m bored and I’m having some friends over.

Bargaining: Bargaining occurs when denial breaks down and we start to acknowledge reality but we’re not ready to give up the illusion that we still have control. Basically, we try to compromise to find an easier, less painful way out. Today, bargaining sounds like: It’s OK to spend time with others as long as they wash their hands before they see me. This will all be over by Easter. I’ll be safe until then, and then we can go back to normal. I know when people look sick. I will be fine as long as I stay around people who are healthy.

Despair: Despair and depression occur when reality fully sets in, when there is no more room for denial. There is a sense of hopelessness, a feeling that we are fully disempowered and all is lost. We engage in self-pity. We think that nothing can help now, despite evidence to the contrary. We rue the fact that our attempts at bargaining haven’t worked. Today, despair sounds like: I can’t go to work, I can’t earn money. Pretty soon, I’ll be broke and homeless. This epidemic is the new normal. I can say goodbye to my hopes and dreams. I am high-risk and likely to die

WHO ARE WE?

EngAGING NH is an all-volunteer not-for-profit organization registered with the State of NH. We work to support and promote activities, policies, planning and values that respect and include ALL older adults.

alone. No one will come to help me when the time comes.

Acceptance: Acceptance occurs when we finally acknowledge and surrender to the facts, whatever those facts happen to be. When we reach this stage, we can stop denying and fighting reality, and we can start dealing as effectively as we can with what has happened and what is happening. Today, acceptance sounds like: I can't control the pandemic, but I can do my part by sheltering in place, washing my hands, and staying positive. The fact that I can't leave my house doesn't mean my life has to stop. I can work from home, and I can still connect with my friends and family via phone and the internet. I can also enjoy the extra time I have with my spouse, my kids, and our pets. The world is going to change, but maybe when all this is over, we will be kinder to one another.

Robert Weiss, Ph.D., MSW, is the author of Out of the Doghouse: A Step-by-Step Relationship-Saving Guide for Men Caught Cheating. Shutterstock Used with Permission

"Listening connects us and heals the hurt we carry--we can make a world of difference for one another by listening."

Patty Wipfler

NH Updates

SENIOR VOLUNTEERS TO BE HONORED FOR THEIR SERVICE

Award ceremony postponed to a later date

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the New Hampshire State Commission on Aging, and EngAGING NH announce this year's recipients of the Older Adult Volunteer Awards. To align with social distancing

guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention around COVID-19, the award ceremony will be held at a later date.

ENH welcomes all points of view and invites your submissions.

To send articles or to add your name to our newsletter mailing list, contact:

engagingnh@gmail.com

Forward it on!

"Here in New Hampshire, we take pride in our communities and in our efforts to ensure that all Granite Staters are able to live and age with dignity in the comfort of their communities," said Governor Chris Sununu. "As we face a public health crisis of unprecedented proportions, the work done by individuals like the recipients of this year's Awards has become more important than ever before. We cannot thank you enough for all that you have done to strengthen New Hampshire's communities."

Each May, during Older Americans Month, the Commission on Aging recognizes individuals or couples age 60 or older from each of New Hampshire's ten counties for their outstanding volunteer efforts on behalf of older adults and others in their communities.

This year's recipients are:

Belknap County: Chris Ray of Gilford

Carroll County: Kenny Ware of Glen

Cheshire County: Mona Walsh of Marlborough

Coos County: Harold E Marshall Jr. of Lancaster

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Grafton County: Robert and Effie Bachand of Enfield

Hillsborough County: Elaine and Harvey Bloom of Merrimack

Merrimack County: Freda Spiro of Concord

Rockingham County: Nancy D'Agostino of Salem

Strafford County: Peter Eldredge of Somersworth

Sullivan County: Bob Dearborn of Newport

SERVICELINK AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTERS

NH ServiceLink offices are reminding clients that while its offices across the state are closed for face-to-face appointments, its staff is available and ready to serve via phone, email and in some cases, ZOOM or other platforms. ServiceLink staff can help clients understand and apply for benefits, access what services may be available to them or better understand family caregiver benefits. They can also help with programs that pertain to seniors who care for adult children or their grandchildren. ServiceLink has offices in all NH counties, to learn more, please call 1-866-634-9412 or visit www.servicelink.nh.gov/.

NH LEGISLATURE TO REOPEN

the New Hampshire House of Representatives and Senate announced they will be returning for legislative sessions in the beginning of June. Committee and Commission meetings will continue remotely for the time being. In order to ensure the safety of members, staff, and the public, the Senate will meet in Representatives Hall and the House will meet at the Whittemore Center at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. Representatives and Senators can still be reached by phone and email.

