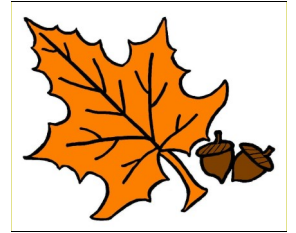


RENEWNEWS

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



VOLUME XIX ISSUE TWO

WINTER 2015

Staying at the Top of Your Game by Linda Hawes Clever, MD

New Zealand is more than kiwis and lamb chops. Recently, researchers there have defined “flourishing,” which they say includes positive relationships, engagement, meaning and self-esteem.

Years ago, Eric Weiner *et al* outlined five practices that can lead to flourishing: Having strong relationships ~ Having an active religious and/or spiritual life ~ Taking care of yourself ~ Liking your work ~ Believing that you can play the hand that’s dealt you.

Starting at the top, family and friends are usually your *strongest relationships*. As one wag said, “Family and deep-rooted friends will be with you even when they would rather be anywhere else.” This puts sustaining healthy relationships high on your To-Do List. One successful way to stay connected is to plan the next meeting with your family and friends before you wind up the current one.

Religion and *spirituality* overlap. Rabbi Eric Weiss notes that *religions* name their awe (the Buddha, the Prophet, Zoraster, Jesus) and usually have protocols and ceremonies. *Spirituality* is that transfixing wonder at the miracles of the world that stop you in your tracks. Lives buoyed by a strong sense of religion and/or spirituality require, in part, knowing and living your values, your judgements about what is good and bad, right and wrong. Living your values brings meaning and joy. That’s flourishing!

Taking care of yourself often means taking your mother’s advice: practice moderation; eat nutritious food; get exercise. You also keep health screenings and immunizations up to date and get professional help if you need it. You make sure you have plenty of fun.

Although *work* can be rewarding in many ways, it is not utopia. Staying at the top of your game requires questioning from time to time: Do you enjoy the people around you? ~ Do they respect and use your talents? ~ Do you have enough space, mentoring, and opportunities to learn? If not, consider a change or an exit plan.

Fifth, people who flourish are able to *play the hand that’s dealt them* – even if it’s a bad hand. This does not mean having unbridled optimism. This means having the conviction that you can make it through, no matter what. To do so, you may have to activate your sense of humor and lower your expectations. If that doesn’t work, consider lowering your standards. (The house doesn’t have to be broom-clean; just clean enough so the health department isn’t called. . .)

Any time of year is a great time to be at the top of your game, to contribute, accomplish, celebrate and play. This holiday season is an especially good time to flourish. Cheers!

RENEW & Medical Associations

In September, Ventura County and Fresno-Madera Medical Societies held annual meetings two weeks apart. Each invited Linda to do afternoon workshops, “*Weathering the Perfect Storm: Life Preservers for Leaders*”, for officers, committee chairs and senior staff. The evening/dinner keynote, “*Staying Sane, Satisfied and Effective in Medicine & Life*” was for members and spouses/partners. After one dinner event a physician said, “*My wife [also an MD] made me attend, but now I see the value, and I think I may sign up for Medical Society membership.*” Score!: the next day he did.



RENEW & Stanford

Our collaboration with Stanford’s Health Improvement Program continues. We are just wrapping up three Be Well programs for the fall quarter — including a webinar. The Graduate School of Business, hearing about RENEW’s Be Well program at the Stanford Linear Accelerator, requested a mid-December “*Vitality 101*” to give everyone a boost before the holidays. Come winter, we will offer a 4-session “*This One’s for You!*” Conversation Group© during which topics will range from setting and keeping priorities and making smart decisions, to building and keeping strong, healthy relationships.

RENEW & Kaiser Permanente

This fall’s Kaiser Permanente’s Women in Technology webinar featured Linda in a national exchange of information, questions and answers. Soon thereafter, Kaiser South San Francisco outpatient department managers requested “*This One’s for You: Recharge, Refresh, Renew*”. The Diablo Service Area’s New Physicians’ School has doubled its numbers and sessions as physician recruitment spurts in response to the Affordable Care Act. Thoughtful Kaiser physicians at their RENEW sessions over the past 15 years have offered these and other answers to the question: “What are the best pieces of advice you would give to a physician (or medical student) 5 years younger than you?”



- Get to know each other
- Follow your heart -- not the job market
- Follow what you enjoy -- not what professors/friends say
- Follow your dreams -- don’t compromise yours to please others
- “Later” never comes

RENEW & Leadership

Successful organizations need excellent leaders. In addition to passion, vision, talent and learned skills, what helps keep them at the top of their game? RENEWing! With RENEWing knowledge, leaders can have the vitality they need to be effective in *life*, not just work. Earlier RENEW keynotes and retreats with both Leadership America and the Center for Excellence in Nonprofits [CEN] have paved the way for exciting collaborations in 2016. We will be heading up two Executive Round Tables with CEN in the spring and, should fundraising allow, a series of conferences in Washington, DC, New Orleans and Phoenix for Leadership American. CEN referred us to the Fremont Chamber of Commerce’s Nonprofit Council, which scheduled a 2016 program.