



A Citizen Voice for the
Aging Experience

ENGAGING NH NEWS

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Five Gifts of Aging Acceptance

by Kathy Sporre

It is understood through re- search that part of ageism is due to the fear of dying; espe- cially in western culture. Be- cause of our fear of dying, aging becomes a bad thing to do since it brings us closer to what we fear. To combat this, we try to avoid or at least deny that we are getting older with each passing day. If we carry the baggage of negative stereotypes of aging that we learned as chil- dren, we will also try to avoid the unavoidable.

Many of us go to great lengths to feed this denial in order to maintain our youthfulness. When we do so, through the myriad of ways society has cre- ated to help us feed the mon- ster of age denial – we are missing out on the gifts we can receive by accepting our aging process.

The ability to receive

It almost goes without saying that with acceptance comes the ability to receive. Acceptance removes the barriers that denial creates and opens the way for the gifts of aging to flow into our lives. When we aren't fighting useless battles against

“People are polished and perfected by age. I will be “refined by age not defined by it”

Kathy Sporre

aging we are free to acknowledge and receive the rewards of longevity. Our minds are clear to see the small ripples of benefits aging breaks across our life's shores. Take a walk along the beach that has been your life up until now and intentionally seek those treasures cast up from the deep. Every- one's shore will be strewn with a different variety of "pearls" and treasures. What are yours?

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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.

The ability to live in the present

When we are able to accept, we are more able to live in the present moment. We are not fighting the battles of yesterday through regrets or the fears of tomorrow. We are present to what is going on around us right here and now. We are able to give more attention to the people and things that are right in front of us. That is a gift to them as well as to ourselves. Are you paying more attention to the people and things in your life right now as you are to your regrets and fears? Don't miss out on the present. Remember: the present is a gift.

The ability to make moments count

As we learn to live in the present, life will seem to slow down. Through our increased awareness, we will see and experience more than possible when we are a million miles away fighting past (regrets) or future (fear) battles. Our awareness of all that surrounds us will come into greater focus, and we will clearly see that our attention is called for right here and now. It is good to be mindful of where our attention is. If it is present in the moment we are showing more respect, care, and love to the people in our lives. Moments will not be wasted and cherished memories will be made. Are you here for those you

love or are you somewhere far in the past or the future?

The gift of authenticity

When we can truly accept ourselves for who we are, wherever we are on life's journey, we free ourselves to truly be who we are – authentically. There is no need for any pretenses to prove to others and ourselves that we

are something we are not. We are genuine beings who are grounded in truth. Our foundation is strong when we are true to ourselves. We must first be true to ourselves before we can be true to others. The best relationships are those based on authenticity because they are not conflicted with deception. Deception is not of the light. It is of the dark and it takes a lot of energy to pretend we are what we're not. Like a spring of pure water, our authenticity will find its way to the surface. Are you using your energy to fight the truth or allowing yourself to be filled with energy by accepting the truth?

The gift of freedom

If we accept ourselves as who we are at any given moment in time, we will free ourselves from negative feelings like jealousy and anger that often accompany the desire to be other than who we are. When we see a young person with all the supple qualities of youth which we wish we could hold onto forever, we can look, appreciate, remember and let go. We don't climb on the elevator to the lower levels of anger and resentment or jealousy over what another person has that we covet. We had our time in that place and despite the appearance of youthfulness, life wasn't all a bed of roses then – remember? In fact, life is better now in many ways. Start count-

ing them. When we are able to accept our aging process or anything else for that matter, we no longer have to fight against something. We are truly free.

Kathy Sporre worked in the aging field for over 28 years, serving on initiatives at the national and international levels. You can find her blogs at her website refinedby-age.com

"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others."

Maya Angelou

NH Updates

YOUR LOCAL RESOURCES

Open Enrollment for Medicare has started. If you need help figuring out what plans are best for you, consider calling or visiting your local ServiceLink.

ServiceLink Aging & Disability Resource Center 866-634-9412 (service-link.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 is also available.

Disability Rights Center (DRC)

While disability is not the most important thing about us as older adults, it does become more common as we age and can unnecessarily prevent us from fully engaging in work, civic, and community life. The Disability Rights Center is the agency that can address problems that arise when employers, public services, governments, businesses, and other entities fail to provide reasonable supports or accommodations to allow us access to the services

and activities we want and need. DRC-NH is New Hampshire's designated Protection and Advocacy agency. It is authorized by federal law to pursue legal and other appropriate remedies on behalf of individu-

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

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

als with disabilities.
DRC-NH provides low-cost and free information and referral,

as well as legal services, in cases of abuse disability related discrimination in many areas, including abuse and neglect, access and accommodation, assistive technology, health care, including mental health, and employment. In addition, they are developing materials to be posted on their website to help people with disabilities and emergency response organizations become more prepared for various types of emergency. They are also posting interviews with 2020 Presidential candidates as they respond to questions about their policy positions regarding issues of accessibility to civic engagement, including voting, work, and education for people with disabilities. These powerful and enlightening videos can be viewed at <http://drcnh.org/voting-rights-2020-election>.