WORKREADYNH

WorkReadyNH is a partnership between the Community College System of New Hampshire, the Department of Business & Economic Affairs (BEA), and the NH Department of Employment Security. The program is funded through the NH Job Training Fund and is now online. A practical, tuition-free program designed to meet the needs of job seekers and career builders by providing training in specific skills that employers are looking for in their current and future employees. The online version of the course includes the same in-depth curriculum as in-person classes while offering flexibility to meet individual schedules.

www.ccsnh.edu/colleges-and-programs/workready-nh/

SAVE THE DATE FOR NH GIVES

June 9-10, 2020.

NH **Gives** – an initiative of the NH Center for Nonprofits - is a powerful, statewide 24-hour online fundraising event that is designed to build community, connect donors to local nonprofits and generate excitement about the nonprofit sector. Non-profit organizations include Senior Centers

WHO IS MY LEGISLATOR?

Use this quick link to find and contact your local State Rep and Senator:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

Visit your town or city's website to find contact information for your local elected officials.

Tell them your ideas, thoughts & concerns!

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and they rely on classes and events for funding. For more information go to www.nhgives.org/

YOU CAN HELP

The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities is asking people with disabilities and their families to help make a difference by participating in the development of our next state plan.

Every five years the NHCDD develops a state plan to establish specific goals and objectives to address the needs of people with intellectual/developmental/cognitive disabilities. Filling out our 5 Year Plan Survey will help us identify areas the DD Council can focus on to reduce barriers and create opportunities for people with intellectual/developmental/cognitive disabilities who live in New Hampshire.

This very short survey can be filled out online at:

WWW.SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/558RKQV. Standard or large print copies are available by contacting the DD Council Project Manager, Vanessa Blais at Vanessa.Blais@ddc.nh.gov or 603-271-7040.

The Council is dedicated to dignity, full rights of citizenship, cultural diversity, equal opportunity, and full participation for all NH citizens with developmental disabilities.

YOU COUNT!

I am working as a partnership specialist with the US Census Bureau and my job is to inform NH residents on the importance of the 2020 Census and encourage self-response. Your organization was suggested by Senator Shaheen's office as one that I may want to reach out to.

With over \$675B in federal funds every year being allocated based upon Census data, it is extremely important to get a complete and accurate count during the 2020 Census. NH's current self-response rate to the 2020 Census is 59% (below the national average.) Some counties are doing better than others, with Hillsborough County having the highest average response rate at 68.5%, and Carroll County having the lowest (24.1%).

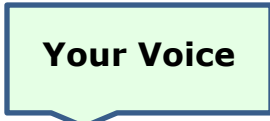
I am trying to reach as many NH residents as possible to provide information on the 2020 Census to encourage people to self-respond and eliminating the need to send a Census Taker to their residence.

Thank you,

Nicole McKenzie, Senior Partnership Specialist

New York Regional Census Center, Field Division, U.S. Census Bureau

nicole.e.mckenzie@2020census.gov



CAR SECURITY

When you hit the lock button on your car upon exiting, it does not send the security code, but if you walk away and use the door lock on your key chain, it sends the code through the airwaves where it can be instantly stolen. Snopes approved.

Nate

ENH NEWSLETTER

Thank you for the May issue. I enjoy reading the articles and have used the resources several times. Being up north, often we do not get all the news. So, thank you again.

Mary

COOKING OILS AND CORONA

I read this article by Dr. Cate Shanahan who says, "Eliminating the eight high-PUFA seed oils that are overabundant in the food supply is the NUMBER ONE best thing you can do to help your immune system beat coronavirus."

Those oils are: Canola, Cotton Seed, Corn, Soy, Safflower, Sunflower, Grapeseed and Rice bran. You can find the information and her explanation on her website: drcate.com/

Anna

COBOL COWBOYS

We hear the energetic language of change all the time. Companies must "innovate" and be "nimble" and able to "pivot" at any instant. Innovation sells, and in many ways, it serves us well, creating great advances in science, medicine, and technology in the last 50 years. In recent weeks, as the COVID 19 pandemic has changed nearly everything that was once familiar, the ability to adapt and learn on the fly has never seemed more important.

HELP!

Do you need help with your Social Security or VA benefits? Do you have questions about the IRS or Medicare? If so, your NH Congressional Delegation can help!

Your two U.S. Senators and two Congresswomen all have staff equipped to help New Hampshire residents with issues, concerns or questions related to the federal government. The contact information for the NH Congressional Delegation is below. Please don't hesitate to reach out!

