

Resources available for people dealing with depression

Although your neighbor appears on the outside to be living a “normal” life, and your child is breaking sports records left and right, the people around you might be suffering inside from depression.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 9.5 percent or 20.9 million American adults suffer from a depressive illness in any given year.

Depression manifests itself through the presence of symptoms typically lasting everyday for about two weeks in adults, and one week in children or adolescents. Because children are not as articulate as adults in expressing their emotions, parents, guardians, teachers older friends and relatives must be able to look for early signs of trouble.

The most common symptoms of depression in adults, adolescents and children include:

Fatigue or loss of energy

Difficulty concentrating, remembering details and making decisions

Feelings of worthlessness, helplessness or guilt

Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or excessive sleeping

Loss of interest in activities and hobbies

Thoughts of suicide; attempts at suicide

A sense of restlessness, or being slowed down

Significant weight loss or gain

Persistent aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems

Excessive alcohol consumption and drug abuse.

Depression is a highly treatable condition, and steps may be taken in an effort to prevent it. However, some forms of depression may not be preventable; those forms most often manifest because of a chemical malfunction in the brain and may have been caused, for example, by experiencing repeated trauma as child (i.e. living with an alcoholic and/or abusive parent, being bullied by peers). The good news is that studies show that depression may be alleviated, or even at times prevented, by adopting healthy lifestyle changes and seeking professional treatment.

Steps to potentially prevent depression include making time to relax and enjoy special times with friends and family; adhering to a well-balanced diet; staying focused on a fun and results-oriented exercise program and creating a healthy and happy living environment.

Although treatment of depression is effective 60 to 80 percent of the time, according to the World Health Organization, less than 25 percent of individuals with depression receive adequate treatment. For immediate help, the following is a list of local resources to assist people who are struggling with depression:

Family Resource Center: 11695 Donner Pass Road, Truckee (530) 587.2513

Sierra Agape Center (Offers free peer counseling), 10153 West River St., Truckee (530) 414.1885

Sierra Family Services, 2690 Lake Forest Road, Tahoe City (530) 581.4054.

Truckee man pitches product for Google

Longtime Truckee architect Nicholas Sonder captured the attention of Google last month, so much so that the billion-dollar corporation featured him in a marketing piece at this month's American Institute of Architects' national convention in Washington, D.C.

Sonder has been a fervent user of SketchUp, a three-dimensional application for design professionals, since it was introduced by @Last Software in 2000. Google acquired @Last in 2006.

Sonder recently replied to a question in an online user group by posting an example of construction document images. Development teams at Google noticed the post and contacted Sonder, hoping to use his examples to help promote and feature SketchUp at the May convention.

"They ended up sending a development team member to interview me," Sonder said in a press release. "He spent two days in Truckee . I showed him around town, introduced him to local contractors and took him to some job sites. He went back with about nine hours of footage."

Here is the interview, which includes footage of Truckee contractors and designers, primarily features Sonder

discussing the usability and advantages of SketchUp.

Choosing to be happy can make a world of difference

By Mandy Kendall

I spent last weekend with 70 wildlife enthusiasts training to be a volunteer at the Lake Tahoe Wildlife Center. This wonderful organization strives, year in and year out, to provide the necessary care to countless injured or orphaned wild animals.

By the end of the weekend I began to realize what a roller coaster of emotions these dedicated people must experience every day during their tireless work at this wonderful facility. I have no doubt that the concern, the long hours and the hard work is soon replaced with an overriding sense of joy when an animal is finally released back into the wild.



Mandy
Kendall

So this brought me to wonder: Are we slaves to circumstances that determine if and when we feel joy? Or is happiness a matter of perspective, i.e. can we choose to feel happy?

Research has shown that the brain cannot distinguish very well between an actual emotion and an imagined one. The same areas of the brain get activated when we are actually feeling happy and when we are imagining, or remembering a time when we were feeling happy.

