

October is LGBT History Month!

By Dr. Margaret Rea

This month's newsletter highlights October as LGBT History Month. The health and wellness of the LGBTQ+ community is of paramount



importance. Despite many positive changes in how members of the LGBTQ+ community are accepted and treated, they continue to face great challenges that affect both mental and physical health. The many events this month will help remind us of how far we still need to go as individuals and health sciences students and professionals to improve the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) presented important data regarding the mental health of the LGBTQ+ community:

LGBTQ individuals are almost 3 times more likely than others to experience a mental health condition such as major depression or generalized anxiety disorder. This fear of coming out and being discriminated against for sexual orientation and gender identities, can lead to depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, thoughts of suicide and substance abuse. LGBTQ people must confront stigma and prejudice based on their sexual orientation or gender identity while also dealing with the societal bias against mental health conditions. Some people report having to hide their

sexual orientation from those in the mental health system for fear of being ridiculed or rejected. Some hide their mental health conditions from their LGBTQ friends.

<https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/LGBTQ>.

The disturbing rates of mental health concerns, substance use, depression and suicide are stark reminders of how essential it is for all of us to guarantee that members of our community, our colleagues and our patients get access to care. Most specifically care that includes support and treatment by providers who are open and accepting to their sexual identity and gender. A recent piece, "Do We Ever Finish Coming Out?" by Dr. Edward J. Callahan, PhD, UC Davis Health Professor Emeritus of Family and Community Medicine, highlighted how patients can re-experience the potential challenge of coming out if they are faced with stigma and a lack of understanding and acceptance by their provider.

<http://improvingoutcomesconference.com/do-we-ever-finish-coming-out/>

It is critical this month, and always, that we do our best in our roles as students, clinicians, researchers and educators to ensure that we create a community where LGBTQ+ individuals feel fully accepted and have access to care for optimum physical and emotional health. Please take time to review the many links below that include information on important events for LGBTQ+ month as well as community resources that support the LGBTQ+ individuals and community.



Continues on page 2

Wellness Events

UC Davis Health Farmers Market

Ed Bldg. Outdoor Quad Thursdays 3 to 7:30 p.m.

Living Fit Forever Classes

http://intranet.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/clinops/resources/living_fit_forever.shtm

Work Life and Wellness Events

<http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/wellness/discounts.html>

UCDMC Yoga

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Gz23GMJbZJDI-wzn9g8NxUnia4lFuVsHah4ola-v7Ow0/edit#heading=h.ey7tt6v51js4>

Therapy Dogs Are Back

October 12th 2-4
Grassy Area in Front of CHT

"Mental Health and Well-being of Health Professions Students: Challenges and Opportunities"

October 20th, 5:30
Education Building Room 1222

Removing Stigma

Stephen Hinshaw, Ph.D., shares his family's journey with mental illness and his vision to remove the stigma.

<https://behavioralhealth.ucdavis.edu/events/flyers/hinshaw-flyer.pdf>

For example, stop by the Blaisdell Library where there will be a wide-arrange of books related to LGBTQ+ health, including clinical books, palliative and elder care, and children's books as well as the PRIDE coloring book developed by two bay area psychiatrists and includes affirmations and quotes with each page. This would be a great activity for students to stop by and take part in when they need a five minute meditation.

Here are two affirmations:

"I acknowledge that I don't have all the answers and I embrace myself as I am, knowing that the rest of my story has yet to unfold."

"Today I will acknowledge myself with love and I will show compassion to those who are not yet able to fully embrace themselves."

Resources:

A wonderful resource is the Improving OUTcomes site. Their blog describes many of the LGBTQ+ events this month as well as excellent resources including local and national mental health resources.

- <http://improvingoutcomesconference.com/lgbt-history-month/>
- <http://improvingoutcomesconference.com/health-resources/mental-health-resources/>

The LGBTQQIA+ and Resource Center on the Davis campus has an amazing website - lots of great community links and information, "The LGBTQIA+ Resource Center values and honors that we are complex, multifaceted, and whole indi-

viduals. The LGBTQIA+ Resource Center is a dynamic, responsive and collaborative organization that serves UC Davis and the surrounding region by providing a growing spectrum of programs, resources, outreach and advocacy." <http://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/>

Other Resources:

- Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion <https://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/diversity-inclusion/LGBTQI/events.html>
- Gender Health Center in Sacramento - medical/psychological resources for transgender folks. <http://www.thegenderhealthcenter.org/>
- PRIDE employee resource group- resources/support/advocacy for UCDH staff & faculty

The Gender and Sexual Diversity student interest group at the School of Medicine has been incredible in organizing events for LGBTQ+ History Month. Please take a moment to check out the link below for various events.

