

BALANCE

WELLNESS MAGAZINE OF THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2017 | VOLUME 3 | NUMBER 2

Getting to Better™:
Strengthen
Your Leadership
Capacity

The Cost of
Losing Your Squat

How Greek
Yogurt is Made

Getting Organized
is Work, but Worth it

The Power of
Mindful Affirmations



editor's MESSAGE



The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society



BALANCE
mind body spirit
THE MANITOBA TEACHERS' SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2017, VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2

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What does wellness look like to you?

This issue's Balance cover photo is of Dan Leclair – Case Manager with the Disability Benefits Plan. We asked him what is wellness to him:

"Enjoying a sunny Louis Riel Day at Le Festival du Voyageur. For ten fun-packed days in February, this is by far the best place in Canada to take in outstanding historical interpretation, live music and to soak up some Joie de Vivre!"

Thank you to all of the participants who joined us for this year's wellness forum. Participants were in for a very special guest speaker this year; we were joined by Dr. Phil McRae, Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association who led the group through a presentation on "Connecting in an Age of Digital (Hyper) Connectivity: Growing Tired, Anxious and Distracted". We are so grateful that he was able to share his in-depth knowledge in this area leading off the incredibly insightful day. In his conversation, Dr. McRae explored how the growing digital connectivity of the "Internet of Things" is quickly evolving into the "Internet of Me". He opened conversations around the opportunities and challenges to well-being for teachers, schools and communities as we become accustomed to a digitally hyper-connected society overwhelmed by the tyranny of choice (whatever, wherever, whenever).

For those who would like some additional resources about Dr. McRae's presentation please e-mail balance@mbteach.org and we will be happy to send you some of the resources he has left for our members.

In addition to Phil, we were joined by Balance team members Mitch Bourbonniere, Sofia Costintini, Tally Young, Sylvia Marusyk and Keith Macpherson. Thank you to all of the Balance team members and participants for making this an incredible day with your ongoing energy and commitment to bringing wellness to our members.

Robyn Braha
Wellness Coordinator

enjoy life more

DAY 13

Enjoyment

Spend ONE hour today doing what YOU want... What was that like? How do you feel now? Taking time to re-energize allows you to continue to be your best in other areas of your life.

- Courtesy of Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Mental Health Promotion Team WRHA



Vocal hygiene:

6

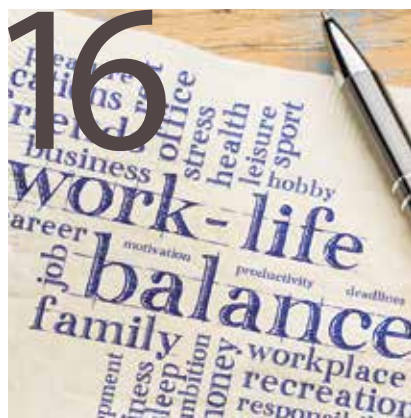
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Getting to Better™: Strengthen your leadership capacity



By **Stephen de Groot, Myriad Consulting** www.stephendegroot.com

The last Getting to Better™ Balance article made the case that quality and effective leadership in and of itself may operate as the greatest mechanism for improving outcomes for teachers and students alike. The goal was to stimulate thinking and feeling in a way that affirmed, validated, and maybe even inspired the experiences of educators, aspiring leaders and those operating in a leadership role.

Because inspiration can fade, the following reflections and considerations are offered, to build

on the last article, “Quality Leadership and Better Outcomes” — so you may take practical steps to develop your leadership capacity further, to inspire those you are responsible for today and every day after.

Know yourself

One of the most important things you can do for your people is to continue to know yourself better. As a human being, you also have your own unique needs, values, goals and strengths (CORE 4). It is not uncommon that important work

and/or challenging work environments can disconnect all of us, to differing degrees, from our own sources of purpose, meaning and motivation.

To be more effective as a leader, it is critical for you to be purposeful in your reflections. Make connecting with your CORE 4 (needs values, goals, strengths) as a leader a priority; What do you feel you need to be more effective as you carry out your role as a leader? What is most important to you? What do you value? What do you hope to accomplish in that role?

Start with strengths

Prior to looking at the areas you would like to develop further, start with your strengths. If you are wondering why, you may want to review the positive and profound implications of a strengths focus offered in Balance article, “Search for Strengths and Find Success” (April/May 2017 v.2, #4). Once you start looking, you will find many things that you are doing well. Consider building on the areas that you are already doing well as a leader and then move toward additional priorities that are important to you and your team members.

Develop a plan

I always say that best is an effort and better is a destination. You can do your best, give your best, and try your best, but you can never be your best. You can always be better. Consider what better leadership capacity means to you. Consider what it looks like. My hope with this and previous work offered in Balance was to affirm and validate what you are already doing well and to provide insights, strategies, and tools to develop your capacity further. You may have already started making use of some of the methods presented.

It is critical that you develop and record a plan; write it out or document it in some way. This can be the difference between whether the plan is merely perceived or actually achieved. Be sure to start with your strengths and start with small, realistic, and achievable steps. Remember that better can develop in increments, and small steps can add up to massive results. Consistent efforts towards better can sometimes take us well beyond what we once thought best might be. Share your plan with people who care about and support your development. They will serve as valuable resources on your journey toward better leadership.

Construct pathways for feedback

Leaders cannot accurately assess their own effectiveness as leaders. Remember that quality leadership is determined by the perceptions and experiences of others—most importantly, the staff members. Feedback from others is essential and operates as the key ingredient to initiate

and enhance leadership capacity. It is important to do what you can to make as many avenues as possible for people to provide you with feedback. More importantly, those avenues must be easy to access, comfortable, and safe.

