



# RENEWNEWS

*RENEW Brings good health  
to those who give good health*



VOLUME XLII ISSUE ONE

Summer 2025

## HOPE IS SOMETHING WE DO Linda Hawes Clever, MD, MACP

Emily Dickinson wrote,

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all - ...

Although I do not always understand Dickinson, I do know that hope, while able to travel far, also stays within us. Hope can lift and warm us.

Ideas about hope have a long history. Plato saw both negative (hope is for the gullible) and positive (anticipating pleasure) elements in hope. Aristotle pointed out that hopefulness can lead to confidence and courage. The Stoic, Seneca, was not enthusiastic about hope. He coupled hope with fear, believing that both of them shackle a person to anxiety rather than allowing them to adapt to the present and develop peace and calm.

More recently, philosophers and researchers suggest that some people are simply wired to be hopeful. Others become mired in false hopes that waste time and effort. For some, layers of recurring trouble have suffocated hope before it had a chance to grow feathers. Others are baffled into paralysis. Some are exhausted.

In tough situations, hope is valuable. As Dickinson said, it sings and it comforts us. Hope can be fuel. With overuse or without a goal, however, hope can dwindle. The 17<sup>th</sup> century philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon said, “Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper.”

The thing is, hope is not just a concept. It is a *project*. Hope requires action.

Poet Rosemary Wahlotra Trommer observed how hope can move us ahead:

Hope’s secret – It doesn’t know  
the destination – it knows only  
that all roads – begin with one  
foot in front of the other.

One guy tried another kind of action when he needed money. He hoped to win the Lottery using prayer. He prayed and prayed, each time citing a good reason why he needed to win: “Pay the rent” “Fix the car” “Take care of my medical bills.” Finally, after the third fervent request, a blazing light filled the sky and a thundering voice shook the land saying, “Buy a ticket!” Prayer wasn’t quite enough action.

The Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, Nicholas Kristof, nailed hope’s process in his memoir, *Chasing Hope*. He recalls the tragedies and catastrophes he witnessed, from his home town friends to Darfur. He points out that some people misperceive that “hope is a naive faith that things will somehow work out. *No, hope is a strategy to follow evidence and achieve the better outcomes that are possible if you work at it.*”

Making hope come true takes organizing: check out your values, formulate a goal, gather information, make some plans, gather allies and start small. Small steps then multiply and become bigger, making more and bigger steps, showing up and standing up time and again.

Hope is vision tethered to facts, effort and courage. Hope is belief turned into work. It is not just something we have.

Hope is something we do, often together. Hope is a verb.

## THE REVEAL: COMMENTS FROM A LEADER ON WHY AND HOW HE RENEWEd

A director of dining services, who has worked for eight years at a residence for elders and manages a team of 60 that prepares over 1,000 meals daily, attended three RENEW seminars. Interviewed by Brittany Imwalle, RENEW Board member, he said, “Working in senior living is rewarding but incredibly demanding. The seminars offered something different: a space to reflect personally and professionally.

“I first heard about RENEW when our Executive Director invited all the department heads to seminars with Dr. Clever. The topic of ‘healing fatigue’ caught my attention immediately because, let’s be honest, this work can be exhausting.

“What stuck with me the most was the focus on personal renewal and resilience. I didn’t realize how close I was to burnout. You just go-go-go, and then one day you snap or bring stress home to your family and think, “What am I doing?” The seminar helped me step back and think about setting boundaries, taking care of myself, and reconnecting with the little things that bring joy — even if it’s just listening to music or watching a movie. It made me reflect not only as a manager but also as a person.

“I’ve become more intentional with how I lead. I encourage my team to take their breaks, use their PTO, and check in when something seems off. We’ve created a more open, supportive environment. People are happier and more productive because they feel seen and valued. I’ve also learned to delegate more — which honestly has made us more efficient overall.

“About *The Fatigue Prescription*: I especially like the part about modeling wellness. It’s one thing to say, take care of yourself,’ but if I’m not doing that too, it doesn’t land. I also appreciated the reminder that it’s okay to mess up or have ‘off ‘days — the key is being able to reset and keep going. That long-term mindset stuck with me.

“RENEW opened up communication between departments and helped create more understanding. We’re better at giving and receiving feedback now — less defensive, more constructive. It helped us connect as people, not just coworkers.

When asked “What makes Dr. Clever’s approach so effective?”, he said, “She’s just a real, approachable person. No judgment. She listens, she understands, and she connects with everyone in the room. That made a big difference — it wasn’t just another seminar. You could tell she genuinely cared.

“I’ve already talked to my regional director about that. I think directors across our company would benefit from this. It’s not just operations. It’s about taking a breath, reflecting, and becoming better at what we do by understanding ourselves first.

“RENEW helped me shift into a more empathetic, resilient style of leadership. It helped me see that when we care for ourselves, we show up better for others — and that impacts everything.”

## The RENEW Prescription

