

# UCDSOM WELLNESS

Office of Student Wellness Newsletter  
UC Davis School of Medicine

## Silent Mantra Meditation

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## WELLNESS EVENTS



### Physician Burn Out: Time to Heal the Healers: September 6th

Colleen Brophy, MD

12 PM - 1 PM, Education Bldg., 1222

RSVP [hs-specialevents@ucdavis.edu](mailto:hs-specialevents@ucdavis.edu)

### The Goldilocks Principle: Seeking a “Just Right” Balance in Medical School: September 21st

Stephen Simonson, PsyD

12 PM - 1 PM, Education Bldg., 3225

### Practice of Mindfulness and Compassion: September 22nd

Phillippe Goldin, PhD

Thursdays, 5 - 6pm, 1331 Center For Health and  
Technology

[pgoldin@ucdavis.edu](mailto:pgoldin@ucdavis.edu)

### Work Life and Wellness Events

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

I highly recommend – trying the meditation workshop on  
Mondays at noon

Time: 12:00-1:00 pm; Location: Glassrock Building, Room  
7106

### Living Fit Forever Classes

[http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/](http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtml)

[living\\_fit\\_forever.shtml](http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtml)

## Welcome to September!

By Dr. Margaret Rea, Director of Student Wellness

Each year Dean Freischlag identifies a theme for the UCD Health System and the School of Medicine and Nursing. I am so pleased to be able to tell you that this year's theme will be Health and Wellness. It is so wonderful that your leadership recognizes the importance of honoring and caring for your well-being. You will see many events surrounding wellness throughout the year so please keep an eye out for announcements about the different activities and opportunities. I will be sure to inform you through the newsletter and emails.

Colleen Brophy, MD, Professor of Surgery at Vanderbilt University will lead off the “Year of Health and Wellness” with a lecture entitled, “Physician Burnout, Time to Heal the Healers” September 6th at 12:00-1:00 pm in Ed Bldg 1222.

I asked Dr. Brophy for the highlights of her presentation, she wrote:

*“I am a vascular surgeon, scientist, entrepreneur who has translated RO1 funded basic science research into 7 different start-up companies. One of those companies, the Ivy House ([www.theivyhouse.org](http://www.theivyhouse.org)) is a yoga and meditation retreat center in Nashville where I teach and prepare healthy organic food for retreats.*

*I will speak on living in the most dynamic epoch of human history with information technology and biotechnology growth progressing at an exponential rate. This rapidly changing world poses stresses that activate our autonomic nervous system. As a surgeon, I am personally familiar with being a self-proclaimed*

*“thrill junkie” and the potential for burn out associated with the repeated activation of the sympathetic nervous system. Health care providers are exposed to a multitude of external forces that contribute to stress in their lives including economic and governmental influences that impact patient care. In many cases, these outside influences detract from the mission as healers. This conflict between the external pressures and internal values exacerbate the stresses associated with rapidly changing biotechnology.*

### Dean Freischlag's Theme of Health and Wellness

*I will present psychoneurophysiology data generated in my laboratory that demonstrates the effect of stress on our vascular system. Using the blood vessel as a metaphor for life, I will describe the impact that the lack of balance between our sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system has on our well-being. The premise is that the way to achieve balance and hence restore well-being is to enhance the activity of the parasympathetic nervous system through yoga, meditation and other activities. My recent work has developed modalities to non-invasively monitor well-being (parasympathetic activity) using venous waveform analysis. Technology may eventually be a guide on the path to wellness.”*

# Monthly Wellness Tip



## Silent Mantra Meditation

I asked Dr. Brophy to share her favorite wellness practice which is silent mantra meditation. I did some reading to better understand what practicing this type of meditation can offer. Repeating a mantra can help you disconnect from your thoughts and the worries of the external world. It can actually transcend you to a different state of being. This type of meditation can slow down your metabolic rate and give you a deep rest and in turn you are better able to cope with stress.

***Repeating a mantra can help you disconnect from your thoughts and the worries of the external world...***

Here is what Dr. Brophy describes as her “RECIPE FOR MEDITATION.”

- Find a quiet comfortable place to sit (the corner of a couch is well supported and perfect)
- Keep your head upright (not supported)
- Close your eyes
- A reasonable mantra is “Shanti Om”
  - Shanti = peace
  - Om = universal sound
- Let the mantra surface
- Let thoughts float by like leaves on a river
- Notice the space between the thoughts

For some of you, who like me might need just a bit more guidance, I reviewed a few websites to get a few more tips to help us all try silent mantra meditation on the next page.

### Wellness App

Calm is a mindfulness meditation app. There are both unguided sessions if you prefer no voiceover while you meditate or while you are going to sleep which include 10 immersive nature scenes. You can choose your background sound and scene to help you relax anytime anywhere. There are also 25 guided sessions that last from just a couple of minutes up to 20.



### Monthly Recipe

This recipe from the UC Davis Department of Integrative Medicine is expanding my thoughts about Poke as it substitutes watermelon for tuna. You vegetarians out there now can try some Poke as well. Enjoy!



<http://ucdintegrativemedicine.com/recipes/watermelon-poke/#gs.JS1acb0>

## Practice: Silent Matra Meditation

### Decide on a mantra

The most popular and simple mantra is the word Om or Aum which is believed to be the sound that was made at the start of the universe. Some people might want to use a personal word that is simple and has meaning for you. Don't stress about choosing the word. I am trying the word Peace.

### Identify a time and location for meditation

From what I read, there is no specific time, but many suggest the morning is a good way to set the stage for your day. Again, there is no "right" place, but a quiet spot is recommended.

### Get comfortable

Sitting on the ground, pillow or comfortable chair is recommended.

### Begin your meditation

Close your eyes and focus your attention on your breathing. Notice as the air goes in and out of your body. Feel the gentle rise and fall of your lungs. Once you are feeling relaxed start to silently repeat your mantra to yourself. Continue to repeat your mantra over and over in your mind. If you feel comfortable with the saying mantra out loud, you can start to chant it now. Start by saying it quietly at almost a whisper and then gradually increase the sound. It is recommended that you say it slowly and softly at first.

*Notice as the air goes  
in and out of your body.*

*Feel the gentle rise and  
fall of your lungs.*

### What to do when your mind wanders

As you are repeating the mantra you may notice that your mind is beginning to wander. If this happens bring your attention back to your mantra and your breathing. It is normal to get distracted or for your mind to wander when performing mantra meditation. That you are not able to keep with your word or phrase the entire time does not mean that you're a bad meditator. In order to be successful with mantra meditation is simply need to notice when your mind is wandering and bring your attention back to your mantra.

You can start your mantra meditation by practicing for only a few minutes at a time and then build up to more time.

<http://selfhelprobot.com/how-to-do-mantra-meditation-technique-at-home>



## Office of Student Wellness

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