

Prime Timers Focus

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The Prime Timer Focus originated as an excerpt to Peer Links, containing articles of interest specifically to Prime Timers (persons with disabilities age 35 and over). Topics include aging and disability, health and wellness, retirement, relationships with our children, etc.

We would love to hear from you, so if you have any articles, poetry, quick anecdotes, recipes or a few words of wisdom that you wish to share with others, please feel free to contact the Peer Support/ Volunteer Coordinator at cilt@cilt.ca

Spring Clean Your life– Simplify and Live Better

Spring is here and there's truly no better time than now to simplify our lives. You can think of this as spring cleaning your life. The number one stressor these days is that life is too fast paced. It can be difficult if not impossible to keep up. Some retirees find that they are busier than ever, doing all the things they never had a chance to do before.

When we think back to some of the beautiful moments in our lives, they are usually simple times such as viewing a gorgeous sunset panorama or going on a spontaneous picnic or perhaps a relaxed vacation by the ocean.

Now as we deal with the frenzy of our modern lives, the term "simple" can also mean sane. There are things we can do today so that we not only maintain our sanity, but find simplicity and contentment, which will make way for living with greater purpose and balance.

Start Small

At first glance the task of simplification may in itself seem overwhelming, but if we take one small step every day, very soon, we will start to enjoy the benefits. First, write down five things that bring you complication or stress. Your list might include some items like the following:

- A cluttered area like a drawer or closet.
- Too many things you don't use.
- Too many activities or commitments.
- A relationship that drains your energy.
- A chore or activity that you don't enjoy.

Then, break down each item into small tasks you can do to clear them up or resolve them. And promise yourself only this: "I promise myself to take at least one small step every day, to simplify my life." Even if all you do is clear out one pile of letters, make one important phone call, donate an item to charity or place one ad to sell something you no longer want or need, you will be making progress. Every day your life will become less complex and you will feel great for accomplishing your tasks.

Learn to Say No

Many of us take on more than we should because we are afraid to say no. Saying no does not have to be harsh. Without using the no-word, we can diplomatically explain that we have so much going on right now, we simply can't take on anything else. Everyone knows how busy life can be and although they may be a little disappointed, they will respect you far more for telling them. If you are involved in too many activities, review what you truly enjoy, then drop those that drain your energy. It may take a phone call or two, but you can tell others your life is changing and you can no longer _____ (fill in the blank) and you are telling them so that they can make alternative arrangements.

Will That be Regular or Decaf?

by Anita Burton

Having recently acquired a love for flavored coffee, I figured I should check out the latest health virtues of this world-famous bean. While coffee has been cleared of almost all former health charges, many still ask whether decaf is healthier. Others wonder whether the de-cafeination process poses its own set of health risks. And still, others are convinced that antioxidant-rich teas are the way to start the day.

Regular Coffee

Over the years, coffee has been blamed for causing serious ailments like heart disease and cancer but so far, has been declared "not guilty." Some researchers still question whether coffee may promote hypertension even though most studies have found no such link. Despite previous thinking, drinking filtered coffee, as most North Americans do, does not appear to raise blood cholesterol levels. There is some evidence to show that coffee may be beneficial against gallstones, dental cavities, type two diabetes and maybe even Parkinson's disease. Caffeine helps relieve pain, which is why you find it in many pain-relieving medications. On the other hand, some people are sensitive to the effects of coffee as it can aggravate heartburn, stomach ulcers and bowel disorders.

It stimulates the nervous system and can briefly boost blood pressure - particularly in those who don't drink it often. To minimize possible side effects, Health Canada recommends limiting caffeine intake to less than 450 mg per day, whether from coffee, tea or colas. That works out to about:

- two (eight ounce) cups of gourmet coffee,
- five (eight ounce) cups of regular or green tea or
- 2 "big gulp" beverages

Decaffeinated Coffee

To be labeled decaffeinated, coffee must have 97% of the caffeine removed. There are three basic methods to extract caffeine:

- Coffee beans are soaked in an organic chemical solvent like methylene chloride, where caffeine is evaporated off.
- Coffee beans are soaked in hot water and caffeine is removed with a charcoal filter, known as "swiss water process."
- Coffee beans are treated with carbon dioxide under extreme heat and pressure to absorb and remove caffeine.

Both Health Canada and the FDA deem all decaffeination processes as safe. Companies use different methods based on consumer taste preferences. Coffee plants are now being engineered to have 70% less caffeine. It will take another five years to produce beans and it's not known whether coffee from these beans will taste better or worse than today's decaf. So whether or not you prefer your coffee with a kick, you can enjoy it knowing there are no serious health concerns to date. But if you are sensitive to the effects of coffee, please discuss with your physician.

