



Health Day

June 10, 2020



**Leadership Greater Syracuse
Health Day, June 2020
~ Ron Zuccaro**

On June 10, 2020, the Design Team for Health Day, conducted the first ever virtual class in the 30-year history of LGS. Due to the Corona Virus pandemic, a social distancing requirement challenged the Design Team with an opportunity to consider a **virtual** version of class day - challenge accepted!!

Based on the overall situation, the timing was right to at least attempt a virtual approach.

- when the schools closed, there was a transition to online learning.
- when the doctors' offices closed, there was a transition to tele-medicine.
- and the LGS'ers transitioned to virtual design team meetings, and exemplified Leadership in its truest form: "if you want to influence the future, design it."

Face to face is obviously preferred, however going virtual was a reasonable alternative. Our entire class was very fortunate to have met several times face to face, where we were able to establish connections & friendships. Although our environment / approach had to change (for now), going virtual gave us the opportunity to move forward with class day, and learn what our role could be in making a positive impact in our community.

So, in addition to creating an engaging and active class day, the team took a crash course on learning the functionality and logistics of hosting a Webinar.

Here are notes from the very informative & enlightening LGS 'virtual' Health Day, 2020.

Class Day Theme: "Achieving Balance for Your Body, Mind & Soul."

Class Day Goal: "To provide tools to empower your BODY, inform your MIND and inspire your SOUL."

Class Day Sponsor *Mark Muthumbi, Regional Vice President of Sales & Account Management, **Excellus BlueCross BlueShield (BC/BS)***

Mark is a "40 under Forty" recipient, and graduate of LGS 2008.

Mark talked about why LGS was important to him and the community: the LGS Programs are key and relevant in terms of everyday life. LGS Syracuse promotes hands on experience, as the LGS participants get to design the class days. Being associated with LGS also provides the opportunity to be involved with different Boards, giving back is a big deal, as you cannot have a thriving business without community. One of Mark's biggest take-aways from LGS, was the sense of Teamwork, Camaraderie, Community, and Leadership, being change agents.

Excellus BC/BS mission: "To help people in our communities live healthier and more secure lives through access to high quality, affordable health care."

Link to the Excellus BC/BS website:

<https://news.excellusbcbs.com/home>

Link to their YouTube site, to view their latest wellness videos and other animations:

https://www.youtube.com/user/ExcellusBCBS/videos?disable_polymer=1

Other sponsors for Health Day were **OneGroup & Visions Federal Credit Union**, and **ACC Technical Services Inc**, who consulted with the Design Team on the use of a Webinar so we could go virtual.

Pam Brunet (LGS Executive Director), kicked off our virtual session with the following poem.

You and I (by Theodore Roszak)

“We meet as strangers, each carrying a mystery within us.

I cannot say who you are, I may never know you completely.

But I trust you are a person in your own right, possessed of a beauty and value that are the Earth’s richest treasures.

So, I make this promise to you:

I will impose no identities upon you, but will invite you to become yourself without shame or fear.

I will hold open a space for you in the world and defend your right to fill it with an authentic vocation.

For as long as your search takes, you have my loyalty.”

“Balancing the Community”

Guest Speaker: J. Ryan McMahon, *Onondaga County Executive*

Upon taking office as County Executive, Ryan placed a focus on three main initiatives: poverty, infrastructure, and economic development.

Ryan discussed COVID-19: how little we knew in the beginning, how much we’ve learned, and how far we’ve come. The approach has been to find balance.

In the beginning, it was about the response to C19, setting up testing, tracing, and making sure the community had resources to continue testing (triage testing was set up very early, which helped us keep our numbers lower). The key was continuity of care, we also had to build an infrastructure for food distribution. When schools were shut down, we needed to ensure that the children who depended on meals still received meals, as well as the Senior Citizens who also depended on meals.

With schools closed, the kids were home, so a Daycare program was set-up for essential employees (eg. health care, law enforcement, child-care providers, etc), to allow them to go back to work.

Voluntary shelter in place helped drive our numbers down right before phase 1. Local government pushed very hard on the state when / where necessary.

