

outside in

BRINGING THE OUTSIDE WORLD IN FOR SENIORS IN OUR COMMUNITY

OUR MISSION: “Using primarily volunteers, PeopleCare will assist and support the homebound elderly by providing socialization, emotional support and access to service providers, where no one is denied services.”

In This Issue

Creativity as Therapeutic Healing	1
Thank you for Your Donations	2
My PeopleCare Story	3
People Care Shopping Photos	4
Work Out Your Funny Bone!	6
PeopleCare Participates in Local Fairs and North Riverside Senior Fair	6
Brain Aerobics	7
Laughter & Play On Words	7
Ask the Doctor — Travel Tips	8

CREATIVITY AS THERAPUTIC HEALING *by Gene D. Cohen, M.D., Ph.D.*

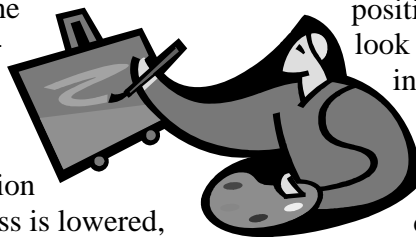
We know from studies of stress, particularly in older persons, that prolonged stress has adverse effects on the immune system; findings reveal that chronic stress lowers the levels of protective immune system cells moving throughout the body. In this situation, our resistance to infection and perhaps other illness is lowered, our health becomes more vulnerable and our healing ability is compromised as well. Research that combines the study of psychological, neurological, and immunological influences again suggests that the negative psychological effects of chronic stress block or disrupt normal function of the brain cells that send messages to the immune system. Remember that the brain is the body’s command center or control tower, and when it is adversely affected, it gives out bad information to other parts of the body.

Experimental studies indicate that creative activities and their consequent positive effect on mood and morale can lead to an increased production of protective immune cells. We don’t know why this is so. Perhaps, in the same way that sustained stress appears to lead to

serious problems with overall health, the sustained experience of the positive, health-affirming nature of the creative process delivers a heightened, satisfying positive health effect. When we look at the way creativity may influence the course of illness, preliminary scientific findings suggest that sustained creativity can promote recovery from acute health problems, such as infections and injuries, as well as improve the course of chronic or even terminal illnesses. This is not to suggest that creativity can cure a terminal illness, but rather, that it enhances relief through better coping abilities.

The popularity of expressive artistic therapies—art therapy, dance and movement therapy, and music therapy, for instance—among patients with serious illness testifies to this enhancement, as do research findings that reflect the positive impact of these creative interventions. Research confirms what I have seen in so much of my work with individuals and families whose lives are touched by the most devastating of disorders, but find their lives improved by creative activity and expression.

Recent findings from research on



“IN EVERY CRISIS

THERE IS AN

OPPORTUNITY.”

- Chinese Proverb

outside in

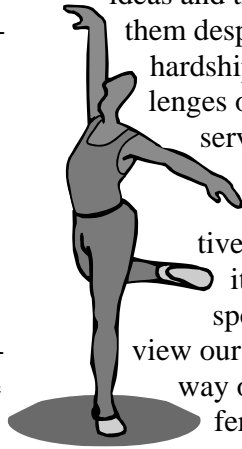
Alzheimer's disease—perhaps the most dreaded of all age-associated brain disorders—also suggest a positive contribution from sustained creative challenge to mental functioning. There is some scientific evidence suggesting that individuals at risk for Alzheimer's disease, who have over the years continued to challenge themselves mentally, on the whole may have a delayed onset of the disorder. These studies point to the role of creativity in preserving brain function alongside the more apparent role in promoting positive function.

Creativity can also be used as a response to adversity; a way that people can turn obstacles into opportunities. Adversity comes in infinite variety—illness, death of a loved one, loss of a job or any undesirable change—any event or situation we experience as negative and that results in, at best, a sense of challenge and uncertainty. Under more severe circumstances, more unsettling feelings include anxiety, despair, and helplessness or a sense of loss of control. Adversity is a powerful force in life, not only in terms of hardship but in the response it prompts from us. Our pride in accomplishments is often made all the sweeter by the knowledge of the obstacles we overcame in the process. What makes a



hero but the contest of adversity she or he overcomes? What makes creativity such a powerful tool against adversity? Creativity is an emotional and intellectual process—a mechanism—that can, moment by moment, displace negative feelings, such as anxiety or hopelessness, with positive feelings of engagement and

expectation. That emotional rise to challenge emboldens us with new ideas and the courage to try them despite obstacles or hardship. Adversity challenges our creativity; it serves as a prompt for innovative thinking in that we instinctively seek relief from it. A creative response enables us to view our situation in a new way or do something different. This new response can ultimately



change the circumstances of our struggle, as well. Creativity offers us a way to lift the emotional darkness of adversity, and may even contribute to physical healing.