<http://improvingoutcomesconference.com/october-2017-lgbtq-history-month/>

Much thanks to the following who were so helpful in identifying the various LGBTQI+ resources and compiling the Newsletter:

*Estelle Dolan
M.D. Candidate, 2020
UC Davis School of Medicine*

*Shea Hazarain
Medical Student and Resident Program Coordinator
Office of Student and Resident Diversity*

*Paul David Terry, MNA
Editor, Improving OUTcomes Blog*

*Thank
You*

Wellness Tip: Mindfulness Meditation

A research study by Leuek and Gobson looked at the role of mindfulness meditation in reducing implicit age and race bias. They hypothesized that the mindfulness practice helped reduce automatic responses that are a central element of bias which is such a key issue for the LGBTQ+ community. The authors highlighted that, "mindfulness meditation may reduce these automatic processes which would be an important step toward reducing prejudice & discrimination. The mindfulness tradition is one in which everyone & everything are interconnected...the practice of mindfulness can help us overcome these automatic biases, then the words "We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness" (Thich Nhat Hanh, 2008) can become a reality. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1948550614559651>

The STOP acronym is one of the most well-known & cherished brief mindfulness practices to use during the day. It's super simple:

- S – Stop
- T – Take a breath
- O – Observe what's going on
- P – Proceed

This can be done any time during the day when you remember. You become aware of what's going on around you or inside of you, you ground yourself with some conscious breaths, & then you proceed with more clarity and from a place of choice.

Here are three wonderful ways to practice STOP in more depth: The ABCs of STOP—or practicing STOP for Awareness, Beauty, and Compassion:

STOP — A: STOP for awareness
Using the STOP practice to become fully aware of the present moment: What is going on in the body? The mind? The emotional field? Or asking yourself: What is out of my awareness right now? It can be as simple as noticing your brain is foggy after being on a conference call for two hours (& that you need a stretch break) or that you have been thinking about the upcoming teacher meeting all morning. Simply stop and take a breath.

STOP — B: STOP for beauty
Pause for a moment & notice something beautiful in your surroundings. It can literally be to "stop & smell the roses."

Use all of your senses to find something & then take it in for a breath or two. If that feels too big of a stretch you can ask yourself: "Ok, I know this is a stressful moment right now, but if there was something beautiful about it, what would it be?" Maybe then we notice the flowers on the table, which blend into the background when we are busy.

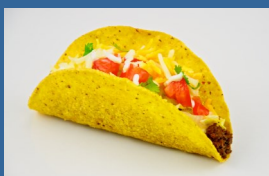
STOP — C: STOP for compassion
In a moment of stress or pain, practice STOP to open your heart to kindness & compassion. Compassion is a natural, caring response to suffering, big and small, in ourselves and in others. Sometimes the tug of compassion calls us to stop, at other times we need to stop and really take something in, so we can open the doors of the heart and invite compassion in. Maybe we are a little impatient with our child complaining at length about something that happened at recess. Maybe the adult brain doesn't see it as hurtful but stopping and truly listening might allow us to connect with the truth of her hurt and allow our heart to melt a little.

<https://www.mindful.org/abcs-stop-three-short-mindful-breaks-day/>

Monthly Recipe: Spicy Lentil Tacos

Leave it up to the fabulous Dr. Oliveira from the UC Davis Department of Integrative Medicine to alert us that October 4th is National Taco Day. In her blog this month, she noted that last year Americans ate as many as many as 4.5 billion tacos. "It is safe to say that the best way to celebrate National Taco Day is to eat a taco. And how about making that the healthiest version possible? We recommend our plant-based interpretation of the terrific taco called [Spicy Lentil Tacos](#).

<http://ucdintegrativemedicine.com/2017/10/the-terrific-taco/#gs=kzWyo4>



Wellness App: WellbeingApp

What's your Wellness Score? Take a Wellbeing Assessment & see which aspects of your lifestyle need some focus. Your Wellbeing score is calculated using an algorithm that takes into account a range of health, fitness & lifestyle issues including physical fitness, weight, stress, smoking, alcohol & sleep. The Wellbeing app then gives you all the tools, support & information you need to make positive changes – helping you to enhance your wellbeing, lead a healthier lifestyle & improve your Wellbeing Score. Main features include...Wellbeing Dashboard; Assessment; Goal Setting & Gamification; Logbook; Programs; Community; and Resources for you – Watch the latest Wellbeing videos, read articles, pick up tips & advice – enjoy rich multi-media content filtered & displayed according to your goals and interest. <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/wellbeingapp/id649808129?mt=8>