Senator Jeanne Shaheen
2 Wall Street, Suite 220
Manchester, NH 03101
603-647-7500

www.shaheen.senate.gov

Senator Maggie Hassan
1589 Elm Street, 3rd Floor
Manchester, NH 03101
603-622-2204

www.hassan.senate.gov

Rep. Chris Pappas
1st Congressional District
660 Central Ave., Unit 101
Dover, NH 03820
603-285-4300

www.shea-porter.house.gov

Rep. Annie Kuster
2nd Congressional District
18 North Main Street, 4th Floor
Concord, NH 03301
603-226-1002

www.kuster.house.gov

Still, youth, trendiness, and everything temporary and disposable has become an almost cultish mindset. Way back, 3 months ago, "OK Boomer" was a favorite catchphrase to dismiss what older generations might offer in the way of insights. But a recent post on the website Sherpa Desk, an online tech support service, asks the cheerful question, "Who's 'OK Boomer now?'" In response to the pandemic, item #4 on their advice list is, "Embrace your elders.... If all else fails, make sure your team has COBOL Cowboys on speed dial."

COBOL Cowboys is a company started in 2013 by some older programmers who realized that a huge knowledge vacuum was about to open up. The founder named it after a Clint Eastwood movie, "Space Cowboys," in which retired aspiring astronauts are called on to save an older satellite that's in trouble. In the real world, tech companies turn to innovative programs that are geared toward quick changes, but almost all non-profits, much of government and public agencies, half of our nation's banking

systems, and almost 90% of the established Fortune 500 companies still use the good, solid, reliable COBOL operating system. The people who understand it and know how to fix problems and train new computer users were rapidly ageing out of the workforce, leaving all those companies and agencies without the wisdom of the elders they still need.

In rode the Cowboys, a group of over 350 IT technicians on call around the country to trouble-shoot legacy programs. As is fitting, they arrived just in the nick of time to deal with COVID19. With trillions of dollars to keep track of, millions of new unemployment claims, and vast medical systems that rely on COBOL, their expertise is priceless. They are working non-stop, and enlarging their posse, as systems struggle to keep up with urgent needs. Big, new-tech companies now are even starting to offer free seminars to teach younger coders COBOL.

Big moments, "rupturing moments," as some call crises such as ours, break open old habits and assumptions about what is real, possible, and valuable. COVID19 is revealing both our flaws and strengths: who is really essential, how labeling and dividing harms us, and, in fact, how completely and beautifully and terrifyingly interdependent we all are. Through stories like the COBOL Cowboys,' even our youth-obsessed culture is learning that it's not only possible, but necessary, both to embrace innovation and creativity and to call on the wisdom and deep knowledge of older people to survive

sudden changes and solve big problems.

Jean

Commission on Aging Update

At the May 18, meeting Rep. Campion announced the plan to hold 3 strategic planning sessions to develop both

short- and long-term plans and emphasized the need to reframe aging as a part of life, not an affliction.

The AARP Age Friendly Communities toolkits might offer a foundation for the Commission. and Todd Fahey and Lori Parham Directors of NH and ME AARPs respectively presented.

Age Friendly Communities

www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/)

is affiliated with the World Health Organization and a plan that has been tested globally for a number of years. Based on 8 domains of livability that should apply equally to 8 or 80-year olds. NH can choose to use the materials and/or join the Network.

Currently we have several communities in the network including: Mtn. Washington area Goffstown, Dover, and Portsmouth. Maine has been designated as an Age Friendly State. Joining the network can be

at the local, municipal level as well as the State.

Director Parham said, "People 50 and older are more engaged, volunteer more and pay more in taxes and that ME and NH share a common issue as rural states, in attracting and

How to Contact Your NH Commission on Aging

Chair, Rep. Polly Campion
polly.campion@leg.state.nh.us

Vice Chair, Ken Berlin
kaberlin@comcast.net

Clerk, Roberta Berner
bernerabel@aol.com

retaining younger residents." Maine is looking to what a community will need to look like 5 to 20 years out and building on what was already going on, expanding, linking, sharing and the importance of social connection.

Members of the Commission were also asked to consider the following questions and to bring their responses to the meeting to be shared with the DHHS Commissioner:

What policies, systems, infrastructure and environments from before the outbreak are serving us well now during the pandemic?

- What are you doing differently because of COVID-19 that is worth retaining after it passes?
- What gaps in policies, systems, and community infrastructure have become more apparent as a result of COVID-19?
- Based on this, going forward what recommendations should we advance to enhance successful aging in NH?

The AARP 8 domains for Age Friendly Communities applied to COVID-19 can be found at:

www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2020/community-responses-to-COVID-19.html

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

If you like this newsletter, please share it with your family, neighbors, friends and colleagues.

"As I get older, I realize that the thing I value the most is good-heartedness."