Balancing economic recovery, working on policies to help small businesses, helping companies retain their employees, then job creation aspect.

We basically shut down our economy for appx 90 days; we run government on sales tax, which is driven by economic activity.

We've gone from pandemic response mode, to restarting / opening up the economy in a way that doesn't jeopardize the progress made. As we move to restart / get into economic recovery mode, we have the challenge of a budget crisis (not going to be easy).

We anticipate Covid will return, but with the infrastructure recently set up, we should be better prepared. We're hoping the spread will be limited based on what we've put in place, and having a better understanding of where the virus spreads the most (eg. nursing homes inundated with cases).

Moving forward, we expect to collaborate regionally to help save money. Collaboration with other cities to share ideas, best practices, via the National Association of Counties, and NYS Association of Counties.

We can't afford to shut down again; our focus will be on what can we do better:

- Mobile testing labs.
- Testing protocols for adults, and kids.
- Protect those more vulnerable (seniors, individuals with pre-existing conditions).

“Find a way to yes, even if you have to regulate more, or scale down certain aspects of your business.” ~ J. Ryan McMahon

“Yoga: Yoking Your Body, Mind and Soul”

Guest Speaker: Kathleen Bennett, *RYT-200, LGS 2008*

Kathy found her true passion in the practice of Yin and Restorative Yoga, which focus on using poses to get into the body/mind. Kathy believes that practicing yoga provides a safe space to explore our body and mind, to cultivate balance and compassion, and to find peace amidst the challenges of life.

Yoga means to yoke, join, unite. Yoke (join) the body, mind, & soul thru breathing, to find calmness, inner peace, and bliss. Poise of the soul to look at life evenly.

Yoga is not about others, or what others can do. Yoga is about you and what you can do. No right or wrong, no good or bad, just your practice and what is in the moment. It's a judgement free time.

Kathy guided us thru a virtual yoga session to help us relax. Breathing is a key part of any exercise.

The “Healing” Limbs to achieve a quiet mind

Asana - Postures. Pranayama - Control of breath. Dhyana - Meditation

Physical benefits

Vinyasa or active styles of yoga, target muscles by employing rhythmic repetitive movements to stress the fibers and cells of muscles. It strengthens and lengthens muscles, increases core strength, improves health of organs, bones, circulatory and respiratory systems.

Specific Physical Benefits of Yin/Restorative: Detoxification, Prevents Contracture, Prevents Degeneration, Reduces Fixation, Hydration, Helps Maintain Structural Integrity of the Spine.

Sitting at a computer for a long time is almost as bad for humans, as smoking. It alters the natural curvature of the spine. The lumbar spine loses its curve, and the thoracic and cervical spine become more rounded. Asana can help computer posture by elongating the spine and working the surrounding muscles in a way that will improve the natural curvature of the spine. Not only will asana help computer posture, it will also help create more awareness of posture while we are sitting at our computer. Sitting all day can cause an anterior tilt of the pelvis, which can lead to lower back pain.

Mental benefits

Yoga is mind-body medicine that works through the mind and body to help heal anxiety, depression and other forms of emotional pain. It draws our focus from the outside world into the mind where the roots of anxiety and depression lie. By regulating breath and relaxing the body we learn to be present with our issues and pain. We learn to resist getting caught up in our reactions or letting them define us. It provides a brief interlude of being free from anxiety and depression, which helps us realize that anxiety and depression are just powerful emotional patterns that draw us in. Once we understand this, we can then replace those anxious or depressed emotional patterns with healthier ones.

Yoga is meditative, and there is a growing body of research on the benefits of meditation for the brain and emotional health. Mindfulness based awareness trains the mind to observe itself with detachment and to be a compassionate, impartial witness to direct experience. By incorporating yoga, it provides a foundational framework for internal awareness. It does this not just through the mind (the thinker), but through the body (the breather). By bringing direct experience into the body, we feel the ebb and flow of mental life and the fluctuations of physical existence at the same time. We help the mind learn to be, rather than simply to think.

