

Local

Winnipeg is warmer than you might think

By: Tara Maltman-Just
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It's one chilly city, but our hearts are warm. [Photo Store](#)

As I deplaned and crossed customs in Winnipeg at about 1 a.m. a few days ago, the blustery snow reminded me I was officially home after attending the World Congress on Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine in Las Vegas.

It's a fascinating field. I'm continually amazed by the advances in modern medicine. This year, the congress showcased high-profile presenters and even celebrities such as Suzanne Somers, Dr. Travis Stork and Arnold Schwarzenegger, all speaking on methods to enhance our health.

Stress -- which is in big supply this time of year -- affects our wellness. The flight attendant on my

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flight home illustrated this when she told me about her joy when someone thanked her for her service, amid the usual bustle of aggravated travellers with deadlines at work, before returning to their deadlines at home.

Health is more than the absence of disease -- a fact I hope all clinicians will remember. Ultimately, it's about people.

As a pharmacist and integrative medicine clinician for eight years, I've been fortunate to see first-hand the health hurdles people have overcome, with a focus on what I call "treating the person, not just the disease."

I've seen many people struggle to find their way in a system that is seemingly clouded with a flurry that freezes progress in attaining lasting health.

What I witnessed in the Winnipeg airport this week not only eased the deep-freeze, but melted hearts as well.

While I was waiting for my luggage, someone beside me said a man had fainted. Running over with two others, I realized he was having a grand mal seizure. I directed airport staff to call 911 while two of my fellow passengers moved him to his side. Then his heart stopped.

Dozens watched in shocked disbelief as a defibrillator was pulled from the wall. Two airport employees and I instinctively joined hands beside him and prayed out loud for this stranger. CPR was being performed by a fellow passenger, in conjunction with multiple targeted shocks. Thank goodness, he started breathing.

In this moment, just after landing in Winnipeg, the passengers and airport personnel came together and stood up for what mattered most. Grumbling halted, pushing towards the luggage carousel stopped, and for a moment, the true meaning of the season shone.

As a health-care practitioner and a human being, my best advice to beat stress and hone health through the holidays is to focus on what health and happiness are really all about.

Winnipeg, it may be cold outside. But you're a lot warmer than you think.

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