



West Parry Sound District COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES NEWSLETTER

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Edited by Valerie Stanley

Spring Cleaning Time—for the Brain, Body and Soul

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Take a moment today to
FOCUS ON YOUR BREATHING.

It relaxes the space inside of you,

STRAIGHTENS YOUR SPINE,

Opens the chest and expands your heart.

(Esme Fielding)

Mindful Breathing Facts...

- ◆ Mindful breathing can help switch off the stress reaction and activate the calming response.
- ◆ Chronic stressful thoughts and behaviours strengthen the negative networks in the brain and weaken the positive ones. Mindfulness interrupts that pattern.
- ◆ People who practice mindful breathing still experience stress, and still feel strong emotions—but they are less likely to be overcome by it.
- ◆ We cannot always control what happens in life, but we can control how we respond and react. Mindfulness breathing can help.
- ◆ Medical research shows that patients practicing a Relaxation Response (RR) - similar to mindful breathing - show positive health improvements in blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen consumption.
- ◆ Just start to make the time to mindfully breathe.

Although this has been a short and warm winter, the brain can still get a little cabin feverish and have some cobwebs from a reduced exposure to the sunshine and fresh air. So with spring around the corner, it is time to start 'spring cleaning' your brain—which in turn cleans your body and soul.

One simple and sure strategy to refresh the brain is to practice mindful breathing every day—several times throughout the day. **This is truly a most effective and uncomplicated approach to decluttering busied and worrisome thoughts.** A calm mind supports a healthier person and scientific studies support this claim.

Our emotions are driven by our thoughts—and our thoughts are driven by us. Ultimately we manufacture and control (or lose control of) our thoughts. If you do not like the way you feel—change your thoughts and change how you think about things. Ask yourself, "What stories am I telling myself about my experience?"

Taking control of one's thoughts is easily achieved through mindful breathing.

There are many variations and degrees of breathing practices; some require extended time and quiet. The breathing exercise I am suggesting is simple and can be done anywhere, anytime and in any situation.

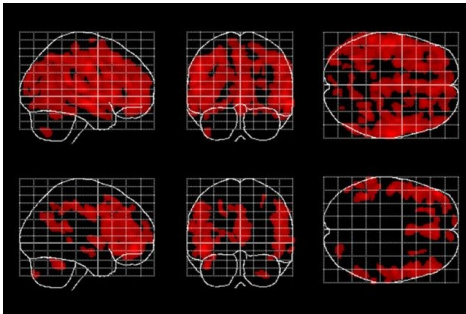
"Mindfulness" is about consciously paying attention to your thoughts and situation without judgment, as it unfolds. The emphasis is always on **what** is happening, not **why** it is happening.

Focus your thoughts and attention on your breathing patterns—on your breaths and take a timeout from the other thoughts. **First**, take a deep breath in through your nose and count to 4—; **second**, hold that breath to a count of 7—; **third**, breathe out strongly through your mouth to a count of 8. **Pay attention to your breathing—that is the mind's task.** (breathing out should be twice as long as the breathing in) Repeat this breathing cycle at least four times—and your brain will reset itself.

Mindful breathing throughout the day is an immeasurable gift of mental and physical wellness you can easily give to yourself.



Meditation Provides Protection for the Aging Brain



Areas of the brain **affected by aging** (in red) are fewer and less widespread in people who meditate, (images in the bottom row), than in people who do not meditate (top row).

The brain images in the picture show how people who meditate appear to generate a protective buffer to areas of the brain affected by the aging process. Researchers in a UCLA study found that long-term meditators had better preserved brains than non-meditators as they aged.

Researchers at Johns Hopkins studied the relationship between mindfulness meditation and its ability to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and pain. The team found that the effect size of meditation is moderate—the same effect size as antidepressants. Another study at Harvard found that eight weeks of mindfulness based stress reduction was found to increase cortical thickness in the hippocampus, which governs learning and memory, and in specific areas of the brain involved in emotion regulation and self-referential processing. The research is showing evidence that meditation results in observable changes in brain structure related to memory, sense of self, empathy and stress and overall brain health.

Focus on the Breath

- ⇒ The most popular concentrative meditation is to focus on the breath.
- ⇒ This is extremely versatile as no supplies like a candle or music are needed and this can be done wherever we are.
- ⇒ The way this meditation is performed is to simply focus on your breath as it comes in and out of your body
- ⇒ Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth, being aware of the air coming in and going out.
- ⇒ By keeping your focus on the breath you prevent other thoughts from coming in. If they do, simply let them go as best as you can, and return to concentrating on your breathing.
- ⇒ Try to do this for a minute or two when you first start, and continue for longer when you feel you are able.

