



# RENEWNEWS

*RENEW helps people who juggle work, family and community commitments sustain (or regain) their enthusiasm, effectiveness and purpose*



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## Juggling

Everyone juggles every day.

You just don't have the time to keep all the balls in the air all the time. Furthermore, some balls are glass; some balls are rubber. Glass balls will shatter if you drop them; rubber balls will bounce. Step one in juggling is to decide which ball is which. Your values and relationships tend to be glass balls; errands and chores tend to be rubber.

Margaret is a physical therapist in an ICU for sick babies, NICU ("NICK-U") as it's called. Some babies stay in the NICU for just a few days or weeks; the sickest ones may stay for months.

Margaret describes this world as one in which hopes run as high as the fears and tensions. All the time. The babies are fragile fighters and may take a long time to grow, mature, and repair. Nurses, doctors, PT's, respiratory therapists and parents work and try as hard as the babies do for their survival. Sometimes the grownups start to feel comfortable and confident, yet crisis can hit fast. Hopes are dashed. Guilt, sorrow, tensions and work spike and overflow. NICU staff – and the parents – somehow have to bounce back to keep going. They need to recover and to regain some equilibrium.

Recently, Margaret took on the assignment to design a retreat for staff. She decided that her message would be how to bounce back; how to be resilient. She needed to find a hook. She had heard a RENEW presentation a few months before and was captivated by both the message and the hook: resilience and juggling.

Margaret wrote her script and then, the night before the program, went to YouTube's videos and learned how to juggle! (Perhaps Margaret, as a PT, is more coordinated than most of us.) I asked what she practiced with. She said, "Tennis balls, of course. It was easy. You start with two and go from there. If you drop a ball, you pick it up, and dust it off. You figure out how to do it better and you keep on going."

Maybe that's the message: start with two. Your resilience starts with being in touch with two kinds of glass balls, your values and your relationships. And you go from there. You practice by saying "No" to distractions or overload that take your focus away from keeping your eye on the prize. Like any good juggler, you chase the balls that get away, snag them, polish them, and keep on going. It can be done, if not overnight like Margaret did.

How did Margaret's retreat go? NICU staff learned new real juggling techniques. They also learned how resilience could become part of their every-day *and* crisis repertoires. They learned they could pick themselves and their clients up after disappointments or struggles and keep on going.

2300 California Street ~ Suite 202 ~ San Francisco, CA 94115

Ph: 415-600-3321 ~ Fax: 415-456-9644 ~ [Linda.clever@ucsf.edu](mailto:Linda.clever@ucsf.edu) ~ [www.renewnow.org](http://www.renewnow.org) ~ RENEW © 2013

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## RENEW Programs are Big in Texas

The schedule was not only BIG; it was *packed*. The four Chief Residents in Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine Houston invited Linda to be their visiting professor. Five RENEWing gatherings packed into two days for four hospitals proved how expansive Texas can be. Residents, faculty, students, and nurse leaders joined lively discussions about how to expand your time and effectiveness; making smart decisions; staying at



the top of your game; leadership; and resilience. One nurse leader said, “Dr. Clever’s session was awesome and very much needed. Thank you for caring about meeting the needs of nurses!”

A physician commented, “Dr. Clever reminded me of the power of humor to lighten the load. She also reminded me that I cannot take care of others to my best capacity if I am neglecting my own basic needs.”

All thanks to RENEW’s enthusiastic donors for closing the Baylor budget gap so RENEW could renew deep in the heart of Texas.

## Marin County Health & Human Services

Long-time donor Ken Drexler has given a practical and inspiring gift to the Social Services Division: RENEWing! For starters, we held a day-long retreat on the campus of the not-for-profit Homeward Bound for the leaders and staff of Public Assistance, Public Guardian, Employment & Training, Children & Family Services, and Aging & Adult Services. More programs are in the works. When asked how our RENEW program might affect how they lead, one person answered, “I need to say ‘no’ more often, work towards achievable amounts of unity, and manage my resources to play the cards I’m dealt.”

## RENEW Board News

Meet RENEW’s newest board member, Dennis Patterson, D.Ed: Dennis is Chair of Verras, Ltd., a company that provides continuous quality improvement techniques for hospitals and medical staffs. This matches groups of patients with appropriate medical services and assures the best results.

Dennis says he joined the RENEW board, “Because I believe it is vital to balance the needs of health care professionals so they can have productive careers, and also live as vital community members, and family members. I have been in health care for over 35 years and have seen the toll it has taken on personal lives. RENEW helps people see that a career is only one aspect of a successful life, and the individual’s need to constantly ‘renew’ that personal life.”

Eliza Lo Chin, MD, RENEW board member and new Executive Director of the American Medical Women’s Association said, “As a health care professional, I see firsthand how the problem of burnout can take a heavy toll on providers both personally and professionally. RENEW helps prevent this by helping people reconnect with their core values and giving them permission to take care of themselves. Your donations help maintain this important work especially for companies with limited financial resources.”