Anyone who believes he or she is being prevented from voting, accessing jobs, health care, or public accommodations, or exercising their right to independence and self-sufficiency, can contact the DRC and be assured of being heard, advised, given a referral, or being offered legal assistance if appropriate. Call 1-800-834-7121; email at mail@drcnh.org; visit the website, www.drcnh.org; go to their Facebook page, Disability Rights Center NH; or Twitter at @DRCNH.

NH DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

The Mature Worker Program is a pilot grant being offered by NH Employment

Security (NHES) in collaboration with the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), and in conjunction with Southern NH Services as well as other community action programs throughout the state. The Mature Worker Program designed to assist individuals age 55 and over with re-employment and job search activities, who are served through our statewide American Job Centers and are:

- Currently unemployed
- Seeking full-time work
- Are not currently receiving or have previously received WIOA services.

Participants will receive case management services and attend job search workshops and activities. Eligible participants may also have access to On the Job Training or an Individual Training Account to gain or update skills to compete in the job market.

Contoocook Dial-A-Ride which provides rides provided by volunteers at no charge will celebrate its 40th Anniversary. Ann Sims, 98 of Contoocook was a volunteer driver 40 years ago and now receives rides herself.

LAWMAKERS PREPARE TO DO THEIR THING WITH SOME OLD AND NEW LEGISLATION

From repealing a prohibition on hunting with a ferret to banning assault weapons in New Hampshire, to health care, energy, and climate issues, New Hampshire's House and Senate will be busy again during the next session.

In 2020, lawmakers will be dealing with a host of new issues and some old ones that did not pass last year.

ENH NEWSLETTER-NOVEMBER 2019

As of Oct. 17, there were 661 Legislative Service Requests or LSR's filed, and counting.

An LSR is a request to have a bill drafted and if successful, eventually voted into law. The House has filed these LSRs here or at http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/lsr_search/LSR_Results.aspx

The Senate has only just begun to file its LSRs, beginning with Democrats announcing an initiative to address prescription drug prices.

As always, the devil will be in the details.

The LSRs give only a gist of what the lawmaker who is filing it is trying to achieve. It's a title.

The detail work on the bill is to come with the Office of Legislative Services hammering out the language. The road to becoming a new law is a long one and full of opportunity for the public to have an impact.

You can read a bill's content, come to hear or even testify when each bill gets a hearing before a committee and then follow it through both chambers. If successful, it will eventually go to the governor to sign or veto. There are opportunities for all to voice their opinions, to learn, engage, and impact New Hampshire.

And... Every two years, it's the public's time to vote.

If you don't like what you have seen or are seeing from your elected representative – from the Governor to your Senator or House Representative – you can vote them out of office. The primary will be Sept. 8, 2020, and the general election, Nov. 3, 2020.

All 400 House representatives and 24 state Senators face the decision of running

for re-election or bowing out for someone else to do the job.

In-DepthNH.org will be closely following the action in the House and Senate again this year. Let us know what LSRs you are following and why by sending an email to Paula Tracy at paulatracy6@gmail.com

One of the first package of initiatives that the Senate has filed deal with prices at the pharmacy. They are looking to import low-cost drugs from Canada, similar to what neighboring states have done.

The proposals look to increase accountability for pharmaceutical companies and pharmacy benefit managers. The bills, now in title only, would establish the Prescription Drug Affordability & Access Act of 2020.

Sen. Majority Leader Dan Feltes, D- Concord, who is also running for governor, is the prime sponsor. It looks to what Maine and Vermont have already done to bring the cost of prescription drugs down.

Sen. Tom Sherman, D-Rye, who is a physician looks to expand drug pricing transparency. Problems with price gouging are addressed in a one whose prime sponsor is Sen. Martha Fuller Clark, D-Portsmouth.

Finally, a fourth bill addresses rebates paid to pharmacy benefit managers, whose prime sponsor is Sen. Cindy Rosenwald, D-Nashua.

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!

*GSIL Advocacy Alert & InDepthNH.org,
Paula Tracy, 10/18/19*

DARTMOUTH-HITCHCOCK TO OPEN GERIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center is trying to do something no other hospital in New England has done before. It's focusing on our aging population in a new way. Our Adam Sullivan explains what it could mean for your loved one's care.

Hospital officials say every year, millions of elderly patients visit emergency departments across the country, often when they don't need to. At Dartmouth-Hitchcock, they are trying to change things by creating a specialized geriatric ED.

"We will be able to provide a different level of geriatric care during that acute time of need," said Shelley Lyford, the president and CEO of West Health.

West Health is a group of organizations dedicated to improving health care for older adults who want to age in place. New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine have the oldest median populations in the country. Because of that, West Health is partnering with Dartmouth-Hitchcock to open a Level 1 geriatric emergency department in Lebanon. It will be the first in New England. The enhanced ED will focus solely on elderly care.

"That hopefully will translate into seniors being able to go home rather than being admitted to a hospital," Lyford said.

West Health is contributing \$3 million to the initiative. Dartmouth-Hitchcock is pitching in an additional \$1.5 million. It's a large investment that medical industry experts say will pay off in the long run.

"The ability to lower cost is really avoiding the admission. That is probably our highest cost intervention we have. Number two, using appropriate specialty care so we can actually get people the care that they need and the assessment that they need when they are in the emergency room," said Dr. Joanne Conroy, the CEO of Dartmouth-Hitchcock.

