

TO YOUR HEALTH

Carleton-Willard Village Out-Patient Clinic - 100 Old Billerica Rd., Bedford, MA 01730

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Transitions in Aging

By Judi Tabor, LCSW



Many of us travel through life never really thinking about the beliefs we hold about aging. Yet, if we're honest with ourselves, we've all internalized societal messages about aging, some from long ago, some from present day, and many of these messages tend toward the negative.

So how do we navigate this life stage, and the transitions and changes inherent in it? If what we believe shapes how we age, then what we believe will affect how we experience the natural shifts and changes that occur as we age.

According to Ron Pevny, the Director of the Center for Conscious Eldering in Colorado, "Since the 'modern' era began, aging has largely been seen as a time of decline, loss and a withdrawal from active contribution". If we espouse this belief, then we will view the shifts and transitions that occur as we age as something to be "feared", and to "avoid at all costs". We hold tight to what has been, even when it's no longer working for us.

If, on the other hand, we view elderhood as a life stage with its own set of tasks, and recognize that each life stage presents us with both challenges and opportunities, then we are better equipped to handle the natural shifts and transitions that occur as we age. There is an understanding of the process of aging, "an acceptance" in this view. When we have respect for the aging process, rather than dismissing or

denying it, we are freed up to focus our energies on creating meaning and purpose wherever we are, whatever the circumstances.

Ron Pevny clearly sees the potential in each of us as we age to have increasing clarity about who we can become. In his words, "Throughout recorded history, the role of elder was an honored role, with elders expected to contribute their wisdom and gifts in meaningful ways to their community. We don't live in such societies, and our culture reveres youth and newness and doesn't recognize the role of elder. But the human psyche doesn't change just because our society doesn't see elders as relevant to its wellbeing. There is an elder in each of us that wants to emerge as we age; but we need to believe in our potential for personal growth, meaning and service or that potential may never see the light of day".

Oftentimes, recognizing this potential can be challenging. It requires a shift in perspective. Sometimes, we think about what we "can no longer do" and we get stuck there. And then what happens? It becomes a breeding ground for sorrow, frustration, stress, disappointment and regret. There's a yearning for what "was"... this is past oriented.

What happens when we shift our perspective to "what can I still do?" It becomes about possibility and purpose...it's hopeful. It's present oriented, and realistic. There's a recognition that there are things that we need to let go, but we choose to focus on what we can continue to enjoy.



Sometimes, making this shift can be hard work. It is a process, and along the way you need to connect with the many feelings and emotions that get stirred up as you become increasingly aware of life changing.

Ron Pevny describes this time of increasing awareness as a “time of inner autumn”. He states, “We are called to review and take stock of our lives and who we have become, seeking to learn and distill wisdom from our many experiences. We become aware of and begin to release or heal attitudes, fears, beliefs, behaviors, attachments and self-identifications that may have served us well in the past, but will certainly not serve us in the future we envision for ourselves”.

He continues, “We have a choice: to either try to hold onto what has been or to embrace the challenging but renewing process of transition”.

It is imperative that all of us explore our beliefs about aging, being honest with ourselves, seeking genuine understanding and clarity. Only then can we begin to fully comprehend how much our beliefs influence our journey through our elder years.

Health Education Lecture

“Who Should Be Gluten Free?” Defining Celiac Disease and Non Celiac Sensitivity.

**CWV Resident, Dr. Peter Gibb, retired
Chairman of the Gastroenterology
Department at Lahey Hospital
and Cherie Asgeirsson, Registered
Dietitian here at CWV will present
this very educational lecture.**

Please join us on:

Wednesday, November 14, 2018

**10:30 am —11:30 am
Auditorium Center**



2019 Medicare Annual Enrollment

The 2019 Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is October 15th, 2018 – December 7th, 2018. Changes take effect January 1st, 2019. If you are thinking about changing your medical insurance or prescription drug benefit, now is the time to do it! During open enrollment you can switch from Medicare Advantage to Original Medicare, or vice versa. This is also a good time to review your prescription drug benefit, especially if you have high copays on your medications. There may be a plan that better suits your needs. Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Comparison Intake Forms are available in the Clinic if you would like Minuteman Senior Services SHINE program to review your options. Forms should be completed and returned to the SHINE program, instructions are on the form.

*give thanks
for each new morning with its light
for rest and shelter of the night
For health and food
for love and friends
For everything
Thy goodness sends*

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Happy Thanksgiving from the Clinic Staff