

Unity Fellowship Church Movement

# HEALTH & WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

Rev. Jerri Mitchell Lee – gjerrilee@gmail.com/ Rev. Cheryl A. Bragg, Editor/Layout

**UFCM EXTERNAL DEPARTMENT**



## **HEALTH & WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

TO SUPPORT THE WHOLISTIC HEALTH OF UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT AND THE COMMUNITITES THEY SERVE.

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DISCLAIMER: The Unity Fellowship Church Movement's Health Innovative wants our readers to know the views and testimonials shared are that of our writers. Please consult your medical providers with health concerns.

IS THERE A HEALTH ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ADDRESSED  
THROUGH THE UFCM HEALTH & WELLNESS IINIATIVE?  
PLEASE SEND IT TO: [gjerrilee@gmail.com](mailto:gjerrilee@gmail.com)

### **WELCOME TO WELLNESS**

**This is your first step to healthier living. Unity Fellowship Church Movement Health and Wellness Initiative encourages you to move in the direction of self-care, self-love, and wellness.**



# November 2024

## Health Initiative Newsletter

### A Word from the Editor...

The holidays bring a variety of emotions that you may not experience the rest of the year. Memories of those who have made transition. Regrets of the things we should have done differently during the year. Realizing the frost brought on by the winter months is covering the ability to forgive. As the holidays approach, try a new thing. Connect with positive people who respect and support how you feel yet allow room to celebrate where you are. Remember people present and past, in your life that have brought you joy. Give of your time in a loving spirit. And forgive yourself for any wrong doings so that you continue to move forward.

HOLIDAY - "a day for celebration with human connection and using the down time to return to core values such as joy, love, kindness and compassion."

BE WELL

**Reverend Jerri Lee**



## WALK FARTHER, FASTER, AND PAIN FREE



You are already aware of the benefits of walking. It burns calories, boosts stamina, improves heart health and reduces stress. However, walking can also be a bring about pain or discomfort in the butt, legs, back and feet.

Taking medication is not always the answer to eliminating the negative effects of walking. Be sure to consult your primary care doctor to make sure it is nothing more serious. With a few adjustments discomfort can be reduced.

Maintaining the best posture possible allows your body to distribute the weight more evenly and move more efficiently. It helps to keep muscles pain free, and not allowing them to be over stressed or overworked. Watching your form will allow your lungs to expand and take in more oxygen and allow less fatigue.

- ❖ **ADDRESSING HIP PAIN:** Stand with a sturdy chair on your right. Rest your right hand on the chair for support. Face forward and make sure your toes are pointed forward as well. Shift your weight onto your right foot. Slowly lift your left leg out to the side as far as you can, hold a moment and return. Perform 10 lifts, then move to the other side of the chair and repeat with the right leg.
- ❖ **FEET:** Heels are meant to absorb the shock of each step as you stride. With every step, land on your heel, roll forward on to the ball of your foot, then push off with your toes.
- ❖ **CORE:** Pull in your stomach and support your spine, gently squeeze your abdominal muscles while walking. This can remove stress from your lower back.

- ❖ **SHOULDERS:** Gently roll your shoulders upward, then back, then down and keep them there. This can prevent slouching and reduces tension on the upper back and neck.

## **Avoiding Seasonal Depression**

You can't stop the changing of the seasons, but there are things you can do to combat seasonal depression.

- ❖ **Stay active-** exercise is a great way to naturally combat the chemical imbalances that can contribute to depression.
- ❖ **Eat Healthy-** Diet impacts your mental health. A healthy diet rich in vegetables and fruits and low in processed foods can help curb feelings of depression by reducing inflammation in the body which is a risk factor for depression.
- ❖ **Stay Connected-** social connections can be a great defense against depression. Whether you talk on the phone, video chat, or meet in person, keep in regular contact with friends and family.
- ❖ **Get Outside-** even on a cloudy day go outside. Eat lunch in the park. Get sunlight where you can.
- ❖ **GETTING OUR BODIES READY FOR WINTER**
  1. Eat close to the earth during the fall and winter months. Vines, gourds, raw and leafy greens. Carrots, beets, sweet potatoes, radishes, garlic, turnips.
  2. Fiber is especially important during the winter months.
  3. Apples are a natural healer. They help to regulate blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol.
  4. Rhythm- self awareness
  5. Rest- self-care
  6. Ecology- purposeful breathing. Wear a mask when necessary.