DHMC is the most rural academic medical center in the country and the new partnership expands beyond the main campus. The geriatric ED in Lebanon will be replicated smaller regional hospitals using existing telehealth partners.

"Put in the protocols, we put in the screens, we put in the trainings and we give access via telehealth to our additional personnel here on our main campus," said Dr. Daniel Stadler, the geriatrics director at DHMC.

The goal is to implement that model at rural hospitals across the country, giving elderly patients the care they need at a lower cost.

Damien Fisher, Union Leader, 10/24/19

Your Voice

MD REFERRALS

Please share this with your readers. Don't assume that when you make an appointment to follow up with a referral that all your information will be reviewed and considered.

I recently had an experience in which my Oncologist referred me to check a cyst and wanted to have me seen no later than one month. (That was in September) When the receptionist offered me an appointment in January, fortunately, I joked that it was a relief to know that my situation must not be serious! That's when she checked my referral!

What about older adults, Commissioner Meyers?

The Oct. 20 *Sunday Monitor* had a piece in which Commissioner Jeffrey Meyers outlined the issues his replacement as commissioner of Health and Human Services will face. The list did not contain a single item related to older adults. New Hampshire does not have an Agency on Aging; the only programs covering services to older adults are administered through DHHS. Given that New Hampshire has the second oldest population, the omission is concerning at best.

CAROL CURRIER
Concord

Focus on Community

SPREADING WORD ABOUT EXISTING TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Laurie Renke started her new part-time job as Londonderry's first-ever senior transportation coordinator in June. The fast-talking former stay-at-home mom with a marketing degree is already trying to spread the word about an existing low-cost transportation service available to seniors in town, and is hoping to get feedback from seniors in an ongoing survey that lasts until the end of the month.

"The reason why they created this position was to have a presence in town ... so the seniors have someone they can come to and have resources," Renke said. "We have a very high percentage of senior residents here in Londonderry."

Town Planner Colleen Mailloux said 28.3% of the town's residents (a little over 7,000 people) are age 55 and older, according to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census. In the 2010 Census, that figure was 22.1%, Mailloux said.

And Renke said the number of seniors is expected to climb significantly as the youngest Baby Boomers begin to enter senior citizenship.

Renke said she has lived in Londonderry for 24 years, where she raised two boys in town with her husband of 30 years. An active volunteer for the Cub Scouts, Londonderry Lancers Marching Band, the Parent Teacher Association and Londonderry Alert, she's also worked in the senior unit for Easter Seals, for Best Buddies New Hampshire and helped create a falls prevention program for the South Central NH Public Health Network as a consultant.

I hope this is not a common experience, but it's a good idea to check. I also ask for and bring copies of any recent tests, such as blood tests too. We need to advocate for ourselves especially when we are seeing a medical professional who is not familiar with us.

Anna

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Good Issue (October) and I liked having all the content in the cover email.

Paul

Excellent as always. I know it's not feasible but so wish these were mailed and not thru email. I would love to pass on to others I know but this way too cumbersome. I know all the reasons it's not Carol, just saying...

Thank you for your work here on this-

Sherry

Editor's Note: EngAGING NH does not accept advertisements as we want to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. As an all-volunteer organization, we have no funds for hard copy mailings. We are working on improving the format to improve its readability on various technological devices. Please let us know what you think.

"Seniors are in my wheel-house since a child, helping my parents volunteer at the Chelsea Soldiers' Home in Massachusetts, supporting and respecting veterans," Renke said.

Now, Renke holds parttime office hours at the Londonderry Senior Center at 535 Mammoth Road. She says she'll officially be a senior herself in two years, but Renke is brimming with energy.

She said her first order of business has been to build awareness about an existing transportation program called Corporate Alliance Regional Transportation (CART). The ride sharing program has been available to town seniors for over a decade,

Renke said, but there are still many who aren't aware of it or are afraid to try it.

"No one knows about them," Renke said. "It's underutilized and underadvertised."

The service offers oneway rides in town to seniors 62 and older for \$1.50, she said. Round trip is \$3. For travel out of the designated zones, the prices vary.

She said a round trip to Derry and back is \$4 and to Hampstead and back is \$5.

Renke said she understands that it can be scary to give

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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up one's independence, but she wants seniors to utilize this service if the alternative is for them to become indefinitely shut-in at home.

The CART program is undergoing some changes, Renke said, as it transitions from Easterseals' management to the Manchester Transit Authority (MTA). She said the move is to help the program expand under the expertise and economy of scale the MTA brings to the table.

Seniors can access it using the same phone number, and the name isn't changing.

The Derry/Londonderry shuttle is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Moving forward, Renke is seeking feedback from the town's seniors about how the existing programs are working and what else could be helpful in the future.

Physical surveys are available at the Londonderry Town Hall, library and senior center. The survey is also online at tiny.cc/seniortransit. The survey is open through Oct. 31.

The Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission helped create fliers, she said.

Renke hopes to learn more about the needs in the community, but also hopes the survey itself will help to raise awareness of existing programs like CART.