If you are someone who thought meditation was too difficult or not possible, think again. Just doing a couple of repetitions of focussing on your breathing is a form of meditation, in its simplest form. If you want to do more advanced meditation there are many resources in the area.

Laughter: The Best Medicine

(from Arthritis Advisor Jan. 2016)

- ◇ Research has shown that the average adult laughs only 15 times a day, whereas healthy children laugh about 400 – times a day.
- ◇ Laughing not only eases stress and its negative effects on our bodies but can also relieve inflammation-related pain and boost immunity.
- ◇ Laughter increases oxygenation in the blood and releases two feel good neurotransmitters—endorphins and dopamine.
- ◇ For best results, the bigger the laugh the better. The bigger the belly laugh the better. So when you think you feel better being with someone who you laugh a lot with—you are right.



TIPS FOR HEALTHY VISION

Good eye health requires practising healthy lifestyle behaviours such as: eat a healthy, balanced diet; maintain a healthy weight; do not smoke; and wear sunglasses and a brimmed hat when outdoors. Taking good care of your eyes is vital to one's overall well-being.

Regular yearly eye check-ups are essential to maintaining healthy vision and are covered by OHIP for people 65 and older. Follow-up assessments that may be required are also covered. Visiting an eye care professional for a *comprehensive dilated eye exam* is the most important thing you can do to reduce your risk of vision loss as you age. (Glaucoma Research Foundation) The comprehensive dilated eye exam is covered by OHIP for seniors 65 and older—every 12 months—and this includes the eye drops.

The comprehensive dilated eye exam checks for early signs of:

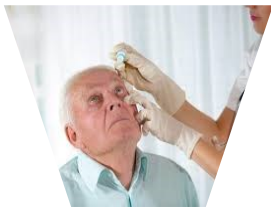
- ~ **age-related macular degeneration**, which gradually destroys the macula, the part of the eye that provides sharp, central vision.
- ~ **Cataract**, a clouding of the lens of the eye.
- ~ **Diabetic retinopathy**, a complication of diabetes that damages blood vessels in the retina, the light sensitive tissue at the back of the eye.
- ~ **Glaucoma**, a group of diseases that can cause fluid and pressure to build up in the eye and damage the optic nerve.

The bottom line: eat well and get a yearly comprehensive eye check-up.



What to Expect During a Comprehensive Dilated Eye Exam

The eye care professional places drops in your eyes to dilate, (widen) the pupil to allow more light to enter the eye. This allows the back of the eye (the retina) to more easily be examined. After the examination your close-up vision may be blurry for a few hours and you may want to avoid driving.



A comprehensive eye exam typically includes:

1. **Dilation.** Drops are put into the eyes and the eye care professional uses a special magnifying glass to examine the retina looking for signs of disease or damage. Then the optic nerve is examined for signs of damage.
2. **Tonometry** measures eye pressure. A quick puff of air may be applied to the eye. Knowing your eye pressure helps assess the risk for glaucoma.
3. **Visual Field Test** measures side (peripheral) vision. You are asked to look straight ahead and respond every time you see a light.
4. **Visual Acuity Test** measures how well you see at various distances while looking at an eye chart. Deficits can be corrected with eye glasses if determined.

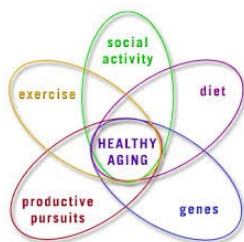
EYE SUPPLEMENTS—AREDS & AREDS2

There is no known treatment that can prevent the early stages of **age-related macular degeneration (AMD)**.

However, the AREDS (Age-Related Eye Disease Study) formulations may delay progression of advanced AMD and help you keep your vision longer if you have intermediate or advanced AMD in one eye. The participants in the first AREDS trial have now been followed for 10 years, and the benefits of the AREDS formulation have persisted over this time. The results of the second study indicated the formulation should be tweaked and beta-carotene was removed from the original formulation and lutein / zeaxanthin were added.