# Mental Health During the Holidays

Martina Forte, MS, CCMA,CPT,CET. Clinical Trainer

The holiday can be a time of joy and connecting with friends and loved ones, but they can also bring stress- and this stress can worsen symptoms of a mental health condition, such as anxiety and depression, or a substance use disorder. However, there are ways to address stress or conditions and improve your mental health. Below are some helpful strategies to help you find moments of joy amidst the hustle and bustle of the holiday season.

Strategies for supporting your mental health:

## 1. Pay attention to your feelings

Remember that it is okay to feel unhappy during the holidays. Recognizing your feelings is the first step to addressing and nurturing them.

## 2. Develop a plan for when you are feeling stressed, sad, or lonely

This plan may include calling a friend or family member, going for a walk, engaging in an activity that brings joy, or watching a favorite movie. Having a plan ahead of time can help ensure the difficult moments are more manageable.

## 3. Practice self-care

It is important to schedule time for yourself and activities that recharge your mind and body. This may include reading a good book, working out, spending time in nature, and practicing stress management skills, such as deep breathing, meditation, and mindfulness. It is also important to remember to prioritize necessities, including eating a balanced diet, getting plenty of sleep, and finding time for exercise.

## 4. Connect with community

If you can't be near loved ones during the holidays, finding a supportive community through clubs, support groups, community centers, local meetups, and faith communities can help reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation. Consider scheduling a regular phone call with family and friends as well.



## **5. Support others**

During this time of year feelings of grief and loss can amplify. Check in on loved ones who may be alone or struggling during the holiday season. Helping a friend or neighbor not only gives joy to others, but it can improve your own happiness and well-being.

## **6. Recognize seasonal mood changes**

[Seasonal Affective Disorder](#) (SAD) is a condition in which people experience symptoms of depression that are triggered by the change in seasons as the days get shorter. While this form of depression often improves in the spring and summer, it is important to talk with your health care provider if you feel you are experiencing these symptoms. Treatment is effective and may include light therapy, antidepressant medication, and/or talk therapy.

## **7. Avoid alcohol and drugs**

For people in recovery, the holiday season presents challenges that can trigger the use of alcohol and drugs. Having a plan for navigating social events and feelings of loneliness can reduce the risk of substance use. For family and friends, it is important to check in on those who may be struggling with substance use over the holidays.

## **8. Know when to seek help**

If you feel that your mental health struggles are becoming overwhelming and difficult to handle, it is important to seek help and know that treatment is available. Below are free and confidential resources that can connect you with effective treatment and support.

## **9. Help is available by dialing or texting 988**

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, help can be reached 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week by dialing or texting 988. The Suicide & Crisis Lifeline website <https://988lifeline.org> [website](#).

	<b>988</b>	<b>Suicide Prevention &amp; Mental Health Crisis Lifeline</b> Free, confidential and available 24/7/365
	<b>911</b>	<b>Medical &amp; Public Safety Emergencies</b> Free and available 24/7/365
	<b>211/311</b>	<b>Resource Support Line (Housing, Food, Etc.)</b> 311 is for Chicago and Cook County 211 is available in select Illinois counties Free and available 24/7/365
	<b>1-866-359-7935</b> Illinois Warm Line	<b>For non-emergency emotional support, recovery education, self-advocacy support and referrals</b> Free and available Mon-Sat, 8am-8pm
	<b>Local Mental Health/ Substance Use Hotlines</b>	<b>Non-emergency resource for individuals who need help finding behavioral health services</b> Various hours of operation

**8 WEEK HEALTHY HABITS PLAN**

“Habits are learned behaviors that repeat with a trigger.  
Habits are not about willpower.”

Healthy planning hints:

MAKE IT OBVIOUS- MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE- MAKE IT EASY- MAKE IT SATISFYING

**WEEK 1**

**STAY HYDRATED:** Every cell in the body needs water to function. Keep water in sight. By the bed for a healthy drink when you wake up, in the refrigerator or on the table.

