



Mental Health Association

of the Heartland

Advocacy, Education and Support in Kansas and Missouri
739 Minnesota Ave.
Kansas City, KS 66101

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The Mental Health Association

of the Heartland

Advocacy, Education and Support in Kansas and Missouri

NEWS

Winter/Spring 2006

(January/February/March)

Issue 1

Get Ready for Mental Health Month in May

Finding Your Balance: At Work and Home

For a lot of people, the pursuit of a healthy work/life balance seems like an impossible goal. With so many of us torn between juggling heavy workloads, managing relationships and family responsibilities, and squeezing in outside interests, it's no surprise that more than one in four Americans describe themselves as "super stressed." And that's not balanced—or healthy.

In our rush to "get it all done" at the office and at home, it's easy to forget that as our stress levels spike, our productivity plummets. Stress can zap our concentration, make us irritable or depressed, and harm our personal and professional relationships.

Over time, stress also weakens our immune systems, and makes us susceptible to a variety of ailments from colds to backaches to heart disease. The newest research shows that chronic stress can actually double our risk of having a heart attack. That statistic alone is enough to raise your blood pressure!

While we all need a certain amount of stress to spur us on and help us perform at our best, the key to managing stress lies in that one magic word: balance. Not only is achieving a healthy work/life balance an attainable goal but workers and businesses alike see the rewards. When workers are balanced and happy, they are more productive, take fewer sick days, and are more likely to stay in their jobs.

Here are a few practical steps we can all take to loosen the grip that stress has on us and win back the balance in our lives. Read on and reap the benefits.

At Work

Set manageable goals each day. - Being able to meet priorities gives a sense of accomplishment and control. The more control we have over our work, the less stressed we get. Have realistic workloads and deadlines. Make a "to do" list, and take care of important tasks first and eliminate unessential ones. Ask for help when necessary.

Be efficient with your time at work. - When we procrastinate, the task often grows in our minds until it seems insurmountable. When you face a big project at work or home, divide it into smaller tasks and complete the first one before moving on to the next. Give yourself rewards upon each completed task. If you feel overwhelmed tell your boss. The less time you spend doing busy work or procrastinating, the more time you can spend productively, or with friends or family.

Ask for flexibility. - Flex-time and telecommuting are quickly becoming established as necessities in today's business world, and many companies are drafting work/life policies. Employees who work flexible schedules are more productive and loyal to their employers.

Take five. - Taking a break at work is acceptable and is encouraged by many employers. Small breaks will help clear your head, improve your ability to deal with stress and make good decisions.

Tune in. - Listen to music at work to foster concentration, reduce stress and anxiety, and stimulate creativity.

Communicate effectively. - Be honest with colleagues when you feel you're in a bind. Chances are, you're not alone. Looking at a situation from someone else's viewpoint can also reduce your stress. In a tense situation, either rethink your strategy or stand your ground, calmly and rationally. Make allowances for other opinions, and compromise. Retreat before you lose control, and allow time for all involved to cool off. You'll be better equipped to handle the problem constructively later.

Give yourself a break. - No one's perfect! Just do the best you can.

At Home

Turn off your PDA or Cell phone. - The same technology that makes it so easy for workers to do their jobs flexibly can also burn us out if we use them 24/7. Make yourself available, but recognize the need for personal time, too.

Divide and conquer. - Responsibilities at home should be evenly distributed and clearly outlined.

Don't over commit. - If you're over-scheduled with activities, learn to say, "no." Shed the superwoman/superman urge!

Get support. - Chatting with friends and family is important to your success at and can even improve your health. People with stronger support systems have more aggressive immune responses to illnesses than those who lack such support.

Take advantage of your company's Employee Assistance Program. - Many organizations offer resources through an

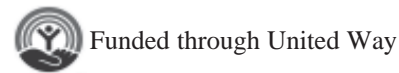
EAP, which can save you precious time by providing guidance on issues like where to find a daycare center and caretaking for an elderly parent, as well as referrals to mental health and other services.

Stay active. - Regular exercise reduces stress, depression and anxiety, and enables people to better cope with adversity. Make time in your schedule for the gym or to take a walk during lunch—and have some fun!

Treat your body right. - Being in good shape physically increases your tolerance to stress and reduces sick days. Eat right, exercise and get adequate rest.

Get help if you need it. - Don't let stress stand in the way of your health and happiness. If you are persistently overwhelmed, it may be time to seek help from a mental health professional. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness—taking care of yourself is a sign of strength.

For more information on where to get help or how to reduce stress in the workplace, please contact your human resources director or Mental Health Association of the Heartland at (913) 281-2221 or info@mhah.org or visit our website at www.mhah.org



Mental Health Association of the Heartland Needs You!

Reasons To Become a MHAH Member:

- **Your** membership will add to the strength of our advocacy voice with City, State and National Governments.
- **Your** membership donation provide essential unrestricted money to MHAH, which we can allocate to any program as needed.
- **Your** membership donation is tax deductible.