The National Institute of Health states that people at high risk for developing advanced AMD should consider taking the antioxidant-zinc combinations examined in AREDS and AREDS2. These people are defined as having either:

1. Intermediate AMD in one or both eyes. Intermediate AMD can be detected by an eye care professional, but usually involves little or no vision loss.
2. Advanced AMD in one eye, but not the other eye. Advanced AMD involves either a breakdown of cells in the retina (called geographic atrophy or dry AMD), or the growth of abnormal blood vessels under the retina (called neovascular or wet AMD). Either of these forms of advanced AMD can cause vision loss. (National Eye Institute—National Institute of Health 2013) *Ask your eye care specialist about taking supplements*



Living better ageing Well



The Versatile Lemon

The humble lemon is a remarkable fruit that has hundreds of uses nutritionally, for household purposes, for health and beauty regimens and for gardening. When choosing lemons, select those with smooth skins because this usually means less peel and more pulp and likely more juice. It is best to choose an organic unwaxed lemon if you plan on using the peel. Always wash fruits well (even with mild soap) before using. Lemons can be kept in the fridge for about 10 days. Do not freeze a whole lemon. You can freeze the peel, zest and juice though. Try filling ice cube trays with a portion of juice and zest. Why not make ice-cubes with a couple of drops of lemon juice?

Lemons are a natural insecticide—the limonene is toxic to insects so wipe kitchen surfaces and cupboards with either lemon oil or juice to clean the surfaces—and also as an insect deterrent.

Keep cut flowers fresher for a longer period by adding 2 tbsp. of lemon juice and 1 tbsp. of sugar to the water in your vase of cut flowers. (do not use lemon juice for chrysanthemums)

Age-spot reducer—If you have age spots or liver spots on your skin try mixing 1 tbsp. of yogurt with a couple of drops of lemon juice and leave it on for 10 minutes before rinsing off. You can also put fresh lemon juice directly onto the age spot twice a day.



A Digestive Aid—Lemon juice in hot water with a tsp of honey provides a natural digestive aid drink. Lemons have potassium, minerals and vitamin C which help cleanse and nourish our bodies.

Prevent Rice from becoming sticky while cooking—by adding lemon juice to the water.

Stop boiled eggs from cracking by dabbing the outer shell with lemon juice and then adding it to the water as well.

Help prevent fresh cut fruit and / or vegetables from browning by squeezing a little lemon juice over them when you are preparing the food.

Prevent Iron deficiency—squeeze lemon juice over salads with spinach and chickpeas.

Recipe Suggestion:

Basic Lemon Salad Dressing: combine 2 tbsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp mustard powder, a little honey, 6 tbsp. of olive oil and salt and pepper in a jar—give it a shake—and you are done. Add your favourite freshly chopped herbs for fun.

FUN WITH LETTER TILES (hint there are more than 10) (answers on back page)



Using the letter tiles, create ten words—words must have at least 7 letters.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

WORD FIND: find the 20 words listed here →

* Puzzle Solution is found on back page

TOPIC - WISE WORDS

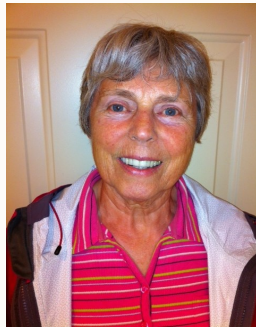
CAREFUL
CIRCUMSPECT
WISDOM
SMART
OWLISH
INFORMED
RESPONSIBLE
JUDICIOUS
SAPIENT
PRUDENT
SAGACIOUS
OMNISCIANT
CLEVER
INSIGHTFUL
SENSIBLE
KNOWING
PERSPICACIOUS
SASSY
DISCERNING
INTELLIGENT

VolunteerPower

Please join us at Community Support Services in celebrating a most valued and cherished volunteer—

Dorit Bartman.

Dorit is a role model to all, and shows us how to be giving, centered, and attentive to ourselves, others and our environments. Dorit lives these values.



Thursdays around CSS are referred to as "Dorit's Day" (reference to Dorit Day) because she is here when the office opens until closing—volunteering to dozens all day long. She leads and designs our most popular exercise programs—three in one day—and in between—she volunteers for the Meals

on Wheels Program. Due to popular demand, Dorit has agreed to lead the

Gentle Exercise Program on **Tuesdays at 1:30** after she once again, volunteers for the Meals on Wheels Program.

Dorit is a facilitator of healing, a Qi Gong Master, a Meditation guide, a visionary, and a teacher. Dorit's wise, humble and quiet presence keeps all who are fortunate to know her—grounded and healthier.