Alice Walker

News You Can Use

WHO QUALIFIES FOR MEALS ON WHEELS?

To qualify for Meals on Wheels, an individual must be: 60 years or older; disabled; homebound; and without a caregiver able to assist with meal preparation. The eligible person's spouse, or disabled person who relies on the individual for care, may also qualify. Some agencies might have other restrictions – or other exceptions. The terms and conditions may vary. To find a program near you:

www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/find-meals and enter your zip code.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR AN ONLINE WILL

In normal times, a last will and testament is a prudent thing to have. During a public health emergency like the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, they're essential. Wills have traditionally been drafted in person with a lawyer, but over the last twenty years, a number of online will preparation services have been gaining popularity. Both paid and free services like LegalZoom, Tomorrow.me, and Rocket Lawyer allow you to create a will by answering a series of questions about your finances and personal circumstances, and then export a finished legal document. With a relatively simple estate, you can prepare a draft in about ten minutes.

All you need to do to begin is know what you own, and decide who you want it to go to. That's it. Online will services all use a similar set of questions asking you to describe your relations (parents, spouse, siblings, children, etc.), the chain of inheritance should any named heir predecease you, what you own (stocks, real estate, cars, etc.), and how you want all of that divided up. It can be as simple as "give

everything to my daughter,” and as complicated as distributing a billion dollar empire among a hundred heirs and charities. If you have any questions while drafting the will, some online will services have on call lawyers who can answer your concerns in real time.

money.com/best-online-will/

ONLINE SHOPPING/REUSABLE PACKAGING

Loop, the milkman-style platform that partners with big brands to offer subscriptions to common products like Tide detergent in reusable packaging, will expand its delivery service across the US early this summer. As an increasing number of people have been avoiding crowded stores as much as possible in the last two months, consumers have turned to e-commerce, including Loop’s service.

The expansion is a response to demand from customers, but also offers an alternative to recycling at a time when the recycling industry is not doing so well. Instead of shipping products in packages designed for a single-use before recycling, or ending up in landfills and polluting the environment, the platform sells products in packages designed for multiple reuses. To learn more visit Loop.com.

www.fastcompany.com/

Focus on Community

COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO COVID

Bristol, New Hampshire, incorporated in 1819, is a beautiful New England town that encompasses the southern portion of Newfound Lake. The Town has a year-round population of approximately 3,300 and a seasonal summer population of approximately 6,500 inhabitants.

COVID-19 called for a creative response the Town’s dedication to providing the best possible service to its residents, businesses, and visitors. Two examples are activities by the library and grocery shopping for those in need.

From virtual story times, forums, online discussion groups, compiling lists of e-books, videos, and other resources, poetry nights, and so much more, the Minot-Sleeper Library in Bristol has been doing outstanding work to keep the community engaged online and through Zoom. The library staff are also answering calls to help people over the phone in navigating the library online, assisting with audiobooks, e-books, finding sources, etc.

Through social media, word of mouth and community/senior centers, Bristol has successfully seen over 70 volunteers shopping for older adults in their community. Through this program volunteers are paired with individuals/families, enabling relationships to be built, and the ability for needed groceries to be delivered safely to vulnerable populations. The response from the Bristol has been nothing short of

Your Local Resources
ServiceLink Aging & Disability Resource Center 866-634-9412 (servicelink.nh.gov);
211 NH is the connection for NH residents to the most up to date resources they need from specially trained Information and Referral Specialists.
211 NH is available 24 hours, 365 days a year. Multilingual assistance and TDD access are also available.

great, with the local Hannaford ensuring the process is safe and efficient.

(Editor's note: Have a story about a project in your Town? Send it to us at engagingnh@gmail.com)

NH MEALS ON WHEELS

Programs continue to help older adults age safely at home while at the same time, working to protect the health and safety of clients, staff and volunteers. Congregate dining sites have been converted to safe pick-up locations (the Newport Senior Center for instance is handling 60 grab and go meals each week day) daily hot meal deliveries have been changed to multiple frozen meals delivered at once with the provision of microwaves to those who needed them and on-site social welfare checks are now done via phone or video if needed.

AFTER COVID-19, A BETTER WAY TO SUPPORT THE OLDER PEOPLE AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

There is a successful alternative to institutional care that allows people of all ages with disabilities to live at home with support: self-directed care.

COVID-19 has thrown America's elderly into extreme peril and their families into a state of panic, while making it more difficult for all people with disabilities to get the care they need.

In Massachusetts, about 60 percent of all COVID-19 deaths have been tied to nursing homes or other long-term care facilities. Meanwhile, families, unable to visit their loved ones, agonize over their health and safety and the care they are receiving.