(blogger comment: in the spirit of social distancing, “namaste 6 feet away”)

“Every BODY Is Beautiful”

Guest Speaker: Holly Lowery, *Chief Operating Officer, Ophelia’s Place (OP).*

In addition to OP, Holly also works as an Eating Disorder Recovery Coach and consultant for the Upstate NY Eating Disorder Service where she hosts weekly support groups and individual support sessions for individuals and parents of young people struggling.

Ophelia's Place ([Ophelia's Place](#)): is a non-profit which provides support, access to treatment and education, that raises awareness for anyone impacted by eating disorders, disorder eating, and body shaming. The Every Body is Beautiful Project, is an initiative by OP, to spread the message that every body is beautiful, "*as is*"

The [Café at 407](#) became a creative way to fund this non-profit and it's become a safe place of community that says we are all in this together.

Eating disorders (Anorexia Nervosa), have the 2nd highest mortality rate of all mental health disorders. In a large study of 14 and 15 year olds, dieting was the most important predictor of developing an eating disorder. Eating disorders are not just a phase, they are a complex, and often fatal, medical / psychiatric illness.

What causes eating disorders:

- 1) Genetic predisposition, personality traits: perfectionism, achievement oriented, obsessive, attention seeking, anxiousness, highly sensitive, high IQ, etc.
- 2) Environment: negative body talk, diet culture, rigid food rules, overly focused on health, weight based / body-based bullying, appearance ideals, etc.
- 3) Trauma (traumatic event in one's life), extreme stress calls for extreme coping skills, fight or flight, eating disorder behaviors give a sense of safety and control and can temporarily calm the brain.

Eating disorders can impact anyone. You don't need to look like you have an eating disorder, to have an eating disorder.

Impact on the brain: a malnourished brain cannot produce dopamine, serotonin at the same level.

What you might see / warning signs.

- constant adherence to a particular diet (especially without flexibility).
- a preoccupation with weight, body shape / size.
- Continual use of phrases like "clean eating," being "good," or eating only "safe" or "healthy" foods.
- Dramatic changes in weight, in either direction.
- Evidence of purging behaviors, including frequent trips to the bathroom after meals.
- Withdrawal from family, friends, other activities in exchange for fitness & food related activities.
- Lightheadedness / dizziness / fainting.

Co-occurring mood disorders: Anxiety, Depression, OCD, Self harm, Substance use.

A recent study published in the Journal of Adolescent Health found that nearly **1/3 of adolescent patients hospitalized for medical complications of anorexia nervosa were not “underweight”**. Importantly, higher-weight patients with anorexia nervosa had medical complications, eating disordered behaviors, and cognitive symptoms that were just as severe as those experienced by underweight patients with anorexia nervosa. This study highlights a very important message: **we cannot tell whether a person has anorexia nervosa by looking at them or by weighing them. Further, we cannot judge the severity of anorexia nervosa by body size.** People who suffer from anorexia nervosa in emaciated bodies are not necessarily “sicker” or “more symptomatic” than those in normal weight bodies or higher weight bodies.

Intervention is critical (it doesn't make the situation worse, but doing nothing can).

How to gently intervene

- keep gentleness in mind, private time to talk with limited people / distractions. Use specific instances in which you felt concerned. Have prepared resources to direct them to for help.

Recommended resources

- Upstate NY Eating Disorder Service (UNYEDS) in Elmira for intake, diagnosis and treatment planning
- The Every Body is Beautiful Project Digital Course
- The Body Project Training: A cognitive-dissonance-based body acceptance intervention designed to help adolescent girls and young women resist sociocultural pressures to conform to the thin-ideal and reduce their pursuit of thinness
 - Training: Nationaleatingdisorders.org educator tool kit
- Ophelia's Place for support services, as well as continued education in the areas of prevention and intervention ([Ophelia's Place](#)).

“A Hometown Crisis”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Ross Sullivan, *Founder of the Upstate Emergency Opioid Bridge Clinic*
Dr. Sullivan has several publications related to overdose and drug abuse, including “Cardiac conduction disturbance after loperamide abuse”, “Synthetic Cannabinoid Withdrawal”, “Baclofen overdose mimicking brain death”, and “A randomized usability assessment of simulated naloxone administration by community members”

Dr. Ross Sullivan discussed how the opioid epidemic has impacted our community, myths & misconceptions, and some community options / solutions.