## **WEEK 2**

**SLEEP BETTER:** schedule to go to bed at the same time each evening. Set up the bedroom for sleep (no television, ) quite music, cool quite, sheets that feel good. Set alarm for bedtime and wake up.

## **WEEK 3**

**MEDITATE FOR STRESS RELEASE:** calm your mind. Focus on breathing.

## **WEEK 4**

**PREP HEALTHY MEALS:** make a meal prep grocery list. Frozen vegetables, greens, kale, spinach, still vegetables, carrots, celery, peppers, whole grains, lean protein, fruits, nuts, and seeds.

## **WEEK 5**

**EAT MORE PLANTS:** Phase in plants, add a little at a time, phasing out meats. Try a new prep method, snack on whole fruit, be a part time vegetarian.

## **WEEK 6**

**WALK REGULARLY:** Stroll, brisk walking, power walking.

## **WEEK 7**

**EAT MINDFULLY:** Assess how you feel, start with gratitude, use your senses, slow down.

## **WEEK 8**

**MAINTAIN MOTIVATION:** Don't let lack of momentum or a bad mood derail your healthy habits.



## MEDICATIONS THAT DO NOT MIX WELL WITH COFFEE



Thyroid Medicine

Osteoporosis Medication

Cold or allergy Medication

Antidepressants

Diabetes Medication

Anti-Psychotic Medication

Alzheimer's Medication

Blood Pressure Medication

Asthma Medication

Melatonin

If you take any of the above medications, delay your daily cup of coffee. If you take more than one medication, talk to your healthcare provider about how to balance your medications.

## **FOODS TO HELP YOU HEAL...AND MAINTAIN WELLNESS**

Fruits, vegetables, healthy fats and protein sources have been known to reduce inflammation, improve immune function, promote healing, and provide fuel for energy. Whether you are recovering from an illness or surgery or looking for ways to maintain your wellness, the foods you consume can either help or hinder your road to recovery or impede your continued wellness.

### **SUGGESTED FOODS TO HELP WITH HEALING AND WELLNESS:**

- ❖ **Leafy green vegetables:** Leafy green vegetables such as kale, spinach, and mustard greens are full of nutrients that can decrease inflammation, support immune function, and improve wound healing. They are high in Vitamin C, magnesium and provitamin A, all of which are important in immune function and overall wellness. Leafy greens are also high in antioxidants, and contain anti-inflammatory elements, as well as vitamin C, which is essential for wound healing.
- ❖ **Eggs:** an excellent source of absorbable protein and nutrients that support immune health and wound healing. Eggs contain vitamins B12, zinc, iron, and selenium, all of which play an important role in immune strength.
- ❖ **Salmon:** High in protein, B vitamins, iron, zinc, and omeg-3 fats. Salmon promotes wound healing, helps to build the immune system and reduce inflammation. It can provide over 70% of the body's daily need for selenium (works as an antioxidant when combined with vitamin E). Consult with your healthcare provider before taking fish oil supplements before or after surgery.
- ❖ **Berries:** High in nutrients and plant compounds that support recovery and overall wellness. High in vitamin C, which stimulates production of collagen- the most available protein in the body that promotes healing. Berries are high in antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antiviral and immune-supporting effects.
- ❖ **Nuts and Seeds:** Nuts and seeds such as almonds, pecans, walnuts, sunflower seeds and hemp seeds provide plant-based protein. They also provide healthy fats and vitamins and minerals that support healing and overall wellness. Nuts are a good source of zinc, vitamin E, manganese, and magnesium, which perform as an antioxidant in the body.

- ❖ **Cruciferous Vegetables:** Includes cauliflower, broccoli, brussels sprouts, and kale and contain a variety of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Cruciferous vegetables have been known to promote immune health by suppressing inflammation, promoting immune system and suppressing infections. They are high in vitamins B and C.
- ❖ **Sweet Potatoes:** a healthy high carb food that is important in recovery and continue wellness. Carbs are important in providing cell energy and enzymes that aid in repair. Low carb intake and delay healing. Sweet potatoes are in anti-inflammatory plant compounds, vitamins and minerals.

In addition to intake of foods that heal and promote wellness, rest and hydration are also important.