Many long-term care facility residents would be far safer in their own homes, but they need assistance with everyday living. Even people already receiving services at home from home care workers are finding that, during the coronavirus pandemic, those workers are less available and that following stay-at-home orders can be complicated.

There is a successful alternative to institutional care that allows people of all ages with disabilities to live at home with support: self-direction of home and community-based services, available under Medicaid and the Veterans Administration's

Veterans Directed Care program.

The self-direction model has enabled tens of thousands of Americans with disabilities — including nearly 42,000 Massachusetts residents currently — to enjoy a higher quality of life in their homes rather than in an institution. Given the serious risks of congregate living during a viral pandemic, Congress should step up support for

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self-direction.

In self-direction programs, consumers can recruit and supervise caregivers of their own choosing, including family members or friends. These informal caregivers help with daily activities such as dressing, bathing, food shopping, meal preparation, and housekeeping. Some programs allow consumers to manage a budget that they can use not only to employ caregivers but also to pay for services like meal delivery, laundry, or transportation. They also have access to counselors to help them figure

out how best to meet their needs and pay their bills.

The original idea behind self-direction was to restore choice and control to people who wanted to live as independently as possible at home. During the coronavirus pandemic, this approach also offers greater safety and peace of mind.

To reduce their exposure, people with disabilities, especially those with underlying health conditions like heart disease or diabetes, need to limit who goes in and out of their homes. Under self-direction, the consumer decides who those people are and what hours they will work. In addition, family members or friends providing unpaid care may be newly unemployed. Being able to pay their caregivers means that consumers can compensate those close to them during the crisis and help alleviate their financial stress. And family members don't have to worry about their relatives' safety or the quality of care they are receiving.

Related: Ariella Z. Barker: Those with disabilities have a right to survive the coronavirus pandemic

Self-direction provides consumers with considerable flexibility and control. It's up to the consumers to decide what works best for them.

We Want You to Know . . .

EngAGING NH promotes citizen leadership and the active involvement of New Hampshire's older adults in the development of communities and public policies that support all individuals as we age. We are a COMPLETELY VOLUNTEER organization with no paid staff, and a limited budget.

We actively partner & work with other NH advocates.

Formal Partnerships

- NH State Independent Living Council
- State Committee on Aging-Vaughan Awards
- Disabilities Rights Center—NH
- NH Cares
- UNH Center for Aging and Community Living
- Oral Health Care Expansion, Children's Alliance of NH
- Self Advocacy Leadership Team (SALT)
- Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

Active Collaborations & Groups:

- Elder Rights Coalition

Other Groups we work with:

- AARP
- NH Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- NH State Committee on Aging
- NAMI
- NH Alliance for Retired Americans
- DD Council
- UNH Institute on Disabilities
- NASW-NH
- Area Committees on Aging
- NH Association of Senior Centers
- Endowment for Health, Alliance on Healthy Aging
- NH Legal Assistance
- Department of Health & Human Services
- ServiceLink

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FYI...

This newsletter is intended as a forum for you to share personal experiences, information and points of view.

In our media driven world of skillful marketing and political spin, we believe that diversity is critical to discernment and therefore the EngAGING NH Board of Directors welcomes all points of view, expressed with civility!

While the opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Board members, our intent is to include material that assists you in forming your own opinions.

To send articles or to add your name to our newsletter mailing list, contact:

engagingnh@gmail.com

Consumers managing a budget can use it to buy such items as personal protective equipment, a cellphone, or a computer and Internet connection to support telehealth if needed.

Research shows that self-direction reduces consumers' unmet needs, increases their satisfaction with care, improves their health, and increases

their satisfaction with life overall, while decreasing financial, physical, and emotional stress for families. It is truly a win-win.

The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has recognized the benefits of self-direction as a response to COVID-19 by giving states greater flexibility. States are taking advantage of the new options, too. As of last month, 14 states had modified their self-direction programs to permit the temporary hiring of legally responsible relatives, such as spouses or parents of children with disabilities. Twenty-one states are increasing self-

directed budgets, benefit limits, or pay rates.

Massachusetts has also made some tweaks to its self-direction program. For example, self-direction workers who have continued to work during the pandemic are earning 10 percent more in "hazard pay" over pre-coronavirus levels. Consumers who are having difficulty finding workers can now hire their spouses.

Meanwhile, the House Energy and Commerce Committee is considering new COVID-19 legislation that would strengthen self-direction programs. The legislation has bipartisan support, and Congress should approve it.

During a pandemic, people with disabilities and their families need an alternative to congregate care. Self-direction is a proven model for supporting safe and independent living. It could be the answer that many families are searching for right now.