Anita Burton is a Community Nutritionist with Fraser Health Authority in British Columbia Canada

Aging with a Disability—Conclusions after a visit to the USA.

A short version of a Norwegian Report written by Terje Binder and Janicke Killian, Bergen, March 1998.

In researching this topic, I discovered that there isn't very much information out there related to "aging with a disability". There is a lot of stuff on acquiring a disability later in life; as we get older, we tend to have more aches and pains, etc. But I hardly found anything pertaining to aging adults who have had a disability either most or all of their lives. Perhaps this is a good topic for a future workshop. Many of us are facing the obstacle of aging with a disability and, as I am, are finding the need for more support from others. The following article was the best I could find on this topic that didn't contain a lot of medical terminology that only those in the medical profession can understand.

The improvements of modern medicine coupled with an enhanced standard of living, sees the emergence of a new group within the <<elderly>> part of the population: People who have spent all, or greater parts, of their life living with a disability. The fact that they now for the first time in history, can expect to live approximately as long as the rest of the population, leaves the western society with problems we have not been prepared for. Individuals that have been living 30 to 50 years with a disability, now experience new turns in their health conditions—new constellations of problems through the combinations of the problems connected with their disability and those that come with <<normal aging>> - that neither they nor health care providers have been taught to handle.

Some research has been undertaken in the last years as it became clear that this is going to be a major challenge in the future. Among other things the emerging of <<secondary conditions>> have been shown in several disabilities (i.e. Spinal Cord Injury, Polio, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Cerebral Palsy). Common secondary conditions for these disability groups are:

- Lower bone-mineral density/osteoporosis;
- Cardiovascular problems;
- Glucose-intolerance/diabetes;
- Wear and tear
- Fatigue;
- Weakness; and
- Depression.

It is important to see the concerns of the disabled population more in relation to those of the elderly in the future. With age the chance of getting some sort of disability increases, while disabled persons often face the problems of <<early aging>>.

The groups have important common issues, and would both profit by pooling knowledge and experience. We think it is important to focus on the theme of <<Aging with a Disability>> at an international level in the future. We therefore suggest establishing a Resource Centre with an international perspective, based on three inter-connecting pillars: Information, Research and Action. The main goal of the centre would be to stimulate research, support projects, and to disseminate information, education and training.

The centre should be based on a high degree of consumer participation, and should employ and give project tasks to consumers who have relevant knowledge within the respective fields. With the new communication technology available, the centre could operate in a network of interested researchers and professionals from all over the world.

The Norwegian report was completed in December 1997. The report stated among other things that most of the research that was being done on this topic

was conducted in the United States. Out of this report came the following conclusions:

- Aging with a Disability is an important topic in the USA, and will continue to be stressed in the years to come, as the aging population increases.
- A disabled person spends more energy performing a task than a non-disabled person. Some work on maximum energy all the time, just like a sports athlete running a marathon. In time, this will result in decreasing capacity. More physical training/exercise is not recommended in these cases, but rather a period with rest and relaxation and life-style changes necessary to cope with the changes in function.
- More research is needed on the cause of secondary conditions, as well as what can prevent them.
- It is important to view knowledge and skills as separate entities. Information might give person knowledge but knowledge on a topic does not necessarily give the person the skills to make this knowledge useful.

Answers to Tough Interview Questions

Article written by Colleen Clarke, Career Specialist, Corporate Trainer and author of "Networking: How to Creatively Tap Your People Resources @ www.colleenclarke.com. Found in "Toronto 24 hrs", May 11, 2005.

To outshine other people being interviewed for the same job as you, you must do your homework and be very prepared to stand out as an organized, prepared professional.

- "Tell me about yourself."
Give no more than a three-minute synopsis of your career to date. For example, "I am a ... with ... years of experience with ... (relevant) education. My areas of expertise are, and here are some examples of those areas."
- "Where do you want to be in five years from now?"
"I hope to still be working in five years for this company, with newly acquired skills, possibly in a management role." Or: "As long as the values of the company are congruent with mine, I hope to still be working with this company."
- "Why do you want to work for this company?"
This is where you show off what research you have learned about the company and possibly mention a common-shared value.
- "Why should we hire you?"
Mention the benefits you will bring to the table. Tell them you are going to save them money, increase productivity or free them up to do their job by

taking care of the little things that they don't have time to do. Do not rehash your skills. Go for the benefits!

- “What is your greatest accomplishment?”
Try to use a recent example that is relevant to the position and the company that you are interviewing with. Be sure to use the situation, action, result format. Tell it with pride and smile. If you can tie it into the position applied for, all the better.