## **STAYING IN RECOVERY DURING THE HOLIDAYS**

As the holidays are upon us, many are faced with a special challenge of staying drug free, alcohol free or both. Emotions are often high and sometimes out of control, causing some to relapse. We encourage you to support those who are on the road to recovery, in recovery or thinking about eliminating drugs or alcohol from their lives and to be as healthy as they can be.

- ❖ **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF:** Holidays can be stressful, and stress can make it harder to stay sober. It is important to take care of yourself during this time. Recovery is about improving your mind, body and spirit. Try meditation and deep breathing. Stay active to help deal with stress. Get enough sleep and eat healthy.
- ❖ **STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM:** During the holiday it is important to stay in touch with the people who support your recovery. Sponsor, therapist or support group as a suggestion. Go to meetings and use online resources.

- ❖ **LEARN TO SAY NO:** Have some responses ready if someone offers you a drink or a drug.
- ❖ **CHOOSE THE RIGHT EVENTS:** You do not have to go to every holiday party. It's OK to pick the ones less focused on alcohol, and where you feel more comfortable.
- ❖ **PLAN AHEAD:** Have an exit plan if it gets uncomfortable, Bring a supportive friend. Let friends and family know you are working on recovery.
- ❖ **CREATE NEW TRADITIONS:** If your old holiday traditions are connected to alcohol or drugs create new ones. Host your own gathering for the holiday.



## **ORAL HEALTH IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY**

**Rev. Lynn Duhart, Unity Fellowship Greater Atlanta**

As a child of a single parent of seven children, dental care was more of a luxury than a necessity. In other words, you didn't go to the Dentist if you didn't have a tooth ache. My research and conversations with others in my community have also found this true in many other families. Because of the lack of resources offered to families during my youth, I am now dealing with the high cost of dental care as a senior citizen.

My overall physical health as an adult has always been important; I have always had access to health insurance that covered most of the cost. But when it came to dental insurance, I wasn't as lucky. But just like during my childhood, it was a terrible toothache that would not allow me to sleep that sent me on a search for relief from the pain I was feeling. It was during this visit that I learned that my pain was a much deeper health issue that was affecting my overall health. Much to my surprise, gum disease entering my bloodstream was contributing to the rheumatoid arthritis in my joints.

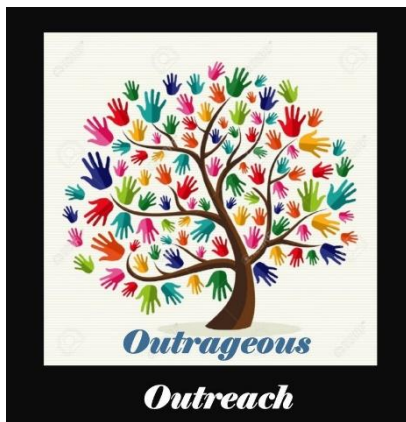
After having what the Dentist described as major dental surgery, I am happy to report that the toothache is gone, and my arthritis pain is much better. But mostly, I can smile with much more confidence. I hope this article will encourage you to be more aware of the importance of your oral health and its effects on your overall health. Below, I have listed some information about the importance of oral health and resources for those needing financial assistance.

"Research has shown that "**African American** adults are at greater risk of having a tooth extracted due to tooth decay or gum disease, and seniors are much more likely to have lost all of their teeth. They also fare worse overall and about disease-specific survival rates for oral and oropharyngeal cancers."

<https://www.carecredit.com/dentistry/>

<https://www.webmd.com/health-insurance/features/how-to-find-free-low-cost-dental-care-seniors>





## UNITY FELLOWSHIP CHURCH MOVEMENT HEALTH INITIATIVE PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE

FIND OUT MORE:

**[Namewellness2023@gmail.com](mailto:Namewellness2023@gmail.com) or 862-405-7612**

**“Wellness is an Energy: Healing is a Process”**

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Unity Fellowship Health Initiative Newsletter is looking for informative health articles and anyone interested in working on the newsletter monthly. We need writers and researchers.

Please contact Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee or Rev. Cheryl Bragg.

- Rev. Jerri Mitchell-Lee- [gjerrilee@gmail.com](mailto:gjerrilee@gmail.com) or (201) 289-6941
- Rev. Cheryl Bragg- [whosoevermusic59@gmail.com](mailto:whosoevermusic59@gmail.com) or (732) 259-3782