Kevin Mahoney is professor emeritus of the Boston College School of Social Work and founding director of the National Resource Center for Participant-Directed Services. Boston Globe, 5/26/2020

(Editor's Note: NH has Person Directed services for people living with both physical and developmental disabilities; we have also have experience in working with older adults and veterans.)

Health & Wellness

HOME WORKOUT TIPS

Home workouts have become popular again as people stay at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can hop on a bike, perform some yoga, jump rope or follow fitness trainers who lead workouts online. "People have been trying to find normalcy," said Jennifer Noiles, Exos performance director at Mayo Clinic

Orthopedic and Sports Medicine in Rochester, MN. "During times of stress, structure is key. Give back to yourself through movement, nourishment and exercise." Noiles encourages you to take a thoughtful, progressive approach to exercise so your sessions don't just become a string of random workouts. Success needs a road map,"

1. Stack your habits. [create a routine schedule that includes tasks that will follow one another even if it's simple such as finishing a glass of water.]
2. Have a defined space for your workout session: [If you are confined to your desktop area, consider making a space for a chair, weights, exercise ball or mat.]
3. Tailor the workout to your abilities. [Choose workouts suited to your individual situation.]
4. Rely on a knowledgeable expert. [there are many free videos on YouTube and Facebook guided by experts.]
5. Rethink what success means. "Now your goal could be creating new fitness habits in this new environment. "To create a habit that you'll be successful at, it needs to be easy, obvious and something you'll enjoy," Noiles said.

Mayo Clinic News Network

NEW NECKLACE DETECTS ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

One of the major causes of stroke is unrecognized and untreated atrial fibrillation, an abnormal heart rhythm, that causes approximately 25 percent of all strokes. An ingenious new necklace, however, could make checking for it a quick and simple process. While it is the most common heart rhythm disturbance, atrial

fibrillation is often symptomless and intermittent, making its detection and diagnosis challenging. The innovative necklace is designed to solve this problem with the help of an ECG (electrocardiogram) embedded into its pendulum. To measure their heart rhythm, users start an application on their smartphone then place the necklace pendant between the palms of their hands or between the palm and the chest for 30 seconds. Data is then automatically sent to a cloud service and analyzed for atrial fibrillation using artificial intelligence (AI). Within a few seconds, the smartphone application displays the results of the analysis, while also generating an ECG report for physicians to confirm the diagnosis.

By evaluating the technology on 145 adults, the researchers found that, when compared to other 'gold standard' ECG technology, the necklace's ECG recordings also reported excellent accuracy in detecting and diagnosing atrial fibrillation. Given the positive results and the fact that the necklace test can be performed by the wearer at any place and at any time, the innovative gadget is likely to be soon

Can You Help?

You may make a donation to ENH through our fiscal agent, Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. which is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation.

Make your check out to Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. and note "EngAGING NH" on the memo line. DRC's mailing address is 64 North Main Street, Suite 2, 3rd Floor, Concord, NH 03301-4913.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

recommended to people with a high risk of stroke as an essential wearable.

www.freepressjournal.in/health/this-necklace-can-detect-abnormal-heart-rhythm

Tech Tips

NEW ONLINE COVID 19 CHECKER

The purpose of the Coronavirus Self-Checker is to help you make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care. This system is not intended for the diagnosis or treatment of disease or other conditions, including COVID-19. This system is intended only for people who are currently located in the United States. Go to:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html

WEB-BASED PLATFORMS FOR MEETING REMOTELY

Zoom provides a great way for all staff to electronically check-in and share challenges, ideas, information, and resources. Some CILs are also checking in with consumers served within the last year to ask them what they need, what their situation is, and suggest resources. Zoom is also excellent for teaching an IL skills or other class, or holding a peer support group. A free Zoom version times out after 40 minutes. Consider purchasing a Zoom license for longer video and audio conferencing.

Tech Soup offers a Zoom discount. Search for Zoom how-to training on YouTube.

Skype is a free app that works well for both one-on-one and group (up to 50 people) video and audio calls. It works via mobile, PC, Xbox and Alexa. There is a small charge to call phones or use SMS messages with either pay-as-you-go or subscriptions. A comparison of Zoom

versus Skype is at: www.dgicomcommunications.com/zoom-vs-skype/.

Discord is a good way to connect employees through voice, video, and text. Although it's primarily a gaming platform, it is free, and simple and smooth to use and set up. Once it is downloaded, anyone can post, ask questions, make requests, and share resource information. There is the option for both group and individual voice or video calls.

Google Meet is Google's video conferencing service that connects up to 25 people. Higher paid membership increases that number to 50 or 100. You need a paid G Suite account in order to set up and start Google Meet video conferences, but anyone with a standard Google account can join and participate in a session.

