

Winter 2018

Mental Health. California

AWARDS DINNER

HIGHLIGHTS

CALIFORNIA CHAMPIONS
OF MENTAL HEALTH

*Charity Awards
Dinner and Jazz
Concert*

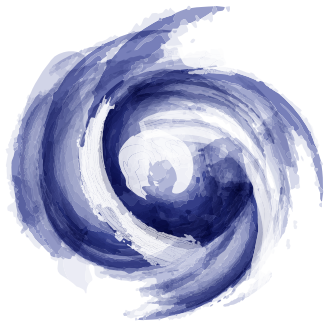
News
by the
National
Institutes
of Health

CALIFORNIA REDUCING
DISPARITIES PROJECT

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS KILHAM

The Medicine Hunter

3 Foods
That Boost
MENTAL HEALTH
Seasonal Goodness
Brain Healthy
Snacks



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Reducing health disparities
in California
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Self Care in the New Year

Tips & Reminders

by Laura Graves, Ph.D.

AS WE BEGIN THE NEW YEAR, WE MAY CONSIDER MAKING SELF-CARE RESOLUTIONS. SO OFTEN, WE'RE LEFT BEHIND BY OUR BUSY SCHEDULES AND CARING FOR OTHERS. PLACING A PRIORITY ON ONESELF IS ONE OF THE KEYS TO WELLNESS WITH LASTING BENEFITS.



Set Values-Based Goals

One of the biggest challenges with resolutions is they tend to be absolute and lofty. This can lead to feelings of failure. Set yourself up for success with values-based goals and measurable benchmarks. For example, if your values-based goal is better health, commit to one vegetarian meal each week and 30-minutes of activity three times per week.

Make Habits, Not Resolutions

When you slowly introduce a new habit, it is easier to maintain change. So, commit to making self-care habits. Research shows it takes an average of 66-days to form a new habit, which is more easily attainable when paired with something you already do. For example, if you want to start practicing daily meditation, pair it with another daily activity - perhaps an end of the workday wind-down, to clear your mind.

Practice Self-Compassion

Many people devote mental space and time to self-imposed high-expectations, and self-defeating thoughts, when they are inevitably imperfect. Improve self-care by

improving your thoughts. Make expectations reasonable and in line with what you really want. Give yourself encouragement and self-compassion just like you would do for a good friend.

Treat Yourself Well

Everyone has basic needs including food, water, sleep, and shelter. Attend to your needs as a part of your self-care. Beyond that, people need quality alone time, connection to others, and a sense of self-accomplishment. Keep these in balance. Pay attention to what you need, and assert your needs for work-life balance as part of your self-care plan.

Be Present with Mindfulness

No matter what new self-care habits you aim to develop, the best self-care comes from being mentally present. Research shows many people miss out on life by being more focused on their thoughts (and worries) than the world around them. Research also shows mindfulness practices, such as meditation, can help you to be more present and happier in your life.



**Keep going for
brighter days.**

We are proud to sponsor Mental Health California™ in their efforts to educate Californians on health and mental wellness.



11 Surprising Reasons You Should Smile
Every Day from the Huffington Post

SMILE

Mental Health California Magazine™

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Founder's Note



In this issue, we're also fortunate to hear from international expert, Chris Kilham, the Medicine Hunter, on so many great topics related to plant-based medicine and holistic wellness. My interview with Chris was fascinating, and we will keep you apprised of future involvements with the Medicine Hunter.

There is quite a bit of fascination within the intersection of mind-body-spirit. We've been hearing about this for quite a long time, but it's like one of Oprah's "aha moments" when we begin to really understand these connections, and how they are absolutely essential to one another. Health, mental health, nutrition, sleep, meditation, mindfulness, exercise, joy, purpose, connection to spirit - are all there working together. By being active participants in our own health and wellness, we can learn on a much deeper and more personal level, which can pave ways for new discoveries in our wellness that lead to higher ground.

Often, I gently relay to people that doctors and clinicians are not "mind readers". From the outside, they may have some semblance of what might be a problem, but they really need for us to meet them half-way. This is where we come in. This is where we can help practitioners find solutions for us - individuals who are unique in our makeup and life experiences. After all, life's inevitable health-related bumps will chase us silently or out loud, so it's best to be prepared if at all possible.

One of our featured writers, Katie Conibear, seems to have mastered this. She suffers from bipolar disorder and also hears voices. She has taken it upon herself to learn as

much as she can about her disorder, so she can participate as a partner in her personal treatment plan. She's also a blogger who uses that platform to express herself when she cannot do so directly with family or friends. Katie is an example we can all follow on our personal journey to wellness.