Thank you Dorit, for bringing health and wellness to the lives of so many—



*Close your eyes and
LISTEN MINDFULLY
For one minute today
to all the
SOUNDS AROUND YOU.
For one minute, you have
NOTHING ELSE TO DO...*





**Community Support Services 21 Belvedere
Ave. Parry Sound, Ont. 705-746-5602
email: ltaylor@belvedereheights.com**



DINERS' CLUBS: (\$12.00 at the door)
Parry Sound: March 14; April 11; May 9;
at 4:30 pm. Belvedere Auditorium

Dunchurch: Diners' Club at the Swiss House Ahmic
Lake - March 4; April 1; May 6; at (noon)

LUNCH AND LEARNS: (\$8.00 at the door)
at 11:00 a.m. Belvedere Auditorium.

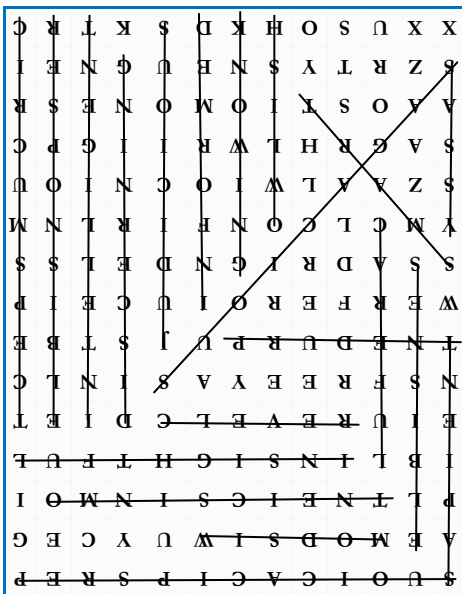
March 22—Seniors' Vision Health— Dr. Erin Axt
April 26—Laser Therapy— with Pauline Brown
May 24—Orthotics & Aging Feet— Sound Orthotics

Gifts of Joy Committee: 4th Wednesday of the month
at 1:15 pm. Belvedere Auditorium.

Crock Pot Cooking Lessons: @1:00 p.m. March 21;
April 18; May 16. Participants can bring their crock
pots and a meal will be prepared. All of the ingredients
are provided and included in the cost. Participants take
home the crock pot full of ingredients to heat & cook.
Cost: \$7.00. **Call CSS a week ahead.**

Next CSS Newsletter—May 2016

Word Search Puzzle Solution



LABOURS
USABLE
BANNERS
UNROBES
ENSARL
UNSNARL
ENABLER
AROUSAL
ENNOBLE
ARSENAL
EARLOBE
LOANERS
UNTEARN
Answers:
Letter Tiles



Reaching Out and Responding ... *"Our Mission is You"*

EXERCISE PROGRAMS

Body Flow for Health & Vitality Exercises: Thursday
mornings at 9:45 am. Belvedere Heights Auditorium—no
cost; donations are accepted. Leader—Dorit Bartman

Gentle Exercise for People with Limited Mobility:
Thursdays @ 1:00 p.m.—Balls, therabands, gentle
breathing and stretching—Leader Dorit Bartman

***Due to Popular Demand—Gentle Exercise for People with
Limited Mobility** is now offered two times a week. In
addition to Thursday, it is now offered on Tuesday
afternoons at 1:30. —2:30 pm.—Leader Dorit Bartman*

Walking / Exercise Programs throughout our area are
being organized and scheduled through the YMCA. They
have the schedule and you can call for programming
times and days. Call: 705-746-0511

Beginners' Tai Chi—Wednesday mornings: Belvedere
Auditorium. 9:30 am. Call CSS first to see if class is
ongoing. 705-746-5602. Leader is Mary Ann McEwen

SENIORS' MOVIES AT BELVEDERE AUDITORIUM



Seniors' Movie Night: (held in the Belvedere Auditorium)
Usually the 3rd Thursday evening of each month at 6:00
pm. Popcorn. Lots of movie titles—comedies, dramas,
musicals. We have a wide and varied selection. **FREE**
Attendees will choose the movie to watch from a suggested list:

He Named Me Malala; Brooklyn; Spotlight; Macbeth;

Joy; The Lady in the Van; Race;

Dates: March 17; April 21; May 19

Parkinson's Support Group: The 1st Wednesday afternoon
of each month. 1:15 pm. Belvedere Auditorium. Valerie
Stanley, interim facilitator 705-746-5602.

*****New PD Program—Dancing with Parkinson's**—moving
to music—held at Canadore College 10:30 am.
Wednesdays. Certified Dance Facilitator—Julie Lea. Call
CSS for information.***

Stroke Support Group: Wellingtons. 12 noon, 3rd
Wednesday of month. Bill Slaman at 705-378-0454.