Take all feedback seriously

All feedback is important! Remember that all behavior contains needs, values, and goals that are operating. When someone attempts to provide feedback, there is something going on, something being communicated that we must pay attention to, whether it be positive or not so positive. It is the latter type of feedback and the ability to take it seriously that may be one of the most difficult aspects of leadership.

It is the feedback that evokes the greatest reaction, that must be taken the most serious. Be aware of the reactive possibility to defend or dismiss the feedback. Stay calm and tune into you. Ask yourself this meaning-making question: What do I know about how I’m feeling in response to what I’m hearing? There is a good chance that you will learn something about yourself. Anger and frustration are often a result of our own needs being unmet, our values being challenged, our goals being blocked and/or our strengths not being recognized or used.

When leaders take all feedback seriously and work to actively integrate the meaning embedded within it, they will advance their own leadership ability, thereby enhancing the quality of the experience for their team members.

Practice, practice, practice

Getting to better takes practice. Consider the amount of time and energy most professional athletes put into their own skill development. They practice at practice so that they can be better in the game. Professional athletes rarely practice something new in a game situation as the chance of poor performance may interfere with their end goal. Consider your goals as a leader. Do you practice in the game or out of the game?

It is critical that leaders take the time to practice and sharpen their leadership skills. Remember that when leaders do well, so do their people and the children and youth they serve.



Enhancing leadership capacity – tips for leaders

1. Make your leadership development a priority
2. Inform colleagues of your commitment to better leadership
3. Offer staff opportunities to suggest areas for leadership development
4. Construct a plan with concrete, time-driven and measurable leadership goals
5. Schedule time, in your calendar, for development activities

Consider setting some time aside to practice. You may want to connect with the people you trust, who support your development so that you may practice, practice, practice.

Have fun

It may be strange for some to see “have fun” as a final consideration pertaining to leadership; however, it may be the most important one. It is not uncommon, when people are reflecting on the greatest leadership experience in their careers to mention fun as an aspect of that experience. Fun is important in most situations and becomes even more important to keep things positive, to buffer the stress of the challenges inherent in important work, tough times and trying work environments. Fun makes good days great and the worst days better.

Consider connecting with the things that you appreciate about the work. Consider the things that contribute to work being positive, exciting, and fun. Consider asking your team members individually and/or as a group to share the things that contribute to their experience of work as positive, exciting, and fun as they carry out their very important work. **B**

Vocal hygiene: Trying to use your resonant voice



By **Caitlin Buchel, RSLP, SLP (C), M.Cl.Sc. , Buchel Speech & Language Group**

It's a new school year! Your class is full of bright faces with so much to talk about after their summer away from school. You've been careful with your voice this summer – letting it rest and getting lots of relaxation time. Yet somehow, by the end of your second week back to school, you hear that familiar hoarseness as you call your students back to their desks. What is going on?

If you followed our articles in *Balance* over the last year, you know that there are many different things that go into making a voice. First, there is good breath support. You also need to watch for muscle tension in your head, neck, face and throat. But what actually makes our voice?

It's hard to believe, but our voice is produced by the vibration of two tiny structures in our larynx (or voice box) called vocal folds. Our vocal folds range in length from approximately 10 – 20mm and they vibrate around 100-300 times per second to make our voice. Think about doing anything 100-300 times per second! Talk about the potential for repetitive movement injuries!

It's very important that our vocal folds vibrate quickly, gently, smoothly and symmetrically so as not to damage these small and delicate structures. When we use too much effort to make a voice (e.g. yelling, coughing, clearing our throat, forcing our voice), we can put stress on our vocal folds and even cause physical damage.

The goal when using our voice is always to get the best possible vocal quality with the least possible effort. This means trying to use a resonant voice; using your breath and the vibratory qualities of your vocal tract to



do the work.

Try placing your hand on your Adam's Apple – your vocal cords are right behind it! Now say "mmm" for a couple of seconds. Stop and repeat. What do you feel? Can you feel the buzzing on your finger tips? This is from your vocal folds vibrating. We want to use this buzz to make a clear and easy voice.

Now let's try that hum again. This time, place your lips together as gently as you can, so that they are barely touching. Now say "mmmm" for 3-5 seconds. What do you feel in your face? You likely can feel buzzing on your lips. People often say it tickles their nose. Again, this is the buzz we want to use when we are talking - every day - to make a voice. A healthy voice should always feel easy. If

it doesn't, then something is wrong.

You can use this "mmm" throughout your day to remind yourself of what a healthy, easy voice feels like. If you are listening to a student tell you about his summer vacation or in the staff room listening to a colleague describe her new classroom, you can use verbal encouragers like, "mmm" or "mmm-hmmm" to respond. In those moments, feel the buzz and how easy it is to make a voice. We want to use that same low-effort, easy voice when we go about the rest of our day. **B**

Caitlin Buchel is the owner and managing clinician of the Buchel Speech & Language Group, a private speech-language pathology (SLP) practice offering services in Winnipeg, and throughout Manitoba.

A practical guide for caregivers: Where's the emergency?



By Wendy Sutton, *Where Next? A Path for Caregivers* wherenxt.blogspot.ca

With the upcoming changes to emergency room services, are you wondering where to take your parents if they are ill?