As she settles in to her new post, Renke said she is doing a lot of research and looking into some potential federal grants.

"Who knows what the future will bring for senior transit," she said.

"Given our aging population and commitment to our seniors, the town decided to hire a parttime Senior Transportation Co-

ordinator both to assist our seniors with the current transportation options available to our senior population ... as well as to research and develop other options as necessary," Assistant Town Manager Lisa Drabik said.

Drabik said an example of a new option would be a volunteer driver program.

Renke said they'll also be hosting a smart driving course with AARP on Nov. 5.

More information about CART can be found at cartrides.org.

Ryan Lessard, ldnews@unionleader.com

RIDESHARING: GOT A RIDE?

(from the United Spinal Association):

As advocates for efficient, safe, and inclusive transportation for individuals with mobility related disabilities, we need to be informed of our communities' personal experiences and impressions of ridesharing platforms. Your feedback will help inform policy and accessibility on this important issue.

What challenges with any recent ridesharing app have you experienced? Let us know, we can help. Take a few moments to fill out the survey below. Thank you.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/rideshare-app

Granite State Independent Living

News You Can Use

FRIENDLY PHONE PROGRAMS

The Gratitude Group based in California is just one of many options for older adults wanting to participate in lively conversations over the phone about everything from writing to music to sports to religion to wellness and much more. Well Connected, which has sessions 365 days a year, is open to anyone over

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.

60; and the average age of participants is 74. Typically, there are 10 to 12 people on a toll-free call. The facilitator helps keep the conversation running smoothly, asks questions and makes sure that those who want to weigh in on the discussion can.

Well Connected has its roots in a New York City-based nonprofit called DOROT (the Hebrew word for "generations"), which provides a variety of services for older adults and works to decrease the loneliness and social isolation often experienced by this population.

www.nextavenue.org/say-hello-to-friendly-phone-programs/

VETERINARY SOCIAL WORKERS

Veterinary social work is a growing field and social workers are being called upon to work in settings where animals and people are in relationship with one another and in need of supportive services (e.g., veterinary clinics, animal shelters, domestic violence facilities, schools, human health care agencies). It is a specialization which focuses on attending to the human

needs at the intersection of veterinary and social work practice.

Utilizing a strengths perspective and evidence-based practices, it includes four key areas: compassion fatigue and conflict management, the link between human violence and animal abuse, animal-assisted interventions (therapy and service animals), and animal-related grief and loss. Among others, the University of Tennessee and Michigan State University offer programs in this area.

TIME TO LOSE FABRIC SOFTENERS

Fabric softeners may seem like a tempting addition to your laundry machine – they act to smooth your clothes, eliminate static and wrinkles, and on top of all that, they add a pleasant scent to your wardrobe. Yet, all of these apparent benefits come at a cost – for your clothes, your health, and the planet; not to mention your wallet.

As ethical fashion blogger Verena Erin explains in her writeup, adding softeners to our laundry routine introduces a host of harmful chemicals to our bodies. Among such chemicals are Quaternary ammonium compounds, or simply 'quats', which are linked to respiratory and skin irritations and harmful to marine environments. Other things that softeners contain are fragrances and phthalates – known endocrine disruptors – as well as preservatives and colors that are linked to skin irritations and even cancer.

What's more, softeners are not even good for clothing. The layer of lubricating chemicals that they add to your laundry builds up over time, causing yellowing in clothes and reducing the absorbency of fabrics, which may be why your old towels don't soak up water like they used to.

Fortunately, giving up fabric softener is not that difficult today, with plenty of healthier, natural, and safer alternatives available out there. The source article from Treehugger has some suggestions. <https://www.treehugger.com/cleaning-organizing/why-you-dont-need-fabric-softener.html>

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICING

Lawmakers in the U.S. House of Representatives are continuing work on their drug pricing bill, H.R. 3, which includes a number of provisions that would improve prescription drug access and affordability for people with Medicare. Among the bill’s critical reforms are those allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices; the imposition of inflationary rebates on certain drugs in Parts B and D; and a restructuring of the Part D benefit that would cap out-of-pocket costs, reduce the federal government’s liability, and better align pricing incentives. A preliminary analysis from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates H.R. 3’s negotiation provisions alone would save \$345 billion over seven years.

SLEEPING WITH THE SEASONS: SEE HOW WEATHER INFLUENCES YOUR SLEEP

Have you ever noticed that different times of year or certain weather patterns influence how you feel or how well you sleep?

Though many aspects of achieving good sleep are under our control, one often-overlooked factor is the outside environment. Changes to temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity and precipitation influence us in many ways, both positive and negative.

When it comes to sleep, learning about the weather’s influence can be helpful for pre-

paring for and mitigating slumber-stealing situations.

Winter is a particularly important season in

this regard. While the cooler, drier air does yield some benefits, the atmosphere and changes to sun cycles can play a significant role in sleep quality. Changes in spring, summer and fall also affect us in different ways.

Read on to see how the weather influences your sleeping habits and what you can do to get better rest.

Shorter Days Can Affect Your Biochemistry

As the days get shorter during fall and winter, we see less and less sunlight. This is especially true when you find yourself rising before sunrise or not leaving work until it’s dark outside.

