



HCQU Northwest

"Happy Spring"

Aren't you so glad that we made it through this past winter?
It seems like it hung on forever!

Well, it's time we will start to see the new buds, blossoms and regrowth. Happy am I to see the beautiful flowers of spring and the chance to get out and breathe the fresh spring air and hear the birds singing their happy songs.

These past couple of years have certainly been trying with COVID, but let's put some sunshine in our future! Yes, we will be having those April showers, but let's remember the beauty that comes from them.

I know I don't look forward to all the spring cleanup from the winter woes, but bring it on! Hibernation is over and the scurry is on.

We live in the most amazing and beautiful country. Get out and enjoy! Find that little something that brings you joy and sunshine today.

Lisa

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SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

April 20: SHAWN McGill Building Awareness & Understanding of the LGBTQAI+ Community and Gender Identity

May 18: RON Idoko Racial Equity Consciousness: A (Systems Thinking, Personal and Social Development) Framework to Foster Antiracist Practices, Communities, and Cultures

JUNE 15 & July 20: LARA PALAY 6/15: Trauma Responsive Care: Safe, Connected and In Control
7/20: Compassionate Empathy: Supporting & Healing Trauma and Burnout in Helping Professionals

HCQU Training Stats

January 1, 2022—March 31, 2022:

824 home-studies completed

64 People Attended Webinars (37 Weekly, 27 Requested)

59 Completed On-Demand Webinars

947 trainings completed

Spring Webinars

April

7: Vision
14: AUTISM 101
21: DISORDERED ATTACHMENT
28: PRADER-WILLI

May

5: DOWN SYNDROME
12: MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS
19: HEARING IMPAIRMENT
26: Skill Building: TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING

June

2: FRAGILE X
9: PTSD
16: THE SUN AND YOUR SKIN
23: Social Skill Building
30: Open Mic



Having Healthy Vision

What is eye health? Many of us do not think about the answer to that question. What can you do to keep your eyes healthy? It is vital to get your eyes checked and to know the importance of caring for your eyes. May is National Healthy Vision Month, so here are some things you should know to better care for your eyes.

Eye health is maintained by eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise, avoiding smoking, and wearing sunglasses when needed. It's also important to have your eyes examined yearly. This should be just as important as your regular health or physician appointments. Everyone needs to take care of their eyes to avoid potential problems in the future. According to the National Eye Institute, more than 23 million Americans aged 18 and older have never had an eye exam. Many individuals avoid making eye appointments because they do not think they have an eye issue. You may not be having issues now, but it is important to have a baseline so an eye doctor can detect changes in your eyes, such as the pressure in your eyes (indicating your risk level for glaucoma), any beginning damage to the retina related to diabetic retinopathy, or age-related conditions such as macular degeneration.

Eating nutritiously can help your eyes. For example, did you know that the best fruits to eat for eye health are red berries, kiwis, guavas, grapefruit, and oranges? I always remember my Mom's words in my head, "Eat your carrots -- they help with your vision." And of course, it's true. Carrots have a substance called beta-carotene that is good for your eyesight. Carrots are a source of Vitamin A that is also vital in converting light, signaling the brain to allow you to see better in low light. Eating a variety of dark leafy green vegetables is also good. Other foods to improve your eyesight are red peppers, broccoli, spinach, strawberries, sweet potatoes, and citrus fruits. Eggs also have Vitamin A that can help to protect your eyes from night blindness and dryness. Whole grains, nuts, and fish help to promote good eye health, and are good food choices as well.

Physical exercise helps the eyes to work together, so exercise promotes eye strength, thus reducing your risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, and glaucoma.

Smoking not only damages your circulatory and respiratory systems but can also damage your eyes. Smoking can lead to vision loss and even blindness due to of macular degeneration and cataracts.

To protect your eyes from sunlight exposure, you should wear sunglasses. This can help to prevent cataracts, a clouding of the eye lens that reduces your vision, and protect against (UV) or ultraviolet exposure from the sun, which may increase your risk for eye cancer. So, you are going to want to wear those sunglasses, even during winter, spring, and fall.

Many times, there are no early signs or symptoms of eye damage or disease. But some signs and symptoms to watch for are: blurry vision or spots in your central vision, the need for more light to read, straight lines that look wavy, difficulty focusing on objects, headaches, and watery eyes.

Many people ignore minor issues in their eyesight, but they can lead to major issues in the future. So take care of your eyes now so they can take care of you for a lifetime.

Resources: [HEALTHY VISION MONTH -May 2022 - National Today](#) [10 Foods That Can Help Improve Your Vision - Asheville Optometrists & Eyewear: Envision Eyecare \(myenvisioneyecare.com\)](#) <https://www.bing.com/search?q=do+carrots+help+your+vision&cvid=ed1879f434424cda874abf45322120ee&aqs=edge.0.0>. Dr-mcgahen.com

Opening the Door

By Amy Tobolski

“An affirmation opens the door. It’s a beginning point on the path to change.” -- Louise Hay

From bullying to neglect and abuse, many people with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) have had traumatic experiences. In fact, trauma experts encourage us to “assume 100%” of the people we support have had at least one (often multiple) traumatic experience/s in their lives, and to approach our interactions accordingly – to provide Trauma-Informed Care. In keeping with our guiding philosophy, Positive Approaches, we focus on positive, self-esteem-building interactions. We try to encourage people and focus on what they do right rather than getting mired in their mistakes and missteps. The following general categories of affirmations may help you be more versatile and intentional in affirming those you support:

(adapted from “Deepening Trauma Awareness”/Lakeside Global Institute.)

1. Accomplishment – describing the specific thing the person did well
2. Potential – appreciating and helping the person see their capabilities more clearly
3. Quality or Trait – describing a specific attribute to help the person appreciate their own gifts and talents
4. Struggle or Effort – describing and appreciating the difficulties the person is facing
5. Intention – appreciating what the person was trying to do, even if their efforts failed
6. Growth/Change – specifically describing how you see the person growing and changing – improvements that they may/may not be aware of
7. Positive Impact – helping the person see how they have positively influenced others in a situation through their behavior, attitude, meaning or mere presence
8. Reality – appreciating/agreeing with the person’s perception as a truth
9. Value or Priority – describing, supporting, and approving of something that is important to the person
10. Rights and/or Responsibility – describing and acknowledging widely accepted rights and responsibilities and connecting them to a specific behavior or attitude of the person
11. Connection – describing the formation, growth, and nurturance of a relationship the person has with you or someone else
12. Process – describing and acknowledging that the person is on a journey toward something and is moving through a process

Claude M. Bristol said, *“It is the repetition of affirmations that leads to the belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.”* Messages that encourage, approve, and validate the people we support need to be provided often to overcome the negative messages the person may have been given in the past. Affirmations can and should include more than just the “good job” someone did or recognition of their kindness or sense of humor, especially if our ultimate goal is to help the people we support develop a “deep conviction” that they are worthy.

Kidney Stones

Certainly one of the most painful experiences anyone can have is that of a kidney stone (also called *nephrolithiasis* or *renal calculus*). It is estimated that one out of 10 people will have at least one, and rates are rising. Over 80% of all kidney stones are made from calcium and oxalate (both naturally occurring substances in food). Other types of stones include struvite, uric acid, and cysteine stones. Kidney stones are responsible for over 500,000 ER visits a year in the USA.

Kidney stones form in the kidneys (which make urine) and sometimes migrate down the ureters, which are the tubes that connect the kidneys to the bladder (which stores urine). They range in size from 1 or 2 millimeters to 10 or 11 mm. They are not smooth; they have jagged edges that irritate the smooth muscles of the ureters. This causes the ureters to spasm, which creates intense pain, usually in the groin, flank, or lower back. Some people have even reported knee pain.

Kidney stone pain usually starts out mild and can build to excruciating levels within an hour or two. Fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea may also occur. Many persons find the pain intolerable if they remain still, so they pace, continually, until the stone passes. This can take a few hours to a few days (imagine having to keep moving for 36 or 48 hours with no sleep). If you or someone you support experiences this type of pain—"the closest a man gets to having a baby"—call 911 and go to the ER. If the stone is too big to pass, it could cause urine to back up and damage a kidney. Persons with ID/A may act out more, become aggressive, or withdraw socially if they have a kidney stone.

How do we prevent kidney stones? First, stay hydrated! Unless your doctor says not to (persons with CHF, hypertension, or other fluid related problems may have to limit their intake), most experts recommend drinking half your body-weight in ounces, of water (*not* soda, coffee, juice, tea, etc.) daily. So, if you weigh 160 pounds, drink 80 ounces of water per day. Squeezing some lemon or lime juice into the water can flavor it, and the citric acid from the lemon or lime may prevent minerals from attaching to the stone (use *real* lemons and limes, not processed products). Staying hydrated mechanically flushes the kidneys and helps prevent stone formation.

Taking vitamin B-6 and Magnesium daily may help prevent kidney stones also. Studies have indicated that in persons with a long history of calcium-oxalate stones (the most common type), recurrence fell 92% after the subjects took these supplements daily. If you have, or someone you support has, a history of recurrent stones, talk with a physician about this.

Avoid foods high in oxalate. These include: chocolate (especially *dark* chocolate), soy products, nuts, okra, tea, rhubarb, swiss chard, spinach, beets, and sweet potatoes. It's also good to avoid any kind of soda, which is high in phosphoric acid and can pull calcium out of the bones and into the blood stream, where it can make its way through the kidneys, causing more stone formation.

If you do have kidney stone pain, the "Jump-and-Bump" method has worked for several people to expel a kidney stone rather quickly, sometimes in an hour. Drink a fair amount (16-24 oz) of water, wait 20 minutes, and then jump 2-3 inches off the ground, landing on your heels, several times in rapid succession. The water makes more urine, which acts as weight behind the stone while the short jumps jar it downward. For more information, do a web search, or watch the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LL4BFPihJeY>.

Tim Juliano

Sources:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/kidney-stones/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20355759>, 4/9/2020.

<https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/kidneystones>, 4/10/2020.

<https://www.pristyncare.com/blog/dissolve-kidney-stones-with-lemon-juice-pc0441/>, 2/22/22.

<https://www.rejuvenation-science.com/research-news/calcium-magnesium/n-magnesium-kidney-stones>, 2/22/22.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LL4BFPihJeY>, 2/22/22.

Paws for mental health

Did you know that even though pets can be a handful, there are several benefits to owning a pet? People can benefit both mentally and physically from them. Pets are in tune with people's behavior and emotions. Some dogs are smart enough that they can understand 80 words and sometimes more, but have you ever seen a dog cower when you raise your voice? This is because they can also interpret tone of voice, body language and gestures. It's been found that dogs will sometimes try to gauge your emotional state and try to understand what you're thinking and feeling. Studies show that owning a pet (especially a cat and/or dog) can reduce stress, and anxiety. They are even known for helping people combat depression and or loneliness and motivate people to exercise (we want to get pets out so they can stretch their legs)!! When a person takes care of a pet, they learn the responsibilities that come with caring for someone other than themselves and they also may find a secure, loyal companion in a pet that they may not otherwise have. According to [Helpguide.org](https://www.helpguide.org), along with the benefits above, studies have shown that 🐾

- 🐾 Pet owners are less likely to suffer from depression than those without pets.
- 🐾 People with pets have lower blood pressure in stressful situations than those without pets. One study even found that when people with borderline hypertension adopted dogs from a shelter, their blood pressure declined significantly within five months.
- 🐾 Playing with a dog, cat, or other pet can elevate levels of serotonin and dopamine, which calm and relax.
- 🐾 Pet owners tend to have lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels (indicators of heart disease) than those without pets.
- 🐾 Heart attack patients with pets survive longer than those without.
- 🐾 Pet owners over age 65 make 30 percent fewer visits to their doctors than those without pets.

Have you ever felt unconditional love? If not, maybe you should get a pet for that very experience. If you weren't sure about getting a pet, maybe these benefits will help sway your decision. Helping a furry creature can help us, as much as it can help them!



Let There Be (UV) Light

The link between skin disease and sun exposure dates back to at least ancient Egypt. Modern uses for ultraviolet (UV) light therapies began in 1877 with the discovery that fungal growth was slowed by exposure to light. In 1932, the American Medical Association listed 34 skin conditions where UV therapy may be beneficial.



UV light has gotten a bad rap recently, but it has actually been found to be beneficial for certain conditions, including: eczema, psoriasis, acne, vitiligo, graft-versus-host disease (associated with bone marrow transplants), neonatal jaundice, Cutaneous T-cell lymphoma (a rare form of skin cancer), and even persistent itching.

Although experts are still working to completely understand how UV light works, one theory is that it may slow the overgrowth of some skin cells, changing the function of the immune system, and helping to improve or even completely heal some wounds and skin conditions.

UV light therapy varies based on the condition being treated. Most conditions require multiple treatments, which may be done in a clinical setting or at home. When treating larger areas, a full-body unit, such as a light bed or cabinet, may be used. For smaller areas, handheld devices may be an option.

UV light should be used as directed, taking precautions to protect areas that do not need to be treated. Side effects can include skin irritation, dryness, sunburn, discoloration (brown spots), and even nausea and headaches in some people. It is not recommended for those who suffer from migraines or are taking medications that can cause photosensitivity, such as tetracycline. Over-exposure to UV light *may* be a risk factor for skin cancer, so it's important to have an annual checkup with a dermatologist.

UV light does not help all skin conditions, and it will not heal you overnight, but if you have one of the conditions mentioned above, it may be worth discussing with your doctor or dermatologist to see if you might be a good candidate for UV therapy.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27892584/>

<https://www.woundcarecenters.org/article/wound-therapies/ultraviolet-light-therapy>

Letter from the Director

Hopefully all of you are staying warm and safe during this transition from cold to summer, and not getting impatient like I am while waiting to plant my garden (still too muddy and cold for that). While I need to exercise patience (and possibly just exercise more), I am also asking you to be patient while we are waiting and seeing what COVID-19 is up to next. I am hoping that we are close to returning to normal - whatever that is now since COVID does not want to go away. I feel like I am caught in the movie *Groundhog Day* with Bill Murray and re-living COVID issues for the last two years. One good thing is that the HCQU is still available for virtual trainings, technical assistance, or other help that you may need, and we are creating new trainings along with updating old trainings so call or email if we can be of assistance. Please look for emails advertising our weekly trainings and soon to arrive monthly speakers.

Take care, enjoy the changing seasons, think about fresh food from the garden and have a great day.

Darryl



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