By supporting Mental Health Association of the Heartland:

- **You** help to improve access to comprehensive mental health care;
- **You** help to fight stigma;
- **You** help to increase public awareness of mental health issues;
- **You** help to implement proven programs to increase mental health in the Kansas City Metro area;
- **You** help to empower mental health consumers.

If you would like to add your voice to the many who are already MHAH members, complete the form below and send in with your payment to: Mental Health Association of the Heartland, 739 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, KS 66101.

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I wish to remain Anonymous You may publish my name in your Newsletter and Annual Report

Member \$35.00-\$49.00 **Bronze Bell** \$50.00-\$99.00 **Silver Bell** \$100-\$249.00 **Gold Bell** \$250.00 and up

We have many ways that you can help MHAH in addition to becoming a member:

- **Memorial Gifts** - A personal remembrance that honors the life of a friend or relative—our kindred spirits. A wonderful way to remember and pay tribute to our loved ones, and to reach out to others in need by supporting MHAH's work.
- **Honorary Gifts** - A wonderful way to celebrate a special occasion or to honor the accomplishments of someone close to you.
- **Donating items** - Donating items to MHAH. Donations are tax deductible. (For a list of items needed, contact Ann Jones (913) 281-2221, ext. 125)
- **Gifts of Stock** - Increase your tax savings and support MHAH.
- **Planned or Estate Giving** - Planned gifts can benefit MHAH while helping you to save taxes, increase your income and pass more on to your heirs.

For more information, please contact Ann Jones at (913) 281-2221, ext. 125 or e-mail ajones@mhah.org.

Our Mission

Mental Health Association of the Heartland is dedicated to promoting the mental health of the community, and improving the lives of persons with mental illness, through advocacy, education and support.

From the desk of the President/CEO



Susan Crain Lewis,
President/CEO

It always feels like the first three months of the year at Mental Health Association of the Heartland are focused on planning and firming up plans and partnerships for the year. I am very excited about several new continuing partnerships that are highlighted in this edition of the newsletter.

First and foremost, I am excited about our new board members, Bill Hankins, Katie McCune and Lorraine Murray. They have pledged their time, energy, skills and vision to help guide and oversee our efforts as the agency prepares to enter its 10th year of operation.

Second, this year's Children's Mental Health Conference promises to be exceptional event. This is due in no small part, to partnerships forged by Shellie Arriaga, Director, Mental Health Promotion with HomeFront, Kansas Psychological Association, Attach Association, and the Family Conservancy. These new partnerships enhances our long-standing relationships with the Wyandotte County Children's Services Coordinating Council, Wyandot Center for Community Behavioral Healthcare Inc. and Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. We hope you'll join us May 11th-12th for this important event.

Also, in the area of children's mental health, we have expanded our involvement with "Empowering Our Children" – Kansas City's only live radio talk show focusing on children's issues by joining their board. We hope you will tune in to AM 1510 on Tuesday afternoons!

No list of continuing partnerships would be complete without noting our long standing collaboration with the Kansas City Depressive and Bipolar Support Alliance. We work with DBSA to bring you the Making the Most of Your Mental Illness Series. I must also recognize the many consumers, consumer run organizations and community mental health centers who keep the Compassionate Ear WarmLine the vital support service that its been since 1999.

Finally, I must recognize the partnership we have with our National Mental Health Association, and our 340 "sister" affiliates across the United States with whom we share ideas, resources and observances with these organizations in order to promote mental health and improve quality of life in all our communities.

We are all part of bigger things and are all interconnected often in ways of which we aren't aware. If you or your organization would like to explore, develop, strengthen or expand a partnership with Mental Health Association of the Heartland, please contact our office at (913) 281-2221 or e-mail slewis@mhah.org – Together we make a difference.

Susan Crain Lewis, President/CEO

2006 Board of Directors

- Phil Chiles, President
- Lee Rathbone-McCuan, Chair-Elect
- Cathy Nix, Treasurer
- Delois Tucker, Secretary
- Tracey Blaylock
- Gary Evert
- Bill Hankins
- Terry Harbert, MSW
- Katie McCune
- Lorraine Murray
- Sue Parkman-Haynes
- Richard Vogel

Up Coming Events and News

- April** National Autism Awareness Month
- April 17th - 23rd** National Volunteer Week
- April 18th** Empowering Our Children - Topic: Autism/Asperger Syndrome
- April 25th** Empowering Our Children - Topic: Bi-Polar Disorder
- May** Mental Health Awareness Month
- May 3rd** National Anxiety Disorders Screening Day - www.freedomfromfear.org
- May 7th - 13th** Children's Mental Health Week - www.ffcmh.org
- May 9th** Empowering Our Children - Topic: Success with Dyslexia
- May 11th - 12th** Children & Resiliency Conference - www.mhah.org
- May 16th** Empowering Our Children - Topic: Psychiatric Medication
- May 17th** National Employee Health & Fitness Day
- May 17th - 23rd** National Volunteer Week
- May 21st - 27th** Older Americans' Mental Health Week - www.owl-national.org
- May 22nd - 28th** Schizophrenia Awareness Week
- May 25, 2006** Making the Most of Your Mental Illness Series: Increasing Your Self-Esteem by Recognizing Your Strengths and Weaknesses
- June 8th - 10th** NMHA's Annual Meeting " Building the Movement" in Washington D.C. - www.nmha.org

