

The Art of Doing Nothing: Mindfulness Restores

By Barbara J. Green Ph.D., YHC Medical Director

Summer is glorious. It unfolds before us offering us many longer hours of daylight and sanctioned releases from typical schedules. We know from research the benefit of natural Vitamin D. Research also drives us to deeper understandings of the positives of changing up routines, exploring new places and activities, connecting with family and friends with play and recreation. The data is abundantly clear about the value of mindfulness and decreases in stress, anxiety, depression, distractedness, increase in attention, immune function, and general well-being.

What many do not place value on is the simple art of “Doing Nothing”. Actually for many of us, doing nothing is an enormous challenge as we are programmed to craft “to do lists” and cross off tasks we accomplish. I am certainly known for that process and teach it as an organizational tool. Anchoring the other end of the spectrum is “Doing Nothing”. Doing nothing is actually doing something, it is the practice of “Mindfulness” and giving ourselves permission to do nothing.

Permission to lie in a hammock and watch the clouds float by, star gaze and breathe in the beauty of the universe,

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Tip for Better Living:

“Your mind will answer most questions if you learn to relax and wait for the answers.”

William S. Burroughs
1914-1997
author

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Youth Health Connection Meetings and Events:

Mental Health Meeting Wednesday
September 12, 2018 from 8-9:30 AM
Guest: Staff from William James
College Interface Referral Services

South Shore FACTS Meeting
Tuesday September 25, 2018 from
2:30-4 PM. **Guests:** Theresa Harmon,
To The Moon & Back
www.2themoonandback.org & Mary Cole,
Greater Boston Tobacco Free
Community Partnership

We welcome everyone to attend any meeting they are able to!!

All meetings are held at South Shore
VNA, 30 Reservoir Park Dr. Rockland,
MA. 02370. ■

The Art of Doing Nothing: Mindfulness Restores *(cont.)*

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to take a nap in the afternoon, to sit on the porch and listen to music, to savor the sound of bees buzzing in the garden. Mindfulness and “doing nothing” are available 24 x 7 and are absolutely free! Not many things in life fit that criteria.



I am challenging you to practice Mindfulness, the essence of being intentional in the moment to what you are feeling, hearing, smelling, tasting and apply it to “Doing Nothing”. I hope you will hold in your heart center what it feels like to release, restore, renew, and refuel. Hit “save” and put it in your emotional muscle memory so you can revisit it and return endlessly to “Doing Nothing” and build in moment to moment Mindfulness.

To learn more visit:

Three easy steps for bringing mindfulness practices on vacation at:

<http://bit.ly/2NDumFF>

10 Mindful Activities to Do as a family: <http://bit.ly/2LiNE6M>

7 Reasons to Slow down this summer, includes a 5 minute meditation:

<http://bit.ly/2LIW8Ab> ■

August Is National Immunization Awareness Month

By: Amanda Astrofsky, RN Curry College Nursing Student

National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) takes place in August. It highlights the importance of vaccinations, which is one of the best ways to protect adults and children from many infectious diseases. This article focuses on the importance of vaccinating children. August is a great month to start thinking about this since many states require children to be vaccinated to attend college, school or daycare. These are places that can easily pass on unwanted, or even worse, deadly diseases including flu, chicken pox, mumps, and measles. These diseases can be prevented.

Currently, there are outbreaks of measles in Europe because immunization rates have fallen below 80%. The World Health Organization (WHO) says 87% of those measles cases occurred in individuals who were unvaccinated against it. Herd immunity or community immunity is the resistance of a population to the spread of contagious diseases, and it is only achieved if 83-95% of the population is vaccinated according to Center for Disease Control (CDC). This is because when a majority of the population is vaccinated they are less likely to get and spread those diseases. This provides protection for those who are not or cannot be vaccinated, such as vulnerable individuals like infants who are too young for certain vaccines, along with those who have compromised immune systems and pregnant women who cannot receive certain vaccines. Creating and maintaining herd immunity can help prevent the return of diseases of the past like measles. *(continued on page 3)*



Save the Date

“*Recovery Rocks!*” is an evening of music to Benefit South Shore Peer Recovery on Thursday, August 23 from 6-10 p.m. at Bulman Marine in Scituate Harbor. This event will offers entertainment by talented musicians, an inspiring short program, local fare, creative mocktails and an opportunity to socialize with friends.