Go online to *My Right Care* and see how fast you can find the walk-in clinic closest to you. In under two minutes, you can access a list of the near by walk-in clinics that are open. If you click on WRHA at the bottom of the page you can also compare wait times at the emergency rooms and urgent care facilities.

The site also has clear descriptions of which health service to use.

Emergency departments

Emergency Departments are for life threatening conditions such as heart attack, stroke, severe head injury, severe difficulty breathing, severe bleeding or any time a person is unconscious. Call 911 for an ambulance.

Urgent care centres

Urgent Care Centres are for urgent but non-life-threatening illnesses that require immediate attention and treatment beyond what is offered by walk-in clinics. Go to urgent care for possible broken bones, cuts that are infected or need stitches, high fever, pain, vomiting and other serious symptoms of flu or infection.

Walk-in clinics

These days you can make appointments at many walk-in clinics. I've gone to the clinic on my own and made an appointment for my mom later in the day.

Access centres

These are a particularly good choice for seniors who don't have a family doctor. Access Centres combine medical care and social services so home care and other social supports can be accessed here. The integration of services makes these

centres a one stop shop for seniors with mental health issues or chronic conditions such as diabetes.

QuickCare clinics

There are five QuickCare Clinics in Winnipeg (four are closing in January). These clinics are designed to meet unexpected healthcare needs during times when most other clinics are closed. QuickCare is typically open evenings and weekends as well as weekdays. These clinics are staffed by registered nurses and nurse practitioners who can diagnose and treat minor health issues. They can also prescribe medication for the conditions they are assessing.

Health Links - Info Santé (204-788-8200, 1-888-315-9257) is a telephone information service that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you do not require emergency care and are not dealing with a life threatening injury, your call will be handled by a registered nurse who can provide health advice and/or direct you to the right source of care.

The ER survival kit

- Manitoba Health Card
- Updated medications list
- Medical information such as allergies and cognitive impairments
- Book, magazine, puzzles, deck of cards
- Money, bottled water, snacks
- Cell Charger
- Notebook & pens
- Blanket, pillow
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, tissues.
- Patience

If you can, have someone meet you at the hospital until things are settled. True story: Him: "You can only leave your car there for 20 minutes." Me: "Is there someone who can watch my mom while I park the car?" Him: "You can only leave your car here for 20 minutes." (Repeat)



Go online to **My Right Care** and see how fast you can find the walk-in clinic closest to you. In under two minutes, you can access a list of the near by walk-in clinics that are open. If you click on WRHA at the bottom of the page you can also compare wait times at the emergency rooms and urgent care facilities.

You are probably beginning to realize that to get the best care we need to become knowledgeable about our health care system. The Manitoba Institute for Patient Safety (MIPS) is an essential resource on patient rights, health care navigation and safety. Be familiar with the S.A.F.E. Toolkit (Self Advocacy for Everyone),

You also know that we are going to hear, "Why don't they teach this in school?" MIPS has been involved since 2013 in developing materials for the secondary health curriculum on medication safety and self-advocacy in the healthcare system. The Grade 11 module is online.

Where's the Emergency? is 6th of a series, A Practical Guide for Caregivers. Previous articles cover such topics as caregiver basics, resources and support, legal issues, tax deductions, navigating the health care system and balancing work and care.

Links to previous issues of Balance and direct links to the resources in each article can be found on the 4Teachers page of Where Next! A Path for Caregivers. **B**

Wendy Sutton is the creator of Where Next? A Path for Caregivers. She is a retired teacher from River East Transcona School Division.



Posture issues: The cost of losing your squat

By **Chelsea White, BSc (Kin), C.A.T (c)**



Take a moment to watch a child in the early stages of their motor development playing, you will witness a perfect squat. They are crouched down playing with a toy, or picking up a ball, they move with fluidity. Watch the squat; their bums touch their calves, knees are just behind their toes, backs are upright and as quickly as they get down, they are up. If only we could snap our fingers and regain that ease of squatting. So what happens, why is it a challenge for many of us to do this now? Why are we saying to ourselves or others, 'I can't squat, it hurts my knees'; I will tell you this much, you can squat and it doesn't have to be painful.

Squatting is one of our fundamental movement patterns that is developed in our early years. However; in our world of chairs, couches and technology; we spend more time sitting than we do getting up and down from the ground. It is these periods of inactivity, along with not moving through our bodies full range of motion that contribute to an overall loss of joints mobility; including the ones important to squatting, the ankles, hips and upper back. When we lose our ability to squat properly, many things start to happen that impact on our lives. Let's start with picking something up from the ground. If squatting is painful or just challenging our body will often find the path of least resistance (this, the most economical path, not always the best), we will bend at our low back increasing the stress on the discs or our knees will bend but they will jut past the toes or collapse inward resulting for many to experience pain in their knees.

There can be several reasons for an altered squat pattern, the following

are some of the more common areas that contribute to this pattern, the ankle, hip, the upper back. Your ankle must be able to go through a full range of motion (towards shin) to achieve optimal squat depth. If your ankle is restricted, often from tightness in the heel cord (achilles) you may find that your knees collapse in (weakness in your hip stabilizers may also be a contributor), that as you are squatting you feel off balance, your torso starts to collapse, or you just can't get as deep as you would like. As ankles run out of range of motion and your body in its efficiency is trying to complete the task at hand and get you to your final destination by rounding the back or just stopping you in your tracks. If you are stiff in the hips you may feel restricted at the front of your hips as you are entering the bottom of your squat and this too may cause you to collapse forward or not achieve the desired depth. Then there is your upper back (thoracic spine), this area is often stuck in the excessively rounded position and will subsequently have trouble (mobility and strength) maintaining an upright position while squatting, resulting in the forward collapse of the upper body.