Vitamin D is important for serotonin production, and serotonin is important for many functions including our sleep-wake cycles. Our main source of vitamin D is sunlight, meaning when we don’t get sunlight we miss out. Research has shown that a lack of sunlight can increase feelings of depression and fatigue and increase carb cravings as serotonin levels are affected.

Lower vitamin D levels have been associated with greater daytime drowsiness, and changes in light-dark cycles can also affect when your body releases melatonin making you feel tired earlier or later than usual.

If you work indoors, make it a point to get several minutes in the sun on a break or in

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!
If you like this newsletter, please share it with your family, neighbors, friends and colleagues.

the morning when possible. According to Purdue University research, people with fair skin need nine minutes, medium skin 16 minutes, and dark skin 38 minutes to absorb 2000 IU of vitamin D with 25% of skin exposed.

If you can't get outside regularly, than work near a window. In one study, office workers who sat near windows received higher white light exposure and also slept better than those who didn't have windows nearby. The effects of winter can also be more serious. The condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder occurs when symptoms of depression become clinical and show clear fluctuations between fall/winter and spring/summer.

Research also links SAD with reduced sleep efficiency and less slow-wave sleep. SAD is more commonly diagnosed among women and in northern latitudes, and is treated with white light therapy and pharmaceuticals.

<https://amerisleep.com/blog/weather-influences-sleep/>

Health & Wellness

THREE DOCTOR APPROVED WAYS TO COPE WITH LONELINESS

First way: Practice kindness.

It can be harder to be kind to yourself than to others, so start with others. Little acts of kindness are as important as grand gestures and can boost your mood. Look for opportunities to do something unexpectedly lovely. Buy a friend a cup of coffee or flowers, give a compliment, offer to walk your neighbor's dog, or ask a cashier how her day is going. If you have more time, volunteer or organize a park cleanup or mural painting in your neighborhood.

Second way: Put down your phone (or pick it up and call a friend).

Aim to increase your face-to-face time with people you care about, and please put away your phones when you're together. Research shows that even having your phone on the table distracts from engaging with the person in front of you. If you live alone, then use your phone to reach out to a friend and say hello—perhaps you can even ask to meet up for coffee or lunch. Even if they say no, just reaching out is a success.

Third way: Take a class or teach one.

A lifelong learning habit is one of the best ways to boost your brain function and connect with others. It can be a one-off event or a recurring activity. Airbnb also offers one-of-a-kind local "experiences" now where you explore new neighborhoods with an insider, learn aerial moves with a circus star, or finally track down that elusive world's best pizza slice. And if you're an expert in one field or another, offer to lead a class; sharing what you know with others is the perfect way to connect.

<http://www.optimistdaily.com/2019/10/feeling-lonely-here-are-3-doctor-approved->

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!

Do you know an Elder leader making NH better for all of us as we age?

Nominated him or her for a Vaughan Award!

Nomination forms are online at

www.engagingnh.org/vaughan-awards.html

ways-to-deal-with-loneliness/

LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE NATURALLY

People who suffer from high blood pressure typically

show no signs or symptoms, earning it the not-so-cheerful nickname of the “silent killer.” It’s also extremely common: about 75 million adults in the US are affected by high blood pressure. That’s around 1 in 3 adults. So, how do you combat high blood pressure?

According to Dr. Michael Greger of NutritionFacts.org, high cholesterol, which is typically caused by eating meat, dairy, and eggs, is the primary cause of high blood pressure, although feeling stressed, smoking tobacco, and having high-stress levels can also play a role. Therefore, the most effective way to naturally lower high blood pressure is by changing up your diet and lifestyle.

Eating more plant-based meals and focusing on “whole foods” that are free from processing can drastically improve your blood pressure. Whole foods (not the store) include fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and beans.

Reducing sodium intake is another thing you should do if you want to lower blood pressure. When you eat too much salt, it can cause the muscles of your artery walls to become stronger and thicker, meaning

there is less space in the arteries, therefore further raising your blood pressure.

MEDICARE’S NUTRITION HELP

Health experts say the little-used benefit represents a lost opportunity for beneficiaries to improve their health — and for the program to save money by preventing costly complications from the diseases. Kaiser Health News.

www.medicare.org/articles/does-medicare-cover-nutrition-counseling/

6 TIPS TO KEEP ANXIETY FROM GETTING THE BEST OF YOU

In our fast-paced lives, it can be all too easy to let work and family commitments overwhelm us. Finding ways to effectively cope with that negative feeling of being stretched too thin can help prevent symptoms related to long term stressors, including heart disease, depression, and diabetes. One powerful tool against toxic stress is to build a practice of feeling content and joyous in your life, so this week we have six strategies to help you stay healthy and balanced, even when you’re experiencing stressful times.

1. Eat well — It can be tempting to binge on salty or sweet treats when we’re feeling anxious, but fueling your body with nutritious food will be more satisfying in the long run, and give you the energy to face all your commitments with confidence.
2. Fit in some exercise — Other than keeping you physically fit, endorphins released when exercising are a powerful mood enhancer. Home workouts or lunchtime walks are an easy way to sneak some movement into your busy schedule.