Even though we are programmed to pay more attention to the negative things that happen to us (there goes that survival instinct thing again) we can even-up the balance by strengthening the happy pathways in the brain. If every time we experience something that makes us feel happy and if we savor the moment and memorize it, the circuits in the brain that retain that feeling will be intensified and can be more easily accessed in the future.

A shift in perspective can also help change the emotion attached to something, and linking this with an attitude of gratitude can be a powerful tool to help shift a negative emotion into a positive one. James Baraz and Shoshana Alexander talk about how a change in focus from “I have to” to “I get to” can “incline the mind to gratitude even during unpleasant moments”.

Finding the time to feel happy is often a challenge in itself. Our hectic schedules have us rushing from one thing to another, that risk us leading reactive, rather than proactive lives. Taking even brief moments throughout the day, to pause and re-set our minds, can help keep us in control of our emotions.

Seeing the good in others can affect your emotional status too. Overlooking what you don't like in someone else and focusing on their goodness can benefit both parties. Interactions with that person can improve and, like a mirror, your behavior towards them is likely to be reflected back to you.

So, here are some *Qwik-e* tips to help increase those joyful

moments:

Memorize a happy time in every detail – Take time to feel every aspect of a happy moment in your life, while it's actually happening or when remembering it. How did it make you feel physically? What were you hearing, seeing and thinking? How were others reacting to you?

Change "I have to" to "I get to" – Try looking at a situation or task you don't like in a more positive light. For example, taking out the garbage can go from the annoyance of I have to to a feeling of I get to. Creating an opportunity to be grateful for the health and strength to do it and thankful for the trash pick up service.

Taking the time – Whenever possible just take a moment, pause, breath, relax, come back to the center of yourself and regain control.

Look for the good in others – Try to ignore the things that really annoy you about someone and search for at least one positive thing about them and focus on that. Then notice what effect it has on your interaction with them and your state of mind too.

Imagine feeling happy – Only you know how it feels when you're happy and your brain doesn't know the difference between the actual thing and your imagination. So reprogram your brain by imagining what it's like when you're feeling happy in as much detail as possible. What would you be doing? What would you look like? Who would you be with? How would it make them feel to see you being so happy?

Here's to being happy and healthy.

Until next time.

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, would like some advice, or would

like to request some Qwik-e tips on any health and wellbeing topic, please feel free to drop me an email at healthconnective@gmail.com, visit us on Facebook, or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.

Travel agents rebound as they adjust to tech-savvy consumer

By Richard N. Velotta, Las Vegas Sun

The Internet has become a game-changer for the travel industry. But it was also a job-killer.

As the public became more familiar with researching travel options and booking plane tickets and hotel rooms online, people became their own travel agents.

Thousands of travel agency professionals lost their jobs, and small mom-and-pop agencies either were absorbed by giant travel companies or disappeared.

But today, small, home-based travel agencies have rebounded. Last week, more than 1,500 of the estimated 8,000 agents nationwide were in Las Vegas for the Home-Based Travel Agent Forum, attending seminars and panel discussions to better themselves as travel professionals.

“It’s a \$100 billion industry today,” said Mark Murphy, president and CEO of Travalliance and a travel industry writer. “I don’t think people realize that 75 percent of cruises and tours and 60 percent of international travel are

booked by travel agents who work from their homes.”

Melody Fee, vice president of the Outside Sales Support Network, which presents the travel agent forum – it debuted at the Venetian last year and is booked at the resort annually through 2016 – said that although some agents have struggled in the Internet era, many of those who have adapted are making six-figure salaries.

Murphy said the biggest challenge facing today’s home-based travel agents is marketing themselves. Most have thin advertising budgets and have a hard time telling potential customers about the services they offer.

Read the whole story

Taco Bell gives thousands of dollars to Tahoe Boys & Girls clubs

Taco Bell franchisee Chris Walsh presented \$15,000 in grant funds to two Boys & Girls Club in Lake Tahoe. The North Lake Tahoe club was given \$10,000 and South Lake Tahoe one \$5,000.