Individuals whose emotions are bottled up—whether they are positive emotions or negative emotions—deal with disease less well than those who express their emotions more freely. Expressive arts interventions help by creatively enabling individuals to express their emotions through a nonverbal approach when emotional expression in words is blocked. Expressive arts offer us opportunities to begin to experience a greater sense of control by discovering that we can take control of our mental imagery by creatively expressing it via art, dance, drama, or music. Creative endeavors in general can have the same effect in that they typically are associated with a powerful sense of influencing our well-being, if not destiny; often, too, they tap into or free up one's emotions in the service of action.

- Gene D. Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2000.

Thank You FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Thank you to all the donors, individuals and organizations, that have contributed financial support to PeopleCare's mission! It is through your generosity that we have been able to continue our work to assist and support the homebound elderly by providing socialization, emotional support and access to service providers where no one is denied services. We greatly appreciate your assistance.

(The following are a continued list of names of donors for 2009. We regret if any names were inadvertently omitted due to production deadlines.)

Individual Donors:

Mary Kowalsky

nutmeg, curry, cayenne,
garlic, ginger, pepper,
cumin, parsley, allspice,
chervil, jasmine, anise,
sorrel, basil, fennel,
saffron, lovage, tansy,
mustard, catnip, sumac.

**SPLIT WORDS/
HERBS AND SPICES
PUZZLE ANSWER:**

my PEOPLECARE STORY

STORIES & THOUGHTS
BY FRIENDS OF PEOPLECARE

"I want to thank you for allowing me to ride along with my friend, your client, to help her out at her doctor's office. It's helpful to have me go with her because her condition makes it difficult to comprehend what other people say...so I try to help. The volunteer driver that we had was so nice and very patient while waiting. Your organization is a wonderful thing for so many people. Your drivers are the greatest and it is always a pleasure to drive with you!!

Thank You, Thank You!!

P.S. The coupon books sure also help us!!!

- A Friend of PeopleCare

*Every child is an artist.
The problem is how to
remain an artist
once he
grows up.*

- Pablo Picasso



"THE SAINTS ARE
THE SINNERS WHO
KEEP ON TRYING."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

"Dear PeopleCare,
Thank you for providing
transportation and your
wonderful volunteer drivers
to help me to my medical
appointments. Your drivers
are always so friendly,
kind and patient!"
Sincerely,

- A PeopleCare Client

"Dear PeopleCare,
Many, many thanks for your helpful services
and to all of the wonderful staff, volunteer
drivers and visitors that you have there!"
- A PeopleCare Client

Thank You
For your Thoughts

outside in

PeopleCare Goes Grocery Shopping

“YOUTH IS
THE GIFT OF
NATURE, BUT
AGE IS
A WORK
OF ART.”

- GARSON KANIN



In March 2008, PeopleCare launched their pilot shopping program in conjunction with the British Home. The British Home has generously provided the use of one of their buses and drivers which has been instrumental in making the program a success.



Paladino Photography

(above) PeopleCare staff, **Judy Mantel**, escorts client **Hermina Greinke** to the bus;
(upper right) British Home bus driver, **Michael Wareham** helps client, **Dolores Wooding** on the British Home bus (right);
(below) volunteer **Frank Klindera** assists client **Isabelle Holmes**.



“IT’S NOT HOW
OLD YOU ARE,
BUT HOW YOU
ARE OLD.”

- Marie Dressler

PAGE 4



Paladino Photography



Paladino Photography



Members of the PeopleCare staff accompany shoppers on their shopping trip and provides bus-to-kitchen assistance with the groceries for passengers when needed. The shopping trip has been very successful!



Paladino Photography



Paladino Photography

(above) Ann Smagaj carefully chooses her vegetables and rides the bus with Josie Calzabada; Judy Mantel and Michael Wareham provide assistance to clients (above) Cyrille Pokras, and (above right) Isabelle Holmes; (right) Hermina Greinke; (below) client Mary Fisher.