Google Hangouts is free and works well for individual or group meetings, up to 100 people.

GotoMeetings can host meetings with up to 250 participants. There is a 14-day free trial with plans currently starting at \$12.00 monthly. Other ideas for remote work can be found at www.gotomeeting.com/work-remote.

GoogleChat is another way to communicate and can be set up in Gmail.

Facebook Live broadcasts are another way to communicate with your staff or consumers who are on Facebook.

FaceTime is a video and audio calling service for iPhone, iPad, iPod touch or Mac, to call anyone else using any one of those devices.

RAISE YOUR VOICE!

Please let us know what's on your mind and what's important to you.
engagingnh@gmail.com

Bluejeans offers easy and secure webinars, conference calls, and online meetings.

GroupMe is a group messaging app that works on every device and over SMS.

Slack provides a messaging tool to connect your staff and stay engaged with what is happening. Slack is an instant message communication channel or email alternative that provides a quick, easy way to contact people in your channel (or group) and organize your conversations. Slack may be used in a web browser or via an app.

Dollars & Sense

**CORONAVIRUS
HARDSHIP
WITHDRAWAL**

Savers impacted by the pandemic can take up to \$100,000 from their 401(k)s and IRAs as part of the recently enacted economic stimulus package. The withdrawal is not penalized and there's no mandatory withholding. You also have longer to pay the resulting taxes, since the income can be spread evenly over tax years 2020, 2021 and 2022. And if you can pay back the amount you took out within three years, you can claim a refund on those taxes.

These distributions are allowed if you, a spouse or dependent has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus. They're also allowed if you've experienced adverse financial consequences from coronavirus-related issues, such as having your hours reduced; being quarantined, laid off or furloughed; not having child care that would allow you to work; owning a business that's closed or reduced its hours; or "other factors as determined by the Secretary of the

Treasury," according to the text of the CARES Act.

www.nerdwallet.com/blog/investing/cashing-out-401k-covid-19/

HOW TO TRACK UNCLAIMED INSURANCE BENEFITS

According to a study by Consumer Reports, 1 out of every 600 people is the beneficiary of an unclaimed life insurance policy with an average benefit of \$2,000. It could be like finding out you have a secret savings account. Life insurers, which paid out \$784 billion in benefits in 2018, make efforts to find the rightful owners of unclaimed insurance policies, says Whit Cornman, a spokesman for the American Council of Life Insurers. "Insurance companies proactively search for beneficiaries; in fact, some companies have whole offices dedicated to that purpose," he says. beneficiaries. You may want to do some detective work yourself.

www.bankrate.com/insurance/life-insurance/track-unclaimed-life-insurance/

Laugh & Live Longer

TIMELY HUMOR

It's been rumored that John Travolta has COVID-19 but it was just a Night Fever and he wants us to know he's Staying Alive.

A Panda eats approximately 12 hours every day which is the same as an adult under quarantine which is it's called a pandemic.

Remember the underwear we had as kids – the ones that had the days of the week on them? I could use a set of those now!

Sometimes I amaze myself. And Sometimes I'm looking for my phone while I'm on it

I order a chicken and an egg from Amazon. I'll let you know which came first

A NON-COVID LAUGH

One day a Scotsman, who has been stranded on a desert island for over ten long years, sees an unusual speck on the horizon. "It's certainly not a ship," he thinks to himself. As the speck gets closer and closer, he begins to rule out the possibilities of a small boat, then even a raft. Suddenly, emerging from the surf is a drop-dead gorgeous blonde woman wearing a wet suit and scuba gear.

She approaches the stunned man and says to him, "Tell me how long it's been since you've had a cigarette?" "Ten years," replies the Scotsman. With that, she reaches over and unzips a waterproof pocket on her left sleeve and pulls out a pack of fresh cigarettes. He takes one, lights it, takes a long drag and says, "Och - in the name of the wee man is that good!"

"And how long has it been since you've had a sip of good scotch?" she asks him. Trembling, the castaway replies, "Ten years." She reaches over, unzips her right sleeve, pulls out a flask and hands it to him. He opens the flask, takes a long swig and says, "Tis absolutely fantastic!"

At this point she starts slowly unzipping the long zipper that runs down the front of her wet suit, looks at the man and asks, "And how long has it been since you've played around?"

With tears in his eyes, the man falls to his knees and sobs, "Oh, sweet Jesus! Don't tell me you've got golf clubs in there too!"

Purposeful Living

Chris Ray is an active volunteer in several community organizations. A USMC Vietnam veteran, this nomination is focused on his

work with Patriot Resilient Leader Institute (PRLI), which runs Camp Resilience in Gilford, NH.