First, a summary regarding the **difference between Opioids vs Opiates.**

Opiates classify as any drug naturally derived from opium - a narcotic originating from unripe seeds of the opium poppy. Opiates bind the body's opioid receptors to initiate pain relief and treat physical ailments such as coughing and indigestion. Types of opiates

include heroin, morphine, and codeine, which are typically used as relaxants or pain relievers.

Conversely, an **opioid** classifies as any drug that binds to the opioid receptors of the brain and central nervous system. However, opioids are not made from opium in the same way opiates are. Rather, opioids typically refer to **synthetically created** drugs and derive from opiates. Originally, professionals labeled opioids as narcotics but later separated them into a different category.

The Opiate issue stretches back to the arrival of the Mayflower in 1620.

Thomas Jefferson grew his own poppies at his estate.

Opiates were the main ingredient in everything from teething powders to analgesics.

So-called “Patent medicines” often contained secret “patented” ingredients. Some served useful, but they also became easy methods to get high.

An Opioid stops the pain transmitters, and increases our levels of dopamine. The increased dopamine targets the Prefrontal Cortex (self-control, impulse control, thinking, judgement, decision making, etc), as well as the Limbic system (risk taking, emotions, learning, memory, etc).

This is a disease. Drugs now kill more people than cars and guns.

11.5 million people age 12 or older, have misused prescription pain relievers in the past year (misuse: to relax / relieve tension, get high, help with emotions, help with sleep, etc).

Stigma, a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

There’s a stigma associated with those who use drugs, which can negatively impact:

- Willingness to attend treatment and access to healthcare.
- Harm reduction
- Self-esteem and mental health.

Help reduce the Stigma. Words matter. Use person-first language.

Avoid saying Addict, by saying, person with substance use disorder.

Offer compassionate support, and be kind to people in vulnerable situations.

You can’t talk someone into recovery, but you can ask them, “what is it that you need?”

They may need food, clothes, or someone that will listen, be empathetic, and guide them to know that it’s ok to seek professional help.

How can we get involved & help . . .

- 1) CARE!!!
- 2) Do something, anything (Onondaga County Anti-Drug task force, Heroin Epidemic Action League, Road to Recovery CNY).
- 3) Donate – time and money – many community resources.
- 4) Employee / Employer – drug friendly atmosphere – know the community resources.
- 5) get NARCAN trained !!

Helio Health

Regional Open Access Center for Addiction 24/7, (315) 471-1564.

Bridge Clinic at Upstate, (315) 464-3745.

Bridge Clinic at ACR Health, (888) 475-2430.

“Chocolate for the Mind, Body & Soul”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kaushal Nanavati, *Assistant Dean of Wellness, SUNY Upstate Medical University*

Dr. Nanavati is also an author having written a book series, CORE 4 of Wellness, which is a culmination of insights addressing the importance of nutrition, physical exercise, stress management, and spiritual wellness to achieve a balanced life.

Dr. Nanavati talked about Compassionate Leadership (Dalai Lama). The Buddhist tradition, of an all-encompassing concern for the welfare of those we lead.

Instead of asking, “what do you want to be when you grow up” - ask . . .

- **what do you want your purpose to be moving forward, and**
- **what do you want to contribute?**

Knowing is good, but doing is better. Promote Wellness / Disease Prevention.

You are a marvel. The structures of the neurons in the brain look similar to galaxy structures in the early formation of the universe.

Using Space as an analogy (a black hole in space, is like the pupil in your eye).

- a black hole in space has such gravitational pull, that anything that comes into its path, gets sucked into it.
- compare that to your eyes, wherever your gaze goes, everything you see and experience, gets sucked in.

Health is critical for a healthy society. Wellness Centers are becoming very popular - more corporations are incorporating wellness / wellbeing into the mix.