The above are some of the common reasons squatting may be difficult, but keep in mind that there are individual differences and many variables to why squatting may be difficult. Although a fundamental movement pattern, poor squatting is a pattern. Along with correcting the road blocks to the squat (there are many routes) we must practice a proper squat pattern. Here is what you should be aiming for and a few tricks of the trade to facilitate you to a great squat. The knees should stay behind the toes and in line with

the second toe, torso upright (not collapsing), weight through the heel to mid foot and the low back should stay in neutral spine (not rounded). Some exercises to assist you in reestablishing your squat pattern are: wall squats, door frame squats and sit to stand squats.

Reestablishing your squat pattern

1. **Wall squat:** stand with your back against the wall, have your feet approximately shoulder width apart and far enough away from the wall that your knees do not pass over your toes at the bottom of the squat. Slide down the wall as far as you feel comfortable (the depth will increase the more often you do them), at the bottom, drive up evenly through both heels maintaining the above alignment.
2. **Door frame squat:** standing in the door jam facing the frame with you feet approximately shoulder width apart, grasp the door frame, sit back and down as if you were sitting into a chair and slide your fingers down the frame, using the door frame to assist you. Drive evenly through both heels as you stand up.
3. **Sit to stand squats:** Place a chair behind you against a wall (so it doesn't move on you), feet shoulder width apart, sit down on to the chair, try to not lean back when you make contact with the chair. After touching down lightly, drive through the heels to stand back up, maintaining the alignment above.

There are many tasks in life that require a squat pattern, so let's make it a great one. **B**



**I'M A TEACHER!
WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?**

I'm a teacher. What's your superpower?



By Danielle Fullan Kolton, PhD, The Manitoba Teachers' Society

I saw the new Wonder Woman movie over the summer. Despite being worthy of critique on many levels, it got me thinking about how the super hero craze continues to intrigue and attract viewers.

For several days, one particular scene of the movie kept replaying in my head. Titled *No Man's Land*, Diana single-handedly advances on a platoon of soldiers to liberate a village, repelling an onslaught of bullets with her wrist shields and, as some movie buffs would say, committing herself as the

hero. Everything about the scene was over the top, but it did demonstrate a number of classic features of a hero.

All super heroes share a number of qualities: determination, motivation, passion, energy, and resilience. At the risk of being overly dramatic (a personal talent of mine), I believe that teachers also exhibit these characteristics. The difference between teachers and super heroes is that you are mere mortals; you need more recovery time, and your resilience is not a sure thing.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back

following difficult circumstances. Super heroes do this on a grand scale – they emerge victorious from demolished buildings and absorb any number of physical and mental assaults. Humans? Not so much. Consequently, you need to be intentional and proactive about supporting resilience for when the going gets tough. While the school year may start out all rainbows and giggles, curve balls are a certainty. In her book, *Bounce Forward*, Elle Allison-Napolitano (2014) identifies the importance of 3R's – relationships,

resonance, and renewal – as the key elements in resiliency and ultimately growth:

Relationships

I get by with a little help from my friends – The Beatles

Not only do social networks and caring, supportive relationships stimulate emotional and physiological wellness, they also increase confidence and provide resources. Even if your inclination is more introverted, seeking and nurturing relationships really matters, and this is broadly supported in the research as the primary factor in resilience (APA, 2014). In education, these relationships are not only about who you are going to eat lunch with; they are with people who understand the demands of the job and can not only be a cheerleader but also challenge you to grow. When teachers develop this social capital, they are more engaged and collaborative (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). In schools where this happens, teachers and students, alike, thrive.

Resonance

Martin Luther King did not become famous saying, I have a complaint. – Van Jones

Think of resonance as your vibe or mojo. It impacts how you interpret and respond to events and generates an energy (positive or negative) that is contagious. Building resilience through resonance requires self-awareness and self-management in order to keep events in perspective, focus on what you want rather than what is wrong, make realistic goals, nurture a positive view of yourself, and maintain a positive outlook (APA, 2014). When the going gets tough, it can be easy to get sucked into a vortex of negativity. Be aware that this negativity also leaves an emotional wake; residue left by you as you move through your day, and this will also impact the resilience of others. While you will not have control over every stressor, you can choose how you handle them.

Renewal

This is your world. Shape it, or someone else will. – Gary Lew

Nutrition, exercise, and sleep are magic to your overall well-being and ability to function; but, what about workplace energy and joy? Research shows that meaningful work, problem solving, learning, and relationships increase energy at work, so finding ways to be cognitively engaged will impact coping skills and enhance creativity and innovation. As fatigue sets in and willpower decreases, it is easy to sit more, gossip more, move less, and, frankly, get stuck. In those moments, it is difficult to be resilient. The school year is a marathon, not a sprint, so how will you ensure there are enough water stations and break stops along the way?

Oh, and did I mention having a sense of humour? This is so important in the work of resilience because it unites people and can help you develop a healthier perspective of adverse events (Allison-Napolitano, 2014). Go ahead: laugh at yourself and be playful.

Perhaps the reason I was so enamored with Wonder Woman's *No Man's Land* scene was because I sometimes imagine moments from my life as a movie clip. You know, the kind where the action is slo-mo, the wind machine is full blast, and a dramatic soundtrack punctuates the moment. Of course, my hair is always perfect and my gait is runway worthy (just like Wonder Woman minus the outfit).