- 3. Don't be afraid to seek professional help — Mental health is as important as physical health and the two are intricately linked. Talking to your doctor or to a therapist can help you find relief if you find yourself perpetually stressed out.
- 4. Get enough sleep — This is your body's time to reboot and repair so take a break and let yourself rest. Plus, some of our best problem solving is done when we sleep.
- 5. Be smart about how you cope — Look at your support system, do your friends, family, and relationships help or harm when you are most stressed? Invest in the ones that do, let the others go. You can also develop positive coping habits like short walks, listening to music, or drinking a relaxing cup of tea.

Remember your job does not define you — If your work puts you in a place of constant stress, ask yourself: is it worth it? Take time every day to relax and think: how can I bring my best self to work, and how can my job best support me?

www.theguardian.com

MEDICAL ADVANCES

Melanoma seems to have found its match in immunotherapy, a type of treatment designed to help the immune system fight cancer. Just a decade ago, only one-in-20 patients would live for five years

after being diagnosed with late-stage melanoma, with most dying in months. But drugs designed to trigger the body's immune system mean 52 percent of patients now live for at least five years, according to a new clinical trial.

Patients with melanoma, which is the fifth most common cancer in the UK, can be cured if the cancer is caught in its early stages, but as cancer spreads throughout the body, then survival plummets. With immunotherapy, however, researchers have found that tumors are reduced in size and stunted from growing any bigger.

Are these patients cured? Saying cured is always difficult in cancer, but five-year-survival is a hugely significant milestone. Some patients taking the drugs are in total remission with no sign of any abnormality on scans. Others still have a tumor inside their bodies, but it is no longer growing. Out of the patients that survived, three-quarters no longer need any form of cancer treatment.

The study shows just powerful immunotherapy can be in fighting cancers that were once deemed untreatable.

www.bbc.com/news/health-49853878

Share How Access to Health Care and Insurance Affects Your Life

(from the Collaborative on Health Reform and Independent Living)

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

2019 National Survey on Health and Disability

The NIDILRR-funded Collaborative on Health Reform and Independent Living (CHRIL) is looking for adults with disabilities to complete an online survey about health insurance and health care services. Whether you have private insurance, insurance from an employer, TRICARE, Medicaid, Medicare or no insurance right now please complete the survey.

Adults, 18 and over, with any type of disability, chronic illness/disease, mental or physical health condition are encouraged to participate.

The survey should take about 20 minutes to complete.

Responses are anonymous.

To complete the survey, go to: https://kusurvey.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_24y2euux4TujTcF

Whether or not you complete the survey, you can choose to enter a drawing to win one of ten \$100 gift cards. If you prefer to take the survey over the phone or have any questions about participating, please call toll-free 1-855-556-6328 (Voice/TTY) or email healthsurvey@ku.edu. This survey may look familiar to you. It was first posted in 2018 and is being posted for a second time this year. We welcome participation from those who completed it in 2018 and those who have never done it before. Thank you!

Granite State Independent Living



HOW TO DISPOSE OF ELECTRONICS

The first question to ask yourself is: Is this item still usable? If it is, consider giving it someone who can still genuinely enjoy it. Perhaps you can do-

nate it to a charity or sell it online on a website like Facebook and make a couple of extra bucks.

If the device is no longer usable, then it's time to recycle that e-waste. Your local Best Buy or Staples both have free electronic recycling programs at all of their US stores. Should you not have one of these in your area, many municipalities also offer occasional electronic recycling; and the recycling experts at TerraCycle offer some options as well.

Best Buy's recycling program accepts a few non-office appliances as well, such as vacuums, fans, curling irons, and hair dryers; Best Buy will even haul away TVs from your home or office and recycle them for a fee (but not in Connecticut and Pennsylvania, for whatever reason).

www.greenmatters.com/p/how-to-recycle-electronics-technology

HOUSEHOLD TECHNOLOGIES

Here are some innovations which could impact the future of aging in place (some are available now, some are not):

Smart refrigerators are typically marketed to families on the go, but they can be just as useful to older adults who are staying put. How? For one thing, inside is a camera that lets you view the contents from anywhere with an internet connection. That means a loved one could check to see if there's any food in the fridge or if that gallon of milk has been moved in a week.

Home Monitoring: Australia-based Billy uses Samsung SmartThings sensors and proprietary software to create a home-monitoring system for older adults that learns a person's habits and sounds the alarm — actually, triggers a smartphone alert — when those habits change.

Induction Cooktops: These only get hot when a pan is in place — and doesn't get as hot as a traditional cooktop. They can help protect older adults who might trip and put a hand on the cooktop to steady themselves.

PATH LIGHTING

Another product that focuses on older adults, whether they live at home or in a congregate-care facilities, is Luna Lights, which combines a pressure-sensitive pad on the bed with wall-mounted path lights. The product also allows motoring and can alert if a pattern of bathroom trips at night increase indicating a possible UTI.

www.nextavenue.org/smarter-home-age-in-place/

TAKING TECH AWAY IS A TOUGH DECISION

At first, Dr. Robert Zorowitz thought his 83-year-old mother was confused. She couldn't remember passwords to accounts on her computer. She would call and say programs had stopped working.