In this issue, we're also fortunate to hear from international expert, Chris Kilham, the Medicine Hunter, on so many great topics related to plant-based medicine and holistic wellness. My interview with Chris was fascinating, and we will keep you apprised of future involvements with the Medicine Hunter. Also, look for articles on depression and vitamin therapy, exercise and mental health, additional mental health and nutrition topics, a review of our mental health awards dinner, and get policy and program updates for information and sharing.

Thanks for your partnership, and have a wonderful, mindful, cozy winter.

Kristene (K.N.) Smith
Founder & CEO

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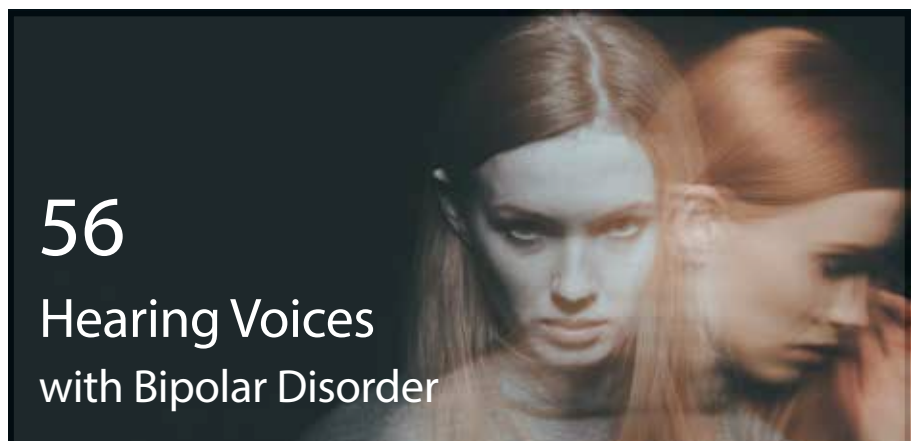
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PLAY

RETREAT



Places to Go for Inner Peace

OBSERVE





Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

San Francisco, California



Wm. Jahmal Miller, MHA
Deputy Director
Office of Health Equity
California Department of Public Health

California Reducing Disparities Project

THE OFFICE OF HEALTH EQUITY (OHE), CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, IS LED AND MANAGED BY ONE OF CALIFORNIA'S MOST VISIONARY LEADERS IN THE AREAS OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES: DEPUTY DIRECTOR, WM. JAHMAL MILLER, MHA.

With multi-cultural, multi-community outreach and engagement as a central focus of the OHE, it forges new territory while remaining strategically informed by the work of an advisory committee. Additional input fuels this important work through stakeholder meetings that welcome new perspectives on these critical matters. It's groundbreaking



work to address health and mental health disparities in underserved populations has emerged through the California Reducing Disparities Project (funded by Prop. 63, the California Mental Health Services Act), a multi-year, statewide initiative. The OHE has also produced an impactful and masterful report: Portrait of Promise, which provides a deep and comprehensive overview of the state's plan to promote health and mental health equity.

Deputy Director Miller, who in his essence lives the goal of equality for all Californians and beyond, has positioned these important projects for success, and to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable populations across the state.

Critical questions from the Office of Health Equity's website:

What are health and mental health disparities?

Health and mental health disparities are differences in health and mental health status among distinct segments of the population, including differences that occur by gender, age, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, education or income, disability or functional impairment, or geographic location, or the combination of any of these factors.

Why is it so important to address health and mental health inequities?

Inequities in health status are quite literally a matter of life and death, shown by differences in death rates and life expectancy among the state's most vulnerable populations. Similar gaps among population groups exist for numerous chronic health conditions that drive the disparities in death rates. Beyond the moral case for addressing inequity, there is also a strong economic argument. Reducing health inequities will yield

savings in health care costs. A study in 2011 estimated that more than 30 percent of direct medical costs faced by African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans were excess costs due to health inequities – more than \$230 billion over a three-year period, plus indirect costs of \$1 trillion in lower workplace productivity due to associated illness and premature death. That three-year total of “excess costs” due to health disparities is equal to approximately half the total of all U.S. health care spending.



Beyond the moral case for addressing inequity, there is also a strong economic argument. Reducing health inequities will yield savings in health care costs.

We salute the excellent work of Deputy Director Miller and his staff. For more information, meeting schedules, and to support the work of the OHE, please visit: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OHE/Pages/OfficeHealthEquity.aspx>.