Mental Health Association of the Heartland Welcomes New Board Members



Left to Right: Terry Harbert, 2005 Board President; Lorraine Murray, KU Medical Center; Bill Hankins, Adamson and Associates; Katie McCune, Bank of America; and Susan Crain Lewis, President/CEO

Empowering Our Children

Mental Health Association of the Heartland has partnered with a new educational foundation, Empowering Our Children, Inc. **Empowering Our Children**™ is an hour-long, interactive psychology call in show on KCTE AM 1510 in the Kansas City Metro area, KXAM AM 1310 in the Independence area and KCTA AM 1320 on the central coast of California (Ventura).

Tuesdays between 3- 4 p.m. Dr. Stephen Blum interviews Child Mental Health Experts. Listeners are invited to phone or e-mail their questions to 1-866-811-7011 or (913) 491-TALK (8255) or e-mail empowering@1510.com

Some of the topics discussed include:

- Attention Deficit /Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism/Asperger's Syndrome
- Eating Disorders
- Bullying, Learning Difficulties
- Anxiety Disorders
- Oppositional Defiant Disorder

The goal is to provide useful information about the behavioral, emotional, social, and neurological difficulties that children face. Learn what you, as a parent or caregiver can do to help.

Stephen H. Blum, Ph.D., graduated from the University of Tennessee with a Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Clinical Psychology from The Menninger Clinic. Dr. Blum has offices in Kansas City and Topeka for the past 25 years. He specializes in child and adolescent behavior disorders, anxiety disorders, and chronic pain conditions.

For a complete program list and information on Empowering Our Children, please visit their website at www.empoweringourchildren.org.

If you would like to order a compact disc copy of any show send check or money order for \$20.00 per show to: Empowering Our Children, Inc. P.O. Box 1413, Overland Park, KS 66222-1413.



Shellie Arriaga, Director
Mental Health Promotion

Making the Most of your Mental Illness Series...

This series of workshops and seminars is sponsored by the Mental Health Association of the Heartland and The Depressive Bipolar Support Alliance Greater Kansas City.

Each session provides up-to-date information and resources that encourage wellness and recovery. The series is designed for individuals with a diagnosed mental health problem, their families, significant others, care providers and health care professionals.

CEU certificates are available to professionals at \$10.00 per workshop/seminar. Workshop/seminar location is the Old Mission United Methodist Church at 5519 State Park Rd., Fairway, KS 66205 from 7:00-8:30 PM. The following sessions have been scheduled for the next few months:

Series 3: Intra-Personal Development

May 25, 2006 - Increasing Your Self-Esteem by Recognizing Your Strengths and Weaknesses

July 27, 2006 - Enhancing Your Life by Balancing Your Mental Health

Look for next quarter's schedule in the Spring/Summer newsletter, or on our website www.mhah.org.

For registration and CEU information, contact Shellie Arriaga, Director, Mental Health Promotion at (913) 281-2221 ext.112 or sarriaga@mhah.org.

Do you have a Compassionate Ear?



Petra Robinson, Coordinator
Compassionate Ear

- Are you a mental health consumer?
- Have you been told you are a great listener and an understanding & empathetic person?
- Have you been told you have a pleasant voice and a courteous manner?
- Do you find yourself supporting people who are experiencing stress, loneliness, sadness, anger, or who just want to share a moment with you?

If you can answer **YES** to these questions, **COMPASSIONATE EAR NEEDS YOU!!**

Compassionate Ear is a support project operated and designed to give people emotional support and friendship during times when they experience difficulty with loneliness, the stress of daily living, or with just needing somebody who has been where they are to listen and give extra support to make it through the rough moments. Compassionate Ear operates from 5:00 to 10:00 pm, 365 days a year.

You can volunteer as a Compassionate Ear operator from your own home. During your shift, calls from the line will be forwarded to your home phone.

If this program sounds like a match for you, call Petra Robinson by phone: (913) 281-2221, ext 114 or e-mail: probinson@mhah.org.

Save These Dates!

MAY 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Children & Resiliency

Nurturing Our Children's Mental Health

Conference Topics

- Legal Issues
- Attachment Disorder
- Therapeutic Intervention
- Brain Development & Optimal Learning
- Parent-Focused Issues

May 11 & 12
Jack Reardon
Convention Center
Kansas City, KS

CLE, CME, CNE, APA CEU's Available

Exhibitors Welcome

For Information: Contact the MHA of the Heartland at 913-281-2221, ext. 130, or www.mhah.org.

Advocacy, Education and Support to Kansas and Missouri

The Best Connection to Better Parenting