You should try it: Picture yourself slo-mo, crossing the threshold of your classroom and emerging triumphant from the trials and tribulations of another year of teaching. What soundtrack do you hear?

- a) Chariots of Fire Theme Song - Vangelis
- b) I Will Survive – Gloria Gaynor
- c) We're All in this Together – High School Musical
- d) Don't Stop Believin' – Journey
- e) Mess is mine – Vance Joy
- f) Wake Me Up When September Ends – Green Day

Your soundtrack choice may provide an important clue about your



All super heroes share a number of qualities:

Determination, motivation, passion, energy, and resilience. At the risk of being overly dramatic (a personal talent of mine), I believe that teachers also exhibit these characteristics. The difference between teachers and super heroes is that you are mere mortals; you need more recovery time, and your resilience is not a sure thing.

mindset this school year, and it will undoubtedly impact your resilience.

Take a moment to plan ahead:

- Who will your people be?
- What emotional force field will surround you?
- How will you reclaim energy and joy when stress threatens your ability to be your best self?

There is no doubt that being a teacher is hard work, and it can take a Herculean effort to stay balanced and flexible under stressful circumstances of adversity and disruptive change. Charge up your super powers with the 3R's to have your best year yet! **B**

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Financial literacy: The craft of buying a vehicle

By Brian Denysuik, Creditaid www.creditaid.ca



I will be very honest, purchasing a vehicle is not my favourite activity. A recent experience placed me in that zone so I thought I would share my experience with you.

With this most recent vehicle purchase I decided that I would really take the time to shop around as I didn't know what I wanted.

The first decision I needed to make was; should I purchase a slightly used vehicle around three years old or a brand new vehicle? In my life time I have done both and everyone will have a different opinion on what is right or "more right".

We have two vehicles in our family and I like to keep my vehicles for ten years. I also like to have a five year difference between the vehicles. This ensured that we only had one vehicle payment and one newer vehicle with some warranty. This gave me peace of mind.

I did define some of the basic things in a vehicle that I was not willing to sacrifice and that was about it; I wanted to approach this event with an open mind.

Before walking into the first dealership I had already done all my homework and had one specific model in mind. It was late in the day and all I wanted to do was start the process.

When I walked in, a young sales person met me and I explained that I wanted to test drive a particular model. His first question was, "how much of a monthly payment would I like"?

I explained that I was there to "test drive" the vehicles and not discuss a payment or purchase at this time.

Forty minutes later they finally produced the keys to a model that I had requested. The test drive went well and I was soon back in the dealership. I asked for a complete price on the vehicle. The sale person asked me the same question,

how much of a monthly payment would you like. Now I am not a very patient person and this question was starting to irritate me. I asked for the complete price once again. His next question was, "are you prepared to buy today"? I responded with a no, I had just started looking. The next steps were typical where a sales manager comes over and tries a few different angles to get you to buy that day. This first experience is exactly why I do not enjoy the process of buying a vehicle.

A few days later I was off to look at a different vehicle where the experience was very different. This place understood what type of buyer I was immediately. Within five minutes I was test driving the model I asked for. This impressed me.

When I finished trying a second model they immediately asked if I would like to tour their service area since that is where I would be spending 95% of my time once I made a decision.

Their process made me want to become a customer. As I began to discuss price they also explained that their sales staff were not paid on commission and that the price we would agree to was the price! No administration fees or documentation fees. I started to really like how straight forward and honest they were. I knew right then and there that I was going to become a customer.

As things progressed and they found a vehicle I wanted, I received a phone call from their finance department asking me if I was going to pay cash, finance the vehicle at zero percent or lease it. This is where it gets interesting. You always need to look at all the numbers and ask key questions.

Many times when you finance the vehicle at what is called zero percent the starting cost is different, so watch for that. Don't be afraid to ask them if this is



Many times when you finance the vehicle at what is called zero percent the starting cost is different, so watch for that. Don't be afraid to ask them if this is the case. When they laid out the options they also pointed out that they could drop the vehicle price by a few more thousand if I was interested in leasing.

the case. When they laid out the options they also pointed out that they could drop the vehicle price by a few more thousand if I was interested in leasing. By now you know I am kind of a numbers guy so I wanted facts. The reason why they could do this was because the leasing company gave the dealership a kick back and the dealership passed it on to their customers!

So when shopping for a vehicle make sure you:

1. Ask for a complete price, not just the payment.
2. Ask what the price is without a trade.
3. Ask what the price is if you pay cash, finance it and/or lease it.

This will help you see any hidden costs and deals. Always push hard for that deal and be prepared to walk away and start again another day! **B**

Brian Denysuik is a local credit counsellor and registered insolvency counsellor at Creditaid who has been in the financial services industry for over 35 years.

Enjoy your food: How Greek yogurt is made

By **Carla D'Andreamatteo, RD, MSc** www.thefoodlady.ca



Production of Greek-style yogurt involves mechanical straining of traditional yogurt to separate out the yellowish/greenish liquid; acidic whey. The thick, creamy, higher protein edible substance is what has become a favourite style of yogurt for many. However, the liquid byproduct, acidic whey is essentially an environmental toxin. It is estimated that more than half of the milk used to make Greek-style yogurt is left in the form of acid whey. When this byproduct decomposes, it becomes toxic to the environment.

As you can imagine, waste that becomes toxic cannot simply be thrown into the environment without consequence. Specifically, if acidic whey were to be dumped back into the environment it would cause problems because "...it is high in nutrients that would fertilize nearby waters, leading to algal blooms and depleted oxygen levels." This would result in the mass death of living, breathing organisms within the body of water that received the acidic whey (i.e. fish).

