

Life Transitions Newsletter

September 2007



Dear Clients,

Good news – moved the Valley Center office down four doors to suite E. Same location in the Courtyard just in the corner next to the pediatrician's office. The space is larger with a waiting room, business center, bathroom and a private office.

I will be out of the office until September 17th. My colleague Rachael Stracka will be covering. In an emergency you can reach her at 760-489-1092.

Don't forget that the teen group "Becoming the Woman You Want to Be" begin on October 1st. There still is space so sign up soon.

Sincerely,

Penny Blazej, LCSW, BCD

The Benefits of Exercise

One of the best natural antidepressants is produced when we exercise. Many of you have commented that it is difficult

to take one hour a day to devote to just exercise. Well, there is good news. Studies done by The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American College of Sports Medicine concluded that **"accumulating 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week."** is all that is needed.

Intense or vigorous effort is not required—but can produce the same benefits of moderate activity in a shorter amount of time—which may be preferable for some. Normal chores, activities, and pleasures also count. Look at the following ["Compare the difference"](#) chart to find out what each chore is worth with respect to calories.

And the physical activity doesn't have to be done in one continuous bout. You can accumulate short spurts of activity—from walking several blocks to climbing a flight of stairs—so that it adds up to the recommended 30 minutes. Scientists now say that the benefits of accumulated periods of activity are probably equivalent to those of a sustained vigorous workout such as aerobics, swimming, tennis, or rowing. In fact, exercisers who divvy up their workouts into short chunks actually seem to get a greater boost in the ratio of "good" cholesterol to "bad."

In Mayo Clinic's August Newsletter they commented on the great benefits of even just small amounts of exercise.

Exercise stimulates various brain chemicals, which may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed than you were before you worked out. You'll also look better and feel better when you exercise

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regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem. Exercise even reduces feelings of depression and anxiety. Exercise is also great for controlling anger.

Living Wills

Many of you have asked me about Living Wills. These document your wishes if you become incapacitated and unable to make your own health care decisions. The types of questions that are answered in these wills are: Do you want to be kept alive on life support machines? Do you want to be kept alive via a G-tube (surgically inserted into your stomach where you are fed) and more.

Some people want all medical means available to keep them alive for as long as possible. Other people just want to be comfortable and have palliative care (no pain just kept comfortable) only. Whatever you choose is what is best for you – there is no right or wrong decision. The key is to just document your decisions.

These documents can be the best gift you can give to your loved ones. Let me give you an example. A past client of mine underwent lung surgery and all was well for several days post surgery. She had to be put on a ventilator right after surgery so her lungs could heal. During her post operative recovery she had a massive stroke that left her a vegetable. The doctors allowed two weeks to go by and did numerous tests to ensure that there was no possibility of recovery.

During the meeting with the family, three of the children agreed to stop the life support machines. One did not. It

was the client's living will that came into action. In her case, she clearly stated that she did not want aggressive treatment and certainly not life support machines. The doctors followed the wishes of the client. The surviving child who disagreed was actually put at peace that her mother clearly documented her wishes in the living wills.

Living wills do not need to be done by a lawyer; however, many people choose to have them done at the same time as their Wills are being drawn up. Below is an excellent resource:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/living-wills/HA00014>

Book Reviews

For those of you that are over 40 years old, this is a must read book: "*I Feel Bad About My Neck*" by Nora Ephron. It puts aging into perspective plus you will have lots of laughs. And as we know, laughter is the best medicine!

Your Comments

Let me know if this newsletter was helpful for you. Just e-mail me at pblazej@vcweb.org.