SPRINT In-Home Services

Senior Peoples' Resources in North Toronto Inc.

SPRINT is a non-profit United Way member agency that provides a wide range of home and community support services to help seniors and persons with disabilities in the North Toronto area live independently in the community.

What are SPRINT's In-Home Service?

- Homemaking
- Respite Care (caregiver relief)
- Top-Up Home Services

Homemaking

SPRINT's Community Support Workers help with household management—including meal preparation, grocery shopping and light housekeeping, as well as providing personal care. They establish a strong, supportive relationship with clients and monitor their well-being as needed.

Respite Care

Caregivers who provide round-the-clock care to a frail or cognitively impaired senior or a person with a disability need time to themselves.

Respite Care Services allow caregivers some time to take a break, while knowing their family member is being well taken care of. SPRINT's trained Community Support Workers can come to your home to help your family member with personal care and homemaking as well as engage your family member in appropriate activities such as playing games, reading or going for walks. The staff at SPRINT are trained to deal with adults with Alzheimer Disease or a related dementia.

What are the fees?

The fees for Homemaking and Respite Care are \$12.00 an hour for the first 4 hours of Homemaking a week or the first 12 hours of Respite Care a week, except for statutory holidays.

SPRINT's Top-Up Home Care Services (For Additional Homemaking and Respite Care)

SPRINT can provide the same Homemaking and Respite Care Services for clients who require more than four hours of homemaking or twelve hours of respite care service a week, using SPRINT's Top-Up Home Care Service. SPRINT clients can rely on a single agency to provide homemaking and respite care regardless of how many hours of care they require.

What are the fees?

The fees for Top-Up Home Care Services is \$22.50 for each additional hour after 12 hours of service at \$12.00 an hour, except for statutory holidays. Service on statutory holidays is provided at a premium rate. To find out more, call SPRINT at (416) 481-6411.

Why the difference in fees?

The Ministry of Health, Long-Term Care Division provides partial funding for Homemaking for up to four hours a week for each client and Respite Care for up to twelve hours a week for each client. SPRINT's Top-Up Home Care Services are not funded by the Ministry.

No one is refused SPRINT's Ministry of Health, Long-Term Care subsidized service because of inability to pay the fee. Please inquire about a subsidy.

Who Provides SPRINT's In-Home Services?

SPRINT's In-Home Services are provided by well-trained, screened and bonded Community Support Workers.

A recent client satisfaction survey indicated that 99% of SPRINT's Community Support Workers have earned a Personal Support Worker, Health Care Aide or Home Support Worker certificate from a college –based program. They are trained to understand the physical and emotional needs of aging adults and respond to the needs of their caregivers.

To find out more about SPRINT, contact them at:

Phone: (416) 481-6411

Fax: (416) 481-9829

Email: homemaking@sprint-homecare.ca

Website: www.sprint-homecare.ca

Mail: 140 Merton Street, 2nd floor
Toronto, Ontario M4S 1A1

Chef's Corner

Chocolate Milk French Toast

(The Canadian Press)

Ingredients;

250 ml (1 cup) chocolate milk

4 eggs

1 small banana

30 ml (2tbsp) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed

6 slices of 1 cm (1/2 inch) thick day-old bread

Butter

Maple syrup

Cocoa for garnish (if desired)

Method:

- Combine first four ingredients in blender. Blend at high speed until smooth. Pour over bread slices in large shallow pan. Turn slices of bread over once; cover and refrigerate 1 hour or until liquid is absorbed.
- Melt a small amount of butter in frying pan. Cook bread slices until golden brown on both sides; add more butter to pan as needed. Serve with maple syrup and cocoa (if desired). Serves 6.

CILT is a non-profit resource organization, consumer-controlled and community based. CILT is funded through the United Way, City of Toronto grants, Federal and based. CILT is funded through the United Way, City of Toronto grants, Federal and Provincial government grants, donations, earned income and membership support.

CILT is a consumer-controlled, community-based resource organization. We help people with disabilities to learn Independent Living skills and integrate into the community. (Please note: CILT is a resource agency and does not do any political, systemic or group advocacy!)

CILT operates on the philosophy of the Independent Living movement which was developed in response to traditional rehabilitation services models. CILT's aim is to develop and implement dignified social services that empower individuals rather than create dependencies. We encourage people with disabilities to take control of their own lives by exercising their right to examine options, make choices, take risks and even make mistakes.

CILT is one of 25 members of the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) and one of 10 members of the Ontario Network of Independent Living Centres (ONILC).

CILT is also unique in that a majority of Board and staff positions must be held by persons with a disability, thus ensuring that the service is directed and controlled by the consumer.