Diet and **inactivity** are leading risk factors for heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, chronic liver disease, and high blood pressure. Your **Diet** and **inactivity** are in **your** control.

Unhealthy eating and inactivity cause 310,000 to 580,000 deaths every year (similar to the number of deaths caused by tobacco, but 13 times more than are caused by guns).

Fewer than 1 in 3 adults eat the recommended amount of vegetables (7 servings daily). Majority of adults don't get recommended amount of physical activity (7 hours weekly). It's important to get adequate sleep (7 hours when possible).

Oral health: the mouth is the gateway to the body. Brush & floss twice a day, and rinse your mouth after each meal.

Building a plan

Write down everything you want / your goals

- circle all of your needs

Write down all of your barriers

- how can you overcome the barriers?

- list issues in terms of what I can control, and what I cannot control.

What is the alternate path to your goal? (redefine the goal, or reshape the path)

Strive to be better today, than you were yesterday; make today, better than yesterday.

Who can do this? The person staring at you in the mirror.

NO is NOT an option!!

No is sometimes too easy to say.

When no is not an option, wonderful ideas emerge.

Life is like a surfer on a surfboard. The waves below are always changing, so the surfer needs to adjust and adapt to the present moment.

Good Health Care begins with Self Care (destress the mind)

- 1) Find a mentor (as you reach out & ask for help, be sure to also lend a hand to others).

- 2) get adequate sleep (7 hours when possible).

- 3) practice meditation.

- 4) practice deep breathing exercises.

- 5) Don't forget the Airlines' messages (put your mask on first - self-care).

Nutrition: the Food Plate, the Harvard version (healthy eating plate).

7 to 9 servings of vegetables (Broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, etc)

1 to 2 servings of fruit

Protein (beans and legumes as the primary source)

- fish, turkey, chicken

- less red meat, and avoid processed meta

- say **no** to bacon / sausage

Dairy - yogurt primarily (milk / cheese, not as much).

Nuts - walnuts, almonds (less peanuts / cashews).

Hydration - water (no juice after lunch). Curtail consumption of sugary drinks.

Vegetarians live appx 8 years longer than meat eaters.

Eating right is about Portion, Proportion, and the Timing of when we eat.

Inhale peace, exhale stress: invite things into your life that bring you happiness & peace, and get rid of things that bring you stress.

Buddhism: be like water . . adapt to situations.

“Happiness is truly an inside job.” ~ Kaushal Nanavati

“The true journey lies in finding peace within.” ~ Kaushal Nanavati

Blogger notes.

The creative Health Day design team: Michelle Billington, Adam Brown, Kelly Burton, Joanne Campbell, Chris Channels, Kim Freson, Justin Hayward, Sarah Just, Nicholas Laflair, Regina Lozito-Yorton, Lynette Sorbello (Health Day logo designer), Jay Subedi, Ron Zuccaro.

The design team was comprised of many talented individuals, each of whom brought a unique perspective and vision to our (virtual) meetings. I was proud to be part of this design team that blazed a new trail, and tried a new ‘virtual’ approach, which can now be leveraged for future class days as needed.

We couldn’t have accomplished this successful virtual event without the Leadership and guidance of our Program Director, Robin Macaluso (Robin and a couple design team members, learned how to host a Webinar in a very short timeframe, and made it look easy). Robin coached / encouraged us to believe in ourselves, and believe in the impossible. This mindset enabled our team to design the first ever virtual LGS class, with a very dynamic agenda. LGS Class of 2020, undoubtedly, the best class ever!!!

Please take care of yourself, and take care of others all around you.

It all begins with each and every one of us. Peace my friends.

~ Ron Zuccaro





"REMEMBER THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A SMALL ACT OF KINDNESS. EVERY ACT CREATES A RIPPLE WITH NO LOGICAL END."

Scott Adams

GREAT DREAM

Ten keys to happier living

GIVING		DIRECTION	
RELATING		RESILIENCE	
EXERCISING		EMOTIONS	
AWARENESS		ACCEPTANCE	
TRYING OUT		MEANING	



"Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day" ~ Alice Morse Earle