Essentially, the Greek yogurt production expanded too rapidly for producers to figure out how to best deal with the acidic waste byproduct. There are confirmed reports of acidic whey being provided to agreeable farmers, who are paid to take the toxic substance. These farmers have found a number of uses for the byproduct, which include adding to feed for animals or using as a fertilizer once combined with manure. However, only a very small amount can be used for these purposes without creating damage to the cattle and the land.

An exciting turn of events has occurred in recent years. Acidic whey is now being used to generate electricity. Yay for all of us! However, the cost to purchase the equipment to turn acidic



whey into a source of energy is in the millions. No need to give up hope, there appears to be mass excitement in the food industry (farmers, scientists, food companies) to come up with new and innovative ways to utilize the byproduct of Greek yogurt production. Ideas are often kept secret while development and exploring continues. At this time, there are ideas being followed that include use in making infant formulas, isolation of components of acidic whey (i.e. lactose) to use in a number of capacities in food production.

There you have it. You are in the know on Greek yogurt production and what is happening while you are enjoying that creamy, sweet goodness. Exciting times ahead my friends, exciting times.

Enjoy your food! **B**

Suggested recipes

1. **Creamy herb dressing**
<http://canolaeatwell.com/recipe/creamy-herb-dressing/>
2. **Salmon cakes w/ lemon yogurt sauce**
<http://canolaeatwell.com/recipe/salmon-cakes-with-lemon-yogurt-sauce/>
3. **Lemon poppy seed yogurt cake**
<http://canolaeatwell.com/recipe/lemon-poppy-seed-yogurt-cake/>

Carla D'Andreamatteo owns and operates a nutrition consulting company, The Food Lady, since 1999. Based in Winnipeg, the team of dietitians offers a variety of nutrition services provincially and nationally.



Clarity over clutter:

Getting organized is work, but worth it



By Susan Macaulay, Clarity over Clutter

Do you feel overwhelmed with the situation in your home? Noticing more and more clutter, paper, and clothing piles? Can't find what you want, when you want it? Not able to really put things back into a 'home', because all the 'homes' are full. Do your cupboards, closets, and storage areas have items that, for the most part, have not been used in a long time?

Is ongoing stress and frustration weighing you down making this all seem like such a big job to get done and you just don't know where to start, or how?

Well, if you have decided you want to make changes in your home and get organized, then here are some helpful tips at aiming to do just that!

As mentioned in a previous article, you need to start with a vision.

- What do you want your home to look like?
- What do you want to do in each room of the home?

In the living room for example, maybe you want to watch TV, read, visit, and have a home office set-up.

Having no more than 4 or 5 zones in a room helps to keep the clutter under control. Remember that with each 'zone', there are the items that go with it.

A few examples are:

- With a bookshelf, there are the books
- With the TV, there are remotes, a stereo, DVD's, etc
- With the home office, there is the filing cabinet, computer, printer, a desk, and other items for setting-up an office.

Determining a clear vision for your home does indeed take time, and mental energy. It's important to understand that it may not be done in an hour and you may need to really reflect on exactly what it is that you want. You might even need to revisit your vision a few times to have a clearer image.

Your vision now becomes your blueprint for the reorganizing process

Getting organized can be physically, mentally, and emotionally tiring. It also takes time, and can be a lot of work. However, don't let it overwhelm you.

Start by working in just one room at a time. Let's say you decide to work in your bedroom. Start in just one area. Perhaps you choose the closet. Focus on just one shelf or section at a time. Group all like items and place them on a surface for sorting. Then decide what to donate, recycle/garbage, or keep.

For each item, decide if it can go to 'donate' as the first option. Starting here will help you in your decision making. Also, remember to keep referring to your vision of what you want your home to be like.

Keeping only items in the closet that work for your current lifestyle will make it much easier when choosing what to wear. This will also create space to view, access, and return what you have with ease.

Thinking that you can work on an area and complete it in an hour or two, may not be realistic. In addition, if you are trying to fit reorganizing into a busy schedule, this does not necessarily work well either. Since there are many things that can take up your time, deciding what activities you can let go of, or put on hold in order to spend time focusing on the reorganizing process is the only way to make it work.

Blocking out time to focus only on the reorganizing process is what will help you accomplish your goal. Scheduling the time in your day to work on this, is the key to succeeding. Just saying you "want to get it done", or having it written on a "To Do" list, does not work.



Determining a clear vision for your home does indeed take time, and mental energy. It's important to understand that it may not be done in an hour and you may need to really reflect on exactly what it is that you want. You might even need to revisit your vision a few times to have a clearer image.

One great strategy that can be helpful while working on the reorganizing process is to use a timer to help keep focused.

The time that you schedule to work on the reorganize/downsize process may be broken down into chunks of time as small as 15-20 minute intervals. Review what was done after the initial 15-20 minutes and reset the timer for another 15-20 minutes. This also will give a good perspective of what can or cannot be accomplished in that time frame.

If a total of ½ hour - 1 hour is all you can work on the process for this particular day, then taking full advantage of using that time will help you see the results you desire!

Getting organized and maintaining an organized home takes time, energy and can be a lot of work; but the reward of your home 'working for you' can reduce stress, increase energy, help you stay focused, and allow you to actually enjoy your home again. **B**

Susan Macaulay of Clarity Over Clutter is a Professional Organizer who works with individuals, and families to create and enjoy a functional home. Susan specializes, as well, working with those who are dealing with Chronic Disorganization and/or Hoarding.