But over time, Zorowitz realized his mother — a highly intelligent woman who was comfortable with technology — was showing early signs of dementia.

The use of devices such as computers, cellphones and tablets becomes difficult and in some cases problematic for those with cognitive impairment.

Computer skills may deteriorate even "before (older adults) misplace keys, forget names or display other more classic signs of early dementia," Zorowitz wrote recently on a group email list for geriatricians. (Based in New York City, he is senior medical director for Optum Inc., a health services company.) "Deciding whether to block their access to their bank accounts,

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

stocks and other online resources may present the same ethical dilemmas as taking away their car keys," he said.

The emergence of this issue tracks the growing popularity of devices that let older adults communicate with friends and family via email, join interest groups on Facebook, visit loved ones virtually via Skype or FaceTime, and bank, shop, take courses or read publications online.

According to the Pew Research Center, 73% of adults 65 and older used the internet in 2019, up from 43% in 2010. And 42% of older adults owned smartphones in 2017, the latest year for which data is available, up from 18% in 2013.

Already, some physicians are adapting to this new digital reality. At Johns Hopkins Medicine, Dr. Halima Amjad, an assistant professor of medicine, now asks older patients if they use a computer or smartphone and whether they are experiencing troubles such as forgetting passwords or getting locked out of accounts.

"If there's a notable change in how someone is using technology," she said, "we would proceed with a more in-depth cognitive evaluation."

Dr. Neelum Aggarwal, a neurologist at Rush University's Alzheimer's Disease Cen-

ter in Chicago, finds that older adults are bringing up problems with technology as a “non-threatening way to talk about trouble with thinking.”

“Instead of saying, ‘I have issues with my memory,’ people will say, ‘I just can’t figure out my smartphone,’ or ‘I was trying to start that computer program and it took forever to get that done,’” she said.

If the person had previously used digital devices without difficulty, Aggarwal will try to identify the underlying problem. Does the older adult have problems with vision or coordination? Is the patient having trouble understanding language? Is memory becoming compromised? Is it hard for the patient to follow the steps needed to complete a transaction?

If using technology becomes frustrating, Aggarwal recommends deleting apps on cellphones and programs on computers.

“The anxiety associated with ‘Oh, my God, I have to use this and I don’t know how’ totally sets people back and undoes any gains that technology might offer,” she said. “It’s similar to what I do with medications: I’ll help someone get rid of what’s not needed and keep only what’s really essential.”

Typically, Aggarwal said, she recommends no more than five to 10 cellphone apps for patients in these circumstances.

When safety becomes an issue — say, for an older adult with dementia who’s being approached by scammers via email — family members should first try counseling the person against giving out his or her Social Security or credit card information, said Cynthia Clyburn, a social worker in the neurology division at Penn Medicine in Philadelphia.

If that doesn’t work, try to spend time together at the computer so you can monitor what’s going on. “Make it a group activity,” Clyburn said. If possible, create shared passwords so you have shared access.

But beware of appropriating someone’s passwords and using them to check email or online bank or brokerage accounts. “Without consent, it’s a federal crime to use an individual’s password to access their accounts,” said Catherine Seal, an elder-law attorney at Kirtland & Seal in Colorado Springs, Colo. Ideally, consent should be granted in writing.

With his mother’s permission, one of Zorowitz’s brothers — a physician in Baltimore — installed GoToMyPC, an application that allows him to remotely manage her computer. He used it to reset passwords and manage items on her desktop and sometimes used it to order groceries online from Peapod.

Eventually, Selma Zorowitz lost interest in her computer as she slipped further into dementia and spent the end of her life in a nursing home. She died in 2014 at age 87.

Judith Graham, Kaiser Health News

Dollars & Sense

HOW TO SPOT IDENTITY THEFT

With all the scams and hacking that we live with everyday identity theft is more and more an issue. Here are three warning signs to look for: you get bills for things you didn't buy; you apply for credit and are denied; and your credit score increases.

How the 2020 Social Security COLA is Calculated: Specifically, SSA ties its adjustment for Social Security benefits to the wage earners’ consumer price index, which is similar to, but not exactly the

same as, the more commonly reported urban dwellers' consumer price index. National average prices are used, not regional. SSA also calculates the percent change between average prices in the third quarter of the current year with the third quarter of the previous year. The reason the fourth quarter isn't used is because that number is typically not available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics until mid-January, and the SSA has to make its adjustment on January 1.

The inflation adjustment for 2020 is only 1.6%, reflecting the current low-inflation environment. Much of the reason for this lower-than-normal inflation is that gasoline prices have dropped 6% over that time, dragging down the overall figure. This is unlikely to be repeated over the course of the next year, and so inflation will likely pick up to about 2%, causing an upward bump in the 2021 Social Security COLA as well.

www.kiplinger.com/article/retirement/T051-C000-S010-what-is-the-social-security-cola-for-2020.html

PUBLIC BANKS

California just passed a law creating public banks. This would allow the establishment of banks that hold the government's money and include socially responsible charters, anti-corruption clauses, transparency, a board that includes community development professionals, and prohibitions on retail locations and on competing with community banks and credit unions. In short, public banks could take taxpayer money back from Wall Street and reinvest it in communities.