Paladino Photography



If you are interested in shopping with us, give us a call at 708-442-1223.

outside in

IT'S THE HEART
AFRAID OF BREAK-
ING THAT NEVER
LEARNS
TO DANCE –
MAKE WHATEVER
YOU DO COUNT.

WORK OUT YOUR FUNNY BONE WITH LAUGHTER!!

Laughing out loud for 10-15 minutes can boost your metabolism by 20 percent, researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn., found. Laughing also increases blood flow and may reduce the risk of heart disease, according to a study by doctors at the University of Maryland.



PeopleCare
Will be Here!!

The PeopleCare Organization participates in a variety of senior fairs within the neighboring communities. The following is a list fairs at which PeopleCare exhibited in 2009.

- Brookfield Aging Well Health Fair for Older Adults
- Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Health & Wellness Day
- Hodgkins/McCook/Countryside Aging Well Health & Benefits Fair for Older Adults
- North Riverside Senior Fair

For more information about upcoming senior events, please call 708-442-1223.

Free Admission,
Free raffles,
Free health
Screenings,
Free seminars!

SENIOR FAIR
Thursday, May 6, 2010
9:30 am until Noon

SAVE THE
DATE

North Riverside Village Commons

2401 South Desplaines Avenue, North Riverside, IL 60546

For information call: 442-5515

This **FREE** event is a great resource for seniors and caregivers. Talk to representatives from retirement communities, government agencies, home health, medical and insurance companies, legal & financial advisors, health specialists, community groups, senior clubs & trip planners. Learn about housing options and many other senior services! Local agencies will be available to discuss senior concerns and the fair will also host the Secretary of State Mobile Unit and State Treasurer's Cash Dash Program.

BRAIN AEROBICS - KEEPING YOUR BRAIN AND BODY HEALTHY



SPLIT WORDS!!

Here's some real food for thought. Combine syllables to find 21 two-syllable word, all related to herbs and spices.

ANSWERS:
See page 2

....a Little Laughter and a Play on Words....

Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.

A bicycle can't stand alone because it is two-tired.

What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead giveaway!)

A backward poet writes inverse.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

She had a boyfriend with a wooden leg, but she broke it off.

If you don't pay your exorcist you get repossessed.

With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.

Show me a piano falling down a mine shaft and I'll show you A-flat minor.

When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.

The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.

He often broke into song because he couldn't find the key.

Every calendar's days are numbered.

“THE STRUGGLE
TO GROW DESPITE
ADVERSITY,
REFLECTS THE
MOST BASIC
CREATIVE ENERGY
OF LIFE.”

*Gene D. Cohen,
M.D., Ph.D.*



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If you would no longer like to receive this newsletter, please call PeopleCare at 708-442-1223 and we will remove your name from our mailing list. *Thank You.*

ASK THE DOCTOR - TRAVEL TIPS *By Marion Somers, Ph.D.*

Q: *My parents still like to travel, but I'm more concerned for their safety now that they are both frailer and less aware of their environment. Do you have a few suggestions how I can help them? Lillian in New York, 52.*

A: Many elderly are staying more active later in life, and that is great, but it has also resulted in a sharp increase in elder-related crimes. Whether your elder is in the home or traveling far away, he or she can become a target. I do not mean to scare anyone with this frank talk, but you need to know how your elder can avoid most problems. Below are some safety tips to consider when your elder ventures outside of the home.



- When shopping, use a cart, since it can help with balance.
- Don't attempt to carry too many goods home — you can often have packages delivered as well.
- Put a rubber band around your wallet and put

- your wallet in an inside pocket if possible.
- Take medication along if you will be gone for an extended period of time.
- While driving, put any purse on the passenger side floor, out of sight, or in the back.
- Keep the windows up when driving.
- When possible, travel well-lit streets and highways, or travel during daylight hours.
- Let someone know where you are going and the route you plan to take.
- Keep emergency items in the car such as a hat, suntan lotion, a shovel, bottled water, a battery charger, a spare tire, a flashlight, an umbrella, and maps.
- Have a cell phone (with charger) in case of an emergency

*Over the last 35 years, Marion Somers, Ph.D., has worked with seniors and their caregivers. It is now her goal to help caregivers everywhere through her book, **Elder Care Made Easier**. For more information, visit: **DoctorMarion.com***