Maintaining balance...the journey



By Sofia Costantini

I go through stages where I feel great and everything seems to fall into place with ease. There's time to take care of myself, I'm productive at work and my interactions with colleagues, friends and family are harmonious and healthy.

Sometimes life is just not so simple. There are times when my schedule realistically doesn't accommodate this kind of balance or an unexpected life event pops up and throws a curve ball into my routine, that I need to redefine what balance looks like temporarily.

I get overwhelmed and I start to look too far into the future or dwell on what has already happened. I get stuck in negative thoughts, critical of others and myself. My mind gets "busy" and I become less productive.

Do you find that when your life gets busy, the first thing removed from the day is your workout? Do you start replacing more of your healthy food options with comfort foods? Does pop, energy drinks or caffeine become more desirable than water? You opt for "non-thinking, busying" activities such as watching TV/Netflix, video games or surfing the Internet in place of your quiet, uninterrupted alone time?

I ask these questions because when I get caught up in my day-to-day stuff and have little opportunity to reflect on my behaviors I sometimes make unhealthy choices that fuel my negativity rather than enhance my tranquility.

Understand that giving up your workouts temporarily, having cheat days and binging on Netflix is completely ok except for when it becomes the norm and your optimum balance and health are affected.

We can quickly forget the necessity to fuel ourselves first in order to be



productive and openly available to others. Let's revisit the five things to help get you back on track; be kind to your mind, your body and to yourself. Remember to make time for you and breathe! In order to reduce your stress level, find a way to still incorporate these concepts into your schedule with maybe half the frequency or intensity.

Staying positive and breathing are essential, as these two things will indeed reduce stress and will also discipline the mind to stay steady and ready for you. Adapt your workout schedule to include only 1-2 planned workouts a week and continue to drink as much water as possible. Your uninterrupted alone time may be cut in half to ten minutes.

Consider making a commitment to yourself as to how you might attempt to work towards this new balanced state

without worrying about whether you're doing enough.

Here is an example

1. I will commit my effort and energy to myself first and then to everything else I do.
2. I will make a conscientious effort to stay in the moment and not focus too much on what still needs to be done.
3. I will work towards finding a balance that works for me right now.

Remember, you're worth it! You owe yourself the love that you so freely give to other people. If you don't take care of yourself...who will?

You are important, you deserve, you are unique and one of a kind. You are loved and all is well.

Next up, we will take a look at exploring and deciding what makes you happy. **B**

Making the rest of your life the best of your life!



By **Sylvia Marusyk**, *Sylvia! MindBody Works* www.stressedtokill.me

I'm Sylvia! Occupational therapist by training, radio show host by accident, Activational speaker by calling.

Why do I call myself an Activational speaker, not a motivational speaker? Great question I'm glad you asked! Offering motivation only without action is simply entertainment. The presentations and seminars I offer are a call to action; if you want your life to change YOU have to change your life! So be prepared if you are in my audience to be motivated AND to be given proven tools to make the changes that will bring you greater happiness and health!

My passion for health began at a young age. I grew up in an abusive home and watched my mother slowly wither from the stress and fear that she lived with every day. I watched her lose her health and her vitality and learned first hand that we are not a distinct mind and body but rather a mind-body. Each influences the other and we must create health in BOTH, to really effect change in our lives.

My mother died young at 66 years of age. For several years after: I had one health condition after another breast lumps, tumors, anemia, chronic back pain and chronic migraine headaches, just to name a few. I began researching the connection between stress and physical health. I had learned about this in my training as an occupational therapist but I needed to dive deeper. I began to heal myself.

When I began public speaking in 2001, I began with a presentation on stress. I realized that stress was and continues to be the greatest health epidemic we are dealing with in North America! Everywhere I turn people say they are stressed, overwhelmed, have no work-life balance, can't keep up, have no time for themselves! Mental health issues are on the rise, physical illnesses and diseases

linked to stress are on the rise and stress leaves are currently costing Canadian businesses over 50 billion dollars a year! Do we have a problem? Absolutely! Workplace stress has been identified as the number one stressor tied with finances for Canadians. So here is my crusade and my mission; if we can create disease (and clearly we can) then we absolutely can create health and I want to teach my audiences how!

Learning to manage stress differently and to create health instead of illness by accessing the power of your mind-body is as difficult as it is simple. There are numerous strategies but they all require effort. Our health doesn't naturally improve and increase as we go through life. It actually does the opposite unless you actively put something into creating better health. So where do you begin?

Research shows that even a negative thought can cause an increase in inflammation in the body as evidenced by a rise in the level of C-reactive protein, a marker of inflammation. So clearly the negative thoughts arising from stress have an immediate influence on our health. Now changing your actions is simple... you can decide not to express your anger toward another driver by engaging in road rage. But this doesn't stop you from having negative thoughts towards the other person! The action is easy to control but the thought is difficult. And because these negative thoughts don't immediately cause us to have pain or suffering we don't realize how incredibly and insidiously dangerous they are! The cascade of negative chemical reactions goes unnoticed until we develop stress-related symptoms. So perhaps focusing on changing our thoughts is a great way to get started!

Changing our thoughts

Here's an excellent exercise that works well for many of my clients, audience members and myself.