South Shore Peer Recovery envisions a world where the joy, hope, and healing of recovery, body, mind, and spirit is nurtured with understanding, support and common purpose. South Shore Peer Recovery provides peer support, education, and advocacy opportunities to assist with achieving a clear pathway to long-term sobriety.

Treatment alone is rarely enough to sustain recovery. Individuals need ongoing checkups and support, just like when managing other chronic diseases. South Shore Peer Recovery bridges the gap between formal treatment and a full life of recovery in the community. Helping people connect with others, and to the resources needed to maintain long-term recovery.

To learn more about this event check out the “Events” section at: <http://bit.ly/2jFMmT3> ■

Book Review by Noel Vigue, M.Ed., Dir. of Health & Wellness, Milton Public Schools

It’s no surprise to any of us that teens are complicated creatures undergoing a tremendous transformation (physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively) in a relatively short period of time. What we are just coming to know more about is the cognitive aspect of the adolescent learner and how we might best support them. “*Attack of the Teenage Brain*” goes into detail regarding the most recent research in neuroscience and behavioral science. Medina’s how-to guide for parents and teachers of teenagers offers recommendations for parents, educators and the school environment based on the science, data and case studies presented in the book.

Spoiler: Everything revolves around the executive function (EF) (examples are: planning, organization, decision-making, analyzing risk, self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, *(continued on page 4)*)

August Is National Immunization Awareness Month *(continued)*

By: Amanda Astrofsky, RN
Curry College Nursing Student

The CDC has a schedule to help parents and guardians protect their children by managing immunizations and staying up to date. The best place for parents and guardians to get more information is at their child's doctor's office or any local public health facility, as individual states may have guidelines that differ from the CDC's. If we all work together to spread awareness, we can help stop the spread of diseases!

Some helpful tips include:

- Be aware of your state immunization recommendations.
- Talk with your child's doctor and ask questions.
- Keep an immunization record (or have access to an e-medical record) for your child/children.
- Making sure your immunizations are up to date to keep the whole family healthy!

For more information please visit:

Center for Disease Control:

<http://bit.ly/2I4KT7a>

National Public Health Information Coalition: <http://bit.ly/2jIFSmg>

Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health: <http://bit.ly/2wtmQtg> ■

Book Review (*cont.*) by Noel Vigue, M.Ed., Dir. of Health & Wellness, Milton Public Schools

empathy, and working memory). Every teacher of teens should understand what EF is and how it develops and how to foster its development. Medina feels that more than any other single intervention; boosting EF is a dependable method for improving academic performance. Parents/guardians have a major role to play in the emotional stability of the teen. Educators can fine-tune their lessons and teaching style to be more authoritative to promote student learning, critical thinking, and personal development. The school environment can be more conducive to EF and the teen brain and students themselves can take an active role.

There are three big takeaways: Middle/High schools need to have physical education every day. Research is overwhelming that fitness-focused classes get teens' heart rates elevated; which prepare their brains to learn. Secondly, there needs to be a comprehensive socio-emotional learning ongoing in all classes with a focus on empathy. The research here is also compelling that quality SEL programs improve teen's mood, cognitive flexibility, moral reasoning and emotional self-regulation. As the author states, only when relational security is consistently protected, do teachers have a shot at consistently improving learning/academic performance. Lastly, the final recommendation is the importance of self-care through mindfulness training. 15-30 minutes of integrative mind-body training every day has shown remarkable benefits for improving teen EF and regulating anxiety and depression (both have been on the rise in reported cases in teens over the past 5 years).

While the wild and whacky teen brain hasn't really changed much in recorded history, the good news is that we have science and research on our side and we can make a positive impact on the development of their learning and behavior. Good luck out there.

To learn more about *“Attack of the Teenage Brain! Understanding and Supporting the Weird and Wonderful Adolescent Learner”* by John Medina (2018) visit: <http://bit.ly/2JdXfWs> ■

Medical Director:

Barbara Green, PhD
(781) 749-9227 x101
Barbara@bjgreenphd.com

Program Coordinator:

Kim Noble, RN, MBA
(781) 624-7415
knoble@southshorehealth.org

Administrative Secretary:

Jean Kelly
(781) 624-7423
jkelly2@southshorehealth.org

Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Hospital dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, community health providers, law enforcement officers, state agencies, religious leaders, parents and peer leaders to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.

To subscribe please visit:
southshorehospital.org/yhpublications

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Youth Health Connection:
Builds and Sustains Community Connections through Healthy Dialogue and Sharing Knowledge to Keep Our Youth Safe Today and Moving Forward