Chris Ray

"The program provides retreats [free for participants] to help service members, veterans, first responders and their loved ones throughout New England, recover and maintain their physical, psychological, and emotional well-being. These

3-4-day long retreats combine peer-to-peer counseling, life skills workshops, and outdoor experiential learning activities. Many Camp Resilience retreats are general in nature with workshops devoted to topics such as mindfulness, anger management, exercise and financial management. More specialized retreats have focused on specific populations such as, women, couples, veterans with post-traumatic stress, and veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma." (Further details are available at www.camp-resilience.org)

Chris Ray was a founding member of Patriot Resilient Leader Institute in 2014. Since then he has remained heavily involved on the Board of Directors, serving as Treasurer since 2014. As a board member, Chris is regularly involved in Camp Resilience retreats, fundraising initiatives, governance and financial aspects of PRLI. In 2019 alone, Chris volunteered over 500 hours to PRLI and Camp Resilience.

Chris works tirelessly maintaining PRLI finances. He presents thorough retreat expense reports at every board meeting, often providing detailed explanations or possible improvements as well. With help of another volunteer, Chris manages QuickBooks and daily expenses for PRLI

including documentation, record checking, reconciliation and balancing the budget. He also develops and proposes the budget for each fiscal year. This year Chris spent extra time organizing the finances in preparation for their first external financial review, done to improve grant submissions and fundraising.

In addition to extensive time spent on financial management, Chris works diligently in fundraising capacities. In 2019 he organized a Concert for Camp Resilience around Veterans Day, a doo wop event benefiting the program. He worked closely with the Laconia Daily Sun, radio station Frank FM, performing groups The Rocking Daddios and The Bel Airs, and solicited sponsors to create this successful event.

Furthermore, Chris invests as much time as possible participating directly in retreats. He is a frequent driver for activities, attends sessions like hiking, and joins groups during meals. PRLI often receives feedback that Chris is a welcome and caring addition to these retreats. As a veteran himself, he connects on a personal level with many attendees, especially Marines.

Chris' allegiance to PRLI and Camp Resilience stands out in his dedication, passion, and care for the people they serve. His commitment and expertise are vital to the operation and effectiveness of this program. His hard work ensures that PRLI maintains a solid official and legal capacity, as well as consistent solvency with adequate funding. For all these reasons and more, PRLI recommends Chris Ray for this award. He is a humble, yet exemplary volunteer, and deserves to be recognized for his steadfast efforts on behalf of those currently serving or who have served and

their families, for our nation and in individual states or local communities

Board Notes

Conversations with my mother, father, my grandparents, as I've grown up have obviously

driven me towards wanting to try and make a difference as much as possible. (Prince Harry)

BE THE CHANGE

May has been full of graduating ceremonies unlike any we have seen. The creativity, compassion and support of schools, parents and communities has been so heartwarming and a delight to watch. They bring home that excitement of starting a new phase of life. It also reminds us of a shared value: the desire to make the world a better place. And it has never been more demonstrated than in these times and the ways so many of our young people contribute.

Most us can remember that stage in our lives, and for many Woodstock was the symbol of the era. Anti-establishment, peace and love were the themes of the day. It was also a time when most Americans believed in "United We Stand, Divided We Fall." As we watch these graduates facing more unknowns than we did, it just might be a coming of age for all of us! Rather than being anti, let's be pro: pro caring for one another and pro policies, institutions, and businesses that support people and the world.

Let's remember that our leaders and representatives who make themselves available, listen and act in ways that reflect that people come first also deserve our appreciation. Political views or individual decisions aside, we have been fortunate, at both the State and federal levels of

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government to have a strong level of responsiveness. Town hall style meetings, frequent briefings, new website pages dedicated to specific needs, and e-newsletters, all happening during the learning curve of virtual gatherings! We're learning and adapting together and it's what we expect from good governing.

In a sense, we are all entering a new phase of life; COVID-19 has changed the world we knew, requiring collaboration and cooperation in new ways. If there is a

silver lining in these difficult times, it is that we can adopt the positive outcomes and make them permanent. We can make sure that our democracy functions with integrity at all levels by speaking up, being clear, being inclusive, and putting people first. And, as every public-school teacher learns, a little positive recognition supports and encourages desired behaviors!

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world." — **Mahatma Gandhi**

Contact Information for NH Members of the U.S. Congress

Name	Mailing Address	Phone	E-Mail Contact Form
U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas	323 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515	202-225-5456	https://pappas.house.gov/
U.S. Rep Ann Kuster	137 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515	202-225-5206	https://kuster.house.gov/contact/email-me
U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan	B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224-3324	https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator
U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen	506 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224-2841	www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne