



Wellness Works

DECEMBER 2007

New Year, New Start?

Elizabeth Miller and Alan Marlatt of the University of Washington's Addictive Behaviors Research Center recently tried to unravel the mystery of how some people are successful in keeping New Year's resolutions, while others are not. The research centered on health-related resolutions, as they are the most common: weight loss, quitting smoking, drinking, or taking drugs, and increasing exercise.

They found the people who make a lasting change had three things in common. First, they all had a strong initial commitment to make a

change. They thought about their resolutions ahead of time and prepared for the big day. Second, they developed coping strategies to deal with problems and barriers in advance. Third, they tracked their progress and shared their experiences. The more monitoring and self-evaluation a person does, concluded the researchers, the closer they will come to reaching their goals.

"Take credit for success when you achieve a resolution, but it is a mistake to blame yourself if you fail," suggested Marlatt. "Instead, look at the

barriers that were in your way. See how you can do better the next time and figure out a better plan to succeed. You do get to try again and can make behavior changes throughout the year, not only at New Year's."

There is a Web site to help you plan for success in setting and achieving your resolutions like losing weight, paying off debt, saving money, reducing stress, improving education and much more! Go to www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/New_Years_Resolutions.shtml for more information.

Embodying the Six Dimensions of Wellness: A Message of Hope and Survival

By Viola Hebert and Jennifer M. Roberts

Each newsletter, the Employee Wellness Program highlights an employee who exemplifies one or more of the six dimensions of wellness: emotional, physical, occupational, social, spiritual and educational. This month we salute Ismaela Egos, a nurse at LBJ General Hospital for 18 years, who has worked in the Newborn ICU and the High Risk Nursery.

Egos is a mother, volunteer, and a breast cancer survivor. She never gave up on her belief that she would stop cancer – and that it would not stop her. After undergoing surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, she is back on the job and enjoying life.

Egos credits maintaining a strict regimen for monitoring and follow-up to ensure that she stays cancer-free. "I am an active participant in my treatment plan. I ask questions to seek a better

understanding and I read to stay informed about the disease," she explained. "Diet and exercise are also important. I go for walks in the park with my husband and try to maintain a healthy diet."

Her love of life is abundant, and she is able to balance all the dimensions of wellness every day. "I am a firm believer of work-life balance, and I practice it," she said. "I make time for everything. When it's time for church I go to church, time to pray, I pray, time to be with friends, I go to see them." She also participates in the annual Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Walk.

"Cancer is not something that you need to hide and keep secret," Egos said. "Talk about it, share your story, and you just may help somebody. You may be the conduit to save someone's life!" Wise words from a true survivor!



WOW!

Did you know that the hospital district offers an Employee Assistance Program? Find resources on stress reduction, family issues, mental health, anger management, substance abuse, marital problems and legal concerns. Free assessment and counseling referrals are available, and all information is confidential. Call 1-888-238-6232 or visit www.AetnaEAP.com to learn more.

Getting Ready for Change

Some experts on changing behavior feel you go through five stages before you can make a big change:

1. Not thinking about change
2. Thinking, but not acting
3. Preparing to change, making plans
4. Starting change
5. Maintaining change

If you are considering quitting smoking, losing weight or any other health-related changes, ask yourself, "What stage am I in, and what will it take to move me into the next stage?" Use the stages to help track your progress. Be prepared for barriers along the way and plan on how to overcome them. If you relapse, just assess your new stage and start over — don't quit trying! Your health is worth it to you and your loved ones.

Those with Aetna coverage can improve their health by enrolling or updating their health risk assessment through Simple Steps (www.simplestepslife.com). If you or a participating family member has been diagnosed recently with an illness or condition, it is especially important

to get started today. It's quick and easy – simply go to the Web site, register, and fill out the profile. After completing it, you will then be asked if you'd like to participate in any free programs – such as those that fight diabetes, help you get in shape, developing a healthier diet, aging well, stress relief, weight loss, or healthy heart. You can also visit the Reawakening Center to learn more about depression. Online coaching is available, and don't forget about signing up for the Moms to Babies program if a new bundle of joy is in your future!

All Harris County Hospital District employees are eligible for offerings through the Employee Wellness Program. Check out our Web site on the intranet or call 713-566-2000 to learn more. We have exercise classes and teams, discount gym memberships, Weight Watchers groups, pain management referrals, smoking cessation classes and much more.

Season's Greetings,
The Employee Wellness Team



Wellness Works

The Employee Wellness calendar includes events taking place at HCHD facilities and around Houston that encompass any of the six dimensions of wellness:

Emotional, Physical, Occupational, Social, Spiritual and Educational

DECEMBER

Dec. 13-17

National Diabetes Photo Exhibit at the Galleria Mall

Meet the Face of Change™, a national traveling photo exhibit, will be on display at the Galleria Mall. Produced by world-renowned photographer Rick Smolan and sponsored by Novo Nordisk, the exhibit documents – and celebrates – the lives of a diverse sampling of the more than 18 million Americans living with diabetes. For more information, log on to: www.faceofchange-us.com

Dec. 15-16

Hip Hop Shop

King's Dancing Centre, 5200 Bissonnet St.
A two-day intensive workshop and performance, the Hip Hop Shop offers all participants a chance to learn and have fun dancing during four dance classes a day from respected choreographers. The participants' hard work will be on display at a public showcase of new works, aptly named the Hip Hop Shop. Selected dancers from the advanced level will be invited to perform at Dance Houston's Winter Formal at Wortham Center Jan. 26, 2008. Advance registration required. For more information, call 713-526-1049 or log on to www.dancehouston.org

Dec. 21-22

Campfire Christmas

The George Ranch, 10215 FM 762, Richmond
Join a holiday celebration like no other! Bring a blanket and those you love for an evening's wagon ride around the history circle. The Jones Stock Farm will be the first stop of the evening, where visitors can experience a pioneer Christmas as it was celebrated in the 1830s. Then guests will be transported past the Victorian Davis House and on to the George Ranch House for holiday vignettes, 1930s-style. The evening will include a traditional Texas feast and a stop by the cowboy campfire for singing and storytelling under the stars. Reservations required. For more information, call 281-343-0218, ext. 258 or log on to www.georgeranch.org

Dec. 22

Breakfast with Santa

Eight and 10:30 a.m. Houston Zoo, 1513 North MacGregor Dr.
Join the Houston Zoo for Breakfast with Santa, including a scrumptious meal, fuzzy animals to get up close and personal with, and a visit by the jolly guy himself. Tickets are \$17 for members, \$21 for non-members, and children under two are free. For more information, call 713-533-6500 or log on to www.houstonzoo.org

JANUARY

Jan. 6

Italian Colors

7:30 p.m., Museum of Fine Arts, 1001 Bissonnet St.
This concert pairs musical selections with art from the museum's collection. Free with museum admission. For more information, call 713-553-0080 or log on to www.mercurybaroque.org

Jan. 12

Resolution Walk

9:30 a.m., MetroRail's Fannin-South Park & Ride
Keep your new year's resolution about getting more exercise by participating in this walk, which actually begins with a ride along the entire MetroRail line to UH-Downtown. Once off the train, participants will enjoy a tour through the UH-Downtown Plaza, Buffalo Bayou's scenic nature trail, and the observation bridge near the Harris County Jail before breaking for lunch at the Spaghetti Warehouse. After lunch, the tour continues to Allen's Landing before returning on MetroRail. Reservations required. For more information, call 713-222-9255 or log on to www.discoverhoustontours.com

Jan. 13

Chevron Houston Marathon

7 a.m., George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas
This annual marathon, half-marathon, and 3.1 mile run, which begins and ends at downtown Houston's George R. Brown Convention Center, has steadily grown to attract more than 18,000 entrants from around the world and 200,000 spectators. Advanced registration required to participate. For more information, call 713-957-3453 or log on to www.chevronhoustonmarathon.com

Jan. 26

HCHD Foundation's Sixth Annual Texas Med 5k

8:30 a.m., Ben Taub General Hospital, 1504 Taub Loop
Help support the great work the Harris County Hospital District does in our community! Complimentary parking will be available in the Ben Taub parking garage. Discount available for HCHD employees (must provide current, valid badge number and pavilion). Registration required. For more information, call 713-566-6409 or log on to www.hchdfoundation.org

*Items in blue are either sponsored by HCHD, or the hospital district will have a registered participant or team.

For more information, visit the Employee Wellness site at <http://home/departments/wellness/main.htm>, e-mail employeewellness@hchd.tmc.edu, or call 713-566-6360.

For events offered by the HCHD Learning Resource Center, please go to the HCHD intranet → Departments/Programs → Education, or call 713-873-8725.