

Promoting Wellness by Staying Engaged

By Dr. Margaret Rea

I am so pleased that this month's thoughts about staying well as a health science student is provided by Sharad Jain, MD, The Associate Dean for Students at the School of Medicine. Please take a moment to read about his passion for staying engaged.

When I reflect on what makes me happy, I think about some of the day-to-day activities that bring me joy: seeing documentary films in a theater, listening to my four-and-a-half year-old daughter draw family portraits, trying a new kind of sour candy. And, while these kinds of daily moments are certainly important to my well-being, there are other lessons from my 25-plus years as a healthcare provider that truly nurture my overall wellness: these are activities that foster connections with the community within which we work and live and that ground me in ways that provide profound,



anchoring contentment.

The importance of community service was instilled in me at an early age, and I have volunteered with a variety of organizations over the years. More specifically, during my medical training, I provided outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness in San Francisco, led health education sessions at a local elementary school, and participated in a global health experience. My most recent work at San Francisco General Hospital taught me the important role healthcare providers can play in

addressing the social determinants of health, especially when working with vulnerable populations. I have also tried to explore ways to develop partnerships with community-based groups to understand the issues facing vulnerable populations so that I can use my voice as a provider to improve the health of those groups. For me, this has meant serving as the faculty advisor for a student-run clinic in San Francisco, learning about legislative initiatives that affect my patients directly and indirectly, writing editorials for the local paper, and establishing a program to provide medical evaluations to support individuals seeking asylum. I serve on the Board of Directors for the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network, a non-profit statewide organization that advocates for policies to improve the health of communities of color. How do these endeavors – that take time in an already-busy schedule and can include some administrative challenges and interpersonal politics contribute to my wellness? They provide perspective. They confer greater meaning. They allow for expressions of gratitude and optimism. These are activities that provide grounding for me and keep me centered despite the ever-changing world in which we live. These undertakings are peripherally linked to my efforts at work while providing a fresh perspective that helps me to be more effective in my job. For those of you who have identified activities that promote your wellness, I encourage you to continue to engage in that work. For others who are earlier in this process, I urge you to find mentors who are doing inspiring work to help you identify issues and ideas to explore, while recognizing that you will have much more time to dedicate to those issues as your career progresses. Your wellness will likely be tied directly to finding work that grounds you, and I urge you to look for that work, whether it is community service or otherwise, during your training and beyond.

Wellness Events

Work Life and Wellness Events

<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/index.html>

Check out their [Summer Newsletter](#)

UC Living Fit Forever

http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtml

UC Davis Health Farmers Market is Back!

Ed Bldg Outdoor Quad
Wednesdays 3 - 7:30pm

The Heart of Medicine A Medical Student Support Group

Bi-weekly, Wednesdays, starting August 29, 2018 5:30-6:30pm
Facilitated by:
Stephen Simonson, Psy.D
Register: ssimonson@ucdavis.edu

Student Wellness Workshop

The Goldilocks Principle: Seeking a "Just Right" Balance in Medical School
Monday, August 16, 2018
12-12:50p.m Edu Bldg. 2205
Lunch will be provided for the first 30 students

Yoga on The Grass

Tuesdays 12-12:50PM
BIM Courtyard
Starting August 7, 2018
All Levels Welcome

Wellness Tip: Mindful Breathing

As you build your repertoire of wellness strategies, consider experimenting with Mindfulness. This technique helps you let go of judging yourself, ruminations about past issues and concerns about the future and instead become present for where you are here and now. Here are some steps to take when experimenting with Mindful breathing. Notice how I said experiment. Try it, experiment with it and see where you land. Not all techniques work for all people.



Practice: Mindfulness of Breathing

1. Find a quiet place, and sit on either a chair or cushion. Choose a chair with a firm, flat seat, and hold your back upright (although not stiffly so). Let the soles of your feet meet the ground, and bring your hands on to your lap. If you sit on a cushion, you can be cross-legged. Let your body be relaxed, inviting openness and confidence.

2. Decide how long to practice for. Your session can be as short as five minutes, or shorter or longer. You may find it useful to set an alarm to tell you when to stop, so you don't have to think about it.

3. Bring attention to the sensations of breath in your belly. Let go of thinking about or analyzing the breath. Just feel it. Follow its natural rhythms gently with attention: in and out, rising and falling. Let thoughts, emotions, body sensations, and sounds be as they are—you don't need to follow them or push them away. Just allow them to happen, without interference, as you direct gentle attention to the breath.

4. When you notice that your mind has wandered, as it likely will often, acknowledge that this has happened, with kindness. Remember, as soon as you're aware of the wandering, you have a choice about what to do next. You can bring your attention back to the breath, and continue to follow it, in and out, moment by moment, with friendly interest.

5. Continue with steps three and four until it's time to stop.

From Into The Heart of Mindfulness, by Ed Halliwell.

All students, staff and faculty are encouraged to contribute wellness stories, tips or recipes to the newsletter.

Monthly Recipe from the UC Davis Community

This month's recipe comes from Ksenia Lorigan, Education Project Manager at the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing. Ksenia was never a big baker, but an accidental over-purchase of bananas led her to getting creative. Banana bread is now a favorite in the Lorigan house. A good tip is to make the Banana Bread ahead of time, wrapping in plastic wrap for the night, and then serving the next morning. Ksenia's favorite way of eating Banana Bread is warmed in the microwave, topped with butter and a slice of Havarti cheese – sweet and savory has never tasted so good! You can find the recipe on the wellness website using the link below.

http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/student_wellness/recipes.html



Wellness App: Omvana

Omvana gives you access to many meditation sounds, music, and guided sessions with meditation experts. Focus options include: mindfulness, stress, relaxation, sleep, and more. You can choose the length of each meditation session, from three minutes to an hour. You will find, "guided meditations by very famous authors, teachers and spiritual celebrities that are scientifically proven to help you enter deep meditative state.....inspirational tracks, music and poetry to get you inspired to live an extraordinary life....stress-busting relaxation sounds that'll help you relax, rejuvenate and refresh your body....a variety of powerful sleep-inducing tracks that you can just click play to experience refreshing, rejuvenating deep sleep."

<http://www.omvana.com/>