1. Identify that you are having a negative thought.
2. Visualize a STOP sign on the street near to your home. This is important because HOME has good thoughts and feelings connected to it. This is a POSITIVE exercise!
3. Visualize the STOP sign directly in front of your face. Really get into this image; smell the metal, imagine touching it and feeling the coldness of the metal, see the colors.
4. Say the word STOP out loud if you are alone, or in your head, very assertively. In other words stop the thought.
5. Make yourself come up with a positive thought to replace the negative thought. Here's an example, if your negative thought is "wow that person that cut me off is an idiot", after you have told yourself to STOP, replace this thought with "wow I hope that person didn't get bad news that is preoccupying them. That may be why they cut me off, they may be worried about something that I know nothing about".

Changing your thoughts requires constant effort and attention and you might be thinking "like I need one more thing to do"! Trust me, this one will change your health immediately and in the long-term and is only hard at the beginning. And you know what they say, "anything worth having is worth working for". Begin giving your Mind-Body the chance to create health instead of disease and make the rest of your life, the best of your life! **B**



Yoga practice:

Anatomy of the locust pose

By Tally Young



When we strengthen our core, our ability to think clearly grows strong as well. This is partly due to the continued flow of oxygen and nutrients through the body to keep the tissues well fed and filled with energy. Of course, a good night's sleep and a massage or two help greatly.

When we move from the core our ability to create a stronger movement in our bodies greatly increases, as we are able to hold our bodies upright when we move. Both in cardiovascular movements and when we are sedentary. The stronger the core, the more upright we will be.

In Locust, we work on the floor from the belly. This posture will strengthen the muscles that arch the back that creates greater extension of the spine. So standing tall in all your movements

becomes a movement of ease.

A mat is all that you will need for this posture. If your ribs do tend to stick out, you may want to place a soft blanket underneath the ribs for comfort.

Achieving the locust pose

1. Lay down on your belly. Bend your elbows and stack your bent arms underneath your forehead. Take 10 deep breaths feeling the belly move into and away from the floor with your breath.
2. Lengthen your arms away from your shoulders, fingers stretching as far as they can go. Do the same with your feet, stretching as far away from the hips as they can go. Feel that simple movement for about five breaths. Rest for three breaths

3. Actively move into the lengthening of your feet and hands and lift your arms and legs off the floor. Allow your head to lift but your eyes to remain looking at the floor directly in front of you. Hold the posture for five breaths. Do the posture twice more increasing the length of breath by two more each time. When done, rest for 20 breaths before moving on with your day.
4. You should feel the heat rising in the body and over time feel your strength increase.

Increasing the length in our body will also increase the space we need to keep our body's energy levels high so we can move with ease and lightness. Thus making our movements filled with joy and peace. **B**

Keith's corner:

The power of mindful affirmations



By Keith Macpherson www.keithmacpherson.ca

There is great power in the thoughts that we think and the words that we speak. Words can give life and words can kill. As we move through our day, many of us do not consciously spend much time monitoring the thoughts that are passing through our minds or truly listening to the words that we are speaking out loud. In the *Making Sense of Mindfulness* framework that I offer, it is suggested that everything begins as an inner dream. Have you ever considered that the conditions which have appeared in your life in one way or another first originated from an inner decision that you made in your mind?

Consider the pen that you write with, the clothes you are wearing or even the job that you are currently working in; all of it first originated in your imagination. The word "Imagine" conjures up two separate words in the mindfulness framework. These two words are "image" and "in". The images that are placed in your mind on a regular basis are like seeds being planted in your consciousness, that will one day manifest into the outer world that surrounds you. It is important to become aware of what you are thinking about on a regular basis. One of my mentors Louise Hay often asks the question, "Are your thoughts building you up or are your thoughts beating you up?" You have the power and the ability to change the conditions in your life as you see fit based on your thinking patterns. For example, a thought that suggests, "There is not going to be enough money" will set into motion a pattern of scarcity, whereby a thought such as, "Money flows freely into my life and expands creatively to support myself and others" is going to produce a completely different outcome in your outer world. Although this may seem obvious, as we move through our busy lives, it is very common to neglect paying



attention to our thinking, along with the words we speak. I have found that a very effective way to begin this process of conscious thinking and creating into our life is to write down affirming statements that you can regularly state in your mind and speak out loud. An affirmation is an intentional thought that affirms what it is that you want to believe and create in your life. For example, "I invite prospering love to guide me through the day ahead". As you speak these intentional words, you mustn't only think them in your mind but you must feel them to be true in every part of you emotionally. The combination of thoughts, words and feelings are your most powerful tools to create the life you are intentionally imagining.

Tips to begin your journey

1. Take a few moments, close your eyes and ask yourself the question, "What do I really want to create in my life?"

2. Once you have identified what it is that you want, write down a statement that supports what you want to create. It is important that the words you write down not only state what you want, but also trigger the feelings within you that this creation is possible and will happen.
3. Speak and read the affirmation daily from a place of intention and feeling. The more you feel the words to be real and true, the sooner you will see it manifest in your life.
4. Release expectations of how your intentions will come about and instead, assume the feeling of the wish already fulfilled in your mind and body. **B**

Keith Macpherson is a motivational speaker, yoga instructor, life coach and recording artist. To connect further with Keith Macpherson and to sign up for his daily inspirational email and other free gifts, visit: <http://www.keithmacpherson.ca>



5th annual
wellness
FORUM

We want to send out a sincere thank you to those who attended this year's Wellness Forum at the Qualico Family Centre. We appreciate your taking the time to come out and hope you enjoyed all of the incredible presenters and information that was shared on this day.



BALANCE
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The
Manitoba
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Society

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