Walsh and partners Bill and Mary Lou Mullin own Taco Bell restaurants in the Tahoe region and are longtime supporters of Boys & Girls clubs.

North Lake Tahoe plans to use the funding to support its college prep program for teen members. This summer participants will go on a three-day Bay Area college tour. In the fall, the grant funding will support the club’s SAT test preparation programs which include test prep curriculum, staff

mentoring and test fee support for teens hoping to attend college.

Some of the grant money will also be used to support the club's "Career Launch" program which prepares teens for entering the workplace by assisting them with resumes, mock interviews and teaching workplace etiquette.

In South Lake Tahoe, the funding will support two initiatives – "Be Great: Graduate" program and the "College Bound" program.

"Be Great: Graduate" targets middle and high school students to encourage and support them in completing high school. "College Bound" exposes students to area colleges through field trips and contact with current college students. The idea is encourage students to complete high school and to plant the seed the college attendance is a real possibility.

Douglas County libraries launching summer reading program

"Dream Big, Read" is the theme of this year's Summer Reading Program for kids at the Douglas County Public Library.

Registration starts June 1 at the Minden and Zephyr Cove libraries. The program continues through July 21.

The Summer Reading kick-off event is June 5 at 5pm at C.V.I.C. Hall in Minden. Usborne Books will present a book fair again this year. Books for all ages will be available. Purchases help buy new books for the library.

Gbozé shares the roots of their history and culture through traditional West African drum and dance at 6:30pm. Learn about instruments, dances, and masks; join in the simple rhythms and dancing. Children and adults will enjoy this interactive, energetic program.

The Douglas County Library Foundation will host an Ice Cream Social from 7:15 to 8pm. For more information, go online or call (775) 782.9841.

Truckee photographer commissioned to do work at Donner Museum

Local award-winning Truckee photographer Elizabeth Carmel has been selected to produce images for the Donner Memorial State Park Museum.

She will photograph a series of panoramic murals to convey the beauty and power of the Sierra Mountain Range, which will serve as backdrops for exhibits about the people and events that have taken place near the site. Carmel will employ aerial photography with the use of a helicopter to acquire optimum views of the mountain peaks and landscapes during sunrise and

early morning time frames to capitalize on the best available light for the museum project.

Included in the new museum will be displays and information about one of the earliest pioneer wagon trains, the Donner Party. Also to be featured will be native American history of the region, natural resource history through time, the history of the railroad development through the Donner Pass, and the construction of Interstate 80 and how transportation played a role in the development of California.

Funding for the new visitor center at Donner Memorial State Park is separate from the current State budget crisis in California and cannot be used for things other than the kind of project proposed for the new museum. Funding is provided by the federal Highway Administration. Funds will also be provided by the 2002 State Park Bond.

Prostate cancer isn't something anyone should die from

By Christopher P. Evans

Misconceptions about prostate cancer abound. It's not just a disease that affects older men, and it is not always slow-growing. Despite some recent recommendations against getting PSA (prostate-specific antigen) screenings, the facts show otherwise. Prostate cancer is the most common non-skin cancer diagnosis in American men and is the second most common cause

of cancer deaths of men in America.

One in six men in the United States risks getting prostate cancer during his lifetime. Why is this disease so prevalent today? We believe prostate cancer has always been widespread; however, before 1987, we didn't screen for it.

At that time, 40 percent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer had metastatic disease that had spread from the primary location to other parts of the body. Today, with screenings and early detection, that number has been drastically reduced to 2 percent.

Prostate cancer is linked to many variables, including age, ethnicity, family history and environmental factors. Based on annual cases diagnosed per 100,000 as reported by the National Cancer Institute:

- If you are black, you have the highest risk of developing prostate cancer (234 cases);
- If you are white, you have the second highest risk (150 cases);
- If you are Hispanic, the risk is 129 cases per 100,000; and
- If you Asian/Pacific Islander, you have a lower risk (88 cases).