It's expected to take one or two years, at least, to set up a charter for such a bank in California. But with California Gov.

Gavin Newsome being an avid supporter of public banking, we have reason to believe public banks could have huge implications for communities in the future.

<https://www.optimistdaily.com>

Laugh & Live Longer

ATTORNEY JOKE

The attorney tells the accused, "I have some good news and some

bad news."

"What's the bad news?" asks the accused.

"The bad news is, your blood is all over the crime scene, and the DNA tests prove you did it."

"What's the good news?"

"Your cholesterol is 130."

QUIZ

Q. How much money does a pirate pay for corn?

A. A buccaneer.

A TIP

If you answer the phone with "Hello, you're on the air!", most telemarketers will quickly hang up...

Purposeful Living

Wanda was nominated by the staff at the Peabody Home a not for profit, private home and

the nomination included quotes from residents. She is a Registered Nurse and first came to Peabody Home as the Community liaison/Hospice nurse for the Franklin Visiting Nurses Association. They indicated that they first met her years ago as she and her husband attended many Care Plan Meetings for a family member who was a resident. She demonstrated that rare combination of providing support for the



Wanda Belyea

staff by “seeing” and “hearing” them while being a family member advocate.

It was then that they learned how involved she was in the community in her position of liaison for the Visiting Nurse Assoc. and

the local hospital. It was said that she possesses a “servant-heart: and a “teacher’s heart.” Meaning she encourages people to come to their own conclusion productively, not doing it for them. She has a soft gentle

manner while firmly getting her point

across. She volunteers her time by sitting with residents

and listening to them. She listens and validates them personally and emotionally. She “meets them in their space.” They always look forward to her visits and they feel better when she is with them.

In addition to meeting with residents, she also Helps w/ lunch trips out to Senior Centers; Plays cribbage; Summer Picnics at the falls; Advertised the “Cruise Night,” attended and brought friends w/antique cars; Will pick up books at the Franklin Public Library for Residents; Reads stories/history to Residents; Takes Residents outside for walks and fresh air; Plays the piano for the Residents; Makes the BEST pepper jelly for everyone at Christmas; Helped with the Peabody Home Craft Fair; Attends monthly luncheons and sits w/ a resident who doesn’t have a guest. Always willing to help – She is only a call away.

Wanda started her volunteer journey at Peabody Home in 2015 serving as a Corporate member. In 2016 she became and

still is a Board of Manager; is a member of our “Steering Committee” and serves on the “Building Committee.”. Her gentle but direct approach to issues facing the Board brings much needed balance She is a strong team member, her role is not swooping in like Mighty Mouse, but is the strong, dependable Wind beneath the Wings, lifting people to their potential.

Wanda, in her volunteer role at Peabody Home supports the many luncheons and special events we have by attending them and visiting with residents and families (garden party, pie social, cake social, etc.). Also each year as a Board Member she makes a gift for each of the staff. Happy Staff mean Happy Residents. Wanda always goes over and above.

Board Notes

RAISING YOUR VOICE

First, what’s up with the format?

The Board of Directors has been discussing the newsletter: content, format, size, and focus. Why do we use the PDF format that is cumbersome in scrolling with up to 20 pages? Two reasons: we use the WORD format for those readers using assistive technology and that limits us to a PDF; and we are not a funded organization and lack the resources for postage. That said, we are exploring options and experimenting.

Did you find this issue easier to navigate? What would you like to see?

What do you think? We have a very diverse audience and we try to include material that will reflect that. If you were going to set criteria for content you would like to read, what would include? Let us know.

Why are we so excited about the Commission on Aging?

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, Wash- ington, DC 20515	202-225- 5456	https://shea-porter.house.gov/contact/email
U.S. Rep Ann Kuster	137 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515	202-225- 5206	https://kuster.house.gov/contact/em ail-me
U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan	B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510	202-224- 3324	https://www.hassan.senate.gov/c ontent/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

New Hampshire does not have an Agency on Aging. The programs that are directed at services for our older adult population are administered through the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services and are limited to specified funding, not a comprehensive approach to changing dynamics. When the Baby Boomers were in the child rearing ages, we build suburbia and more schools. Today we need to rethink our policies, regulations and infrastructure to serve our aging and intergenerational communities. The Commission is bringing together people with the backgrounds to do just that.

If we don't do it who will?

EngAGING NH is the public voice of older adults. We have and continue to be involved in everything that touches issues impacting us. The same faces are usually present, and they come from service providers, State government and contracted agencies. No matter how well intentioned these groups may be, a strong consumer voice is rarely involved or solicited. The

perspective of older adults by older adults is only as strong as we all make it.

Of note, the recent listening sessions for the State Plan on Aging did have significant public input and impact. The survey conducted as part of the planning process revealed a significant finding: Over 25% of the nearly 3000 responses, said they were not aware of services. That's why we include the 9-1-1 and ServiceLink information in each newsletter.

This newsletter is your voice. When we share our thoughts, we strengthen our influence and support one another. Whether you are dealing with a personal situation, caregiving for others, or are assisting an older loved one, your input is needed. We love personal stories and observations – anonymous or not, and we'll even help with the writing if you wish.

If we don't do it, who will?