According to the California Cancer Registry, the number of diagnosed cases in 2009 in Sacramento County for these ethnic groups included:

- For a population of 74,255 blacks – 115 cases;
- For a population of 360,107 whites – 512 cases;
- For a population of 147,585 Hispanics – 69 cases ; and
- For a population of 100,994 Asian/Pacific Islanders – 50 cases.

For 2012, CCR estimates Sacramento County will see 825 prostate cancer cases; Yolo County – 105 cases; El Dorado County – 145 cases; and Placer County – 255 cases.

The disparities among ethnic groups may be due to a variety of complex factors; however, evidence suggests that lack of health care coverage and socioeconomic status play a significant role.

What can you do? Challenge the myths and protect yourself against prostate cancer:

- Talk to your physician, and develop a screening plan that's right for you.
- Get screened, especially if you are at increased risk. This may include regular digital prostate exams and PSA tests. Normal PSA values can vary with age.
- If your father or brother has had prostate cancer, you may be at an increased risk of getting the disease, and should get regular screenings.
- Although studies vary about the impact of foods on prostate cancer, such as those containing omega-3, lycopene and soy products, it's important to maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle.
- Adopt a balanced diet that includes fruits and vegetables and is low in high-fat dairy products and barbecued red meats (especially charred meats).
- Avoid taking more than 1,500 mg. of calcium per day, and stay away from mega-doses of vitamins, especially E and folate.
- Exercise daily, and include strength training to avoid muscle loss as part of your regimen.

Educating yourself about prostate cancer and taking steps to

reduce your risks is the best defense against this potentially deadly disease.

Christopher P. Evans is professor and chairman of the Department of Urology, UC Davis School of Medicine, and is a member of the National Cancer Institute-designated UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe

Woody is a 1-year-old Treeing Walker Coonhound. He is a high energy, curious and social dog. He loves to go for runs and will need this exercise to be a good companion.



Woody will frequently stand up on his hind legs in order to get closer to people who come to see him.

He gets along well with the other dogs at the shelter, but gets very excited around the cats and while not aggressive toward them, his high energy immediately puts them on the defensive.

Woody is a sweet, affectionate, goofy young dog who will fit

in well in an active household.

Woody is neutered, microchipped, and vaccinated. He is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes. Go online to see photos and description of all pets at the shelter.

Call (530) 573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– Karen Kuentz

2 business education classes planned in Truckee

As part of its Chamber EDucation program, the North Lake Tahoe Chamber/CVB/Resort Association in partnership with the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce and the Sierra Human Resources Association is hosting “The Customer Connection” and “The Guest Service Experience” on May 23, 9am to noon and 1-4 p.m., respectively, at Cedar House Sport Hotel, 10918 Brockway Road in Truckee.

“The Customer Connection” is geared for public agencies, municipalities, education, health care, non-profit organizations and non-sales environments. This workshop will discuss the service chain and service culture, as well as how you influence the perception of your community. Emphasis will be placed on body language, non-verbal communication, phone

etiquette, difficult customers and conflict resolution, how to craft your own personal mission statement and creating a plan for common customer issues.

“The Guest Service Experience” is designed for resort, hospitality, hotel and golf course staffs, as well as grocery, recreation, restaurant and retail establishment employees. This workshop will focus on “service is sales” in terms of up selling and cross selling, the art of suggested products and services and acting as everyone’s concierge. Emphasis will be placed on body language, non-verbal communication, phone etiquette, difficult customers and conflict resolution, how to craft your own personal mission statement and creating a plan for common customer issues.

Walk-in registration is \$59 for chamber and SHRA members and \$69 for nonmembers.

For more information and/or to register, contact Laura Moriarty of SHRA at (530) 573.0224 or North Lake Tahoe Chamber Manager Deanna Frumentti at (530) 581.8764.