Community Resources

MHSA-Funded County Behavioral
Health Programs

Provided by NAMI California

Los Angeles County

Older Adults Field Capable Clinical Services

The Field Capable Clinical Services, also known as FCCS, are the first system-wide DMH programs focused exclusively on Older Adults and designed to improve access to needed mental health services for this traditionally underserved population. FCCS offers a range of field-based services to older adults who may be reluctant or unable to access needed mental health services due to impaired mobility, frailty, geographic limitations or stigma associated with receiving services in a traditional mental health clinic. Key Components FCCS provides specialty mental health services designed to meet the unique biopsychosocial needs of older adults ages 60 and above. FCCS are provided in settings that are often preferred by older adults, for example in the home of the older adult, or in other community settings such as senior centers or senior housing complexes, or primary care settings. FCCS are provided by multi-disciplinary teams of professional, paraprofessional and volunteer providers who have received specialized training preparing them to work effectively with older adults.

 <http://dmh.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dmh/mhsa>

PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FUNDED BY THE CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (PROPOSITION 63). RESOURCES GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY NAMI CA.



Contra Costa County

MHSA Housing Services

MHSA funded housing services supplements services provided by Contra Costa Behavioral Health Services and the County's Homeless Services Program, and is designed for those low income adults with a serious mental illness or children with a severe emotional disorder and their families who are homeless or at imminent risk of being homeless.

The annual budget for this program provides affordable housing, and is comprised of five elements:


- 1 Supportive housing
- 2 Augmented board and care facilities
- 3 Temporary shelter beds
- 4 Permanent housing units
- 5 Centralized county operated coordination team

 <http://cchealth.org/mentalhealth/mhsa/>

Alameda County

Schreiber Center

The Schreiber Center is a specialty mental health clinic developed in collaboration with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, the Regional Center of the East Bay, and Alameda County Public Health Department. The Center is dedicated to serving the mental health care needs of adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our team of professionals specializes in supporting clients with complex behavioral, emotional, or psychiatric needs.

 <http://www.acphd.org/schreiber-center.aspx>

California Mental Health Public Policy: Featured Legislation: AB 1340

The Medical Practice Act Continuing Medical Education: Mental and Physical Health Care Integration

The Medical Practice Act requires the Medical Board of California to adopt and administer standards for the continuing education of licensed physicians and surgeons and requires the board to require each licensed physician and surgeon to demonstrate satisfaction of the continuing education requirements at specified intervals. The act requires the board, in determining its continuing education requirements, to consider including courses on specified matters.

This bill would require the board to consider including in its continuing education requirements a course in integrating mental and physical health care in primary care settings, especially as it pertains to early identification of mental health issues and exposure to trauma in children and young adults and their appropriate care and treatment.

For more information:
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB1340

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Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission Update

The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC), an independent state agency, was created in 2004 by voter-approved Proposition 63, the California Mental Health Services Act.



The 16-member Commission is composed of one Senator, one Assemblymember, the State Attorney General, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and 12 public members appointed by the Governor. By law, the Governor appointees are people who represent different sectors of society including individuals with mental health needs, their family members, law enforcement, education, labor, business, and the mental health profession. California voters created the Commission to provide oversight,

accountability and leadership to guide the transformation of the California mental health system. The Commission fulfills this charge by advising the Governor and Legislature, conducting research and evaluation, administering mental health triage personnel grants, and reviewing and approving county innovation projects.

Other Commission responsibilities include:

- Ensuring public mental health funds are spent in the most cost-effective manner and that services are provided in accordance with recommended best practices.
- Developing strategies to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness.
- Ensuring that the perspectives of California’s diverse communities, as well as people suffering from mental illness and their families, are included in all Commission deliberations and actions.
- Undertaking special research projects to document problems with California’s mental health

care delivery system and produce recommendations for reform.

The MHSOAC recently released a special report, *Together We Can: Reducing Criminal Justice Involvement for People with Mental Illness*. The report's Executive Summary states: We all need to be working toward lowering the number of people in our jails and looking at our laws to identify options other than jail for low-level offenders [with mental health needs]. It's a huge, huge crisis for our country today.



WELLNESS • RECOVERY • RESILIENCE

To learn more, see the full report at: <http://mhsaac.ca.gov/document/2017-12/criminal-justice-and-mental-health-project-report>

Visit the MHSOAC: <http://mhsaac.ca.gov>

News by the National Institutes of Health

From the National Institutes of Health Image Gallery:

NIEMANN-PICK TYPE C

Researchers from the National Institutes of Health have entered into an agreement with biotechnology company Vtesse, Inc., of Gaithersburg, Maryland, to develop treatments for Niemann-Pick disease type C (NPC) and other lysosomal storage disorders. Lysosomal storage diseases, also known as lipid storage diseases, comprise about 50 rare inherited disorders that usually affect children. Fatty materials accumulate in the cells and tissues of the body. These diseases can

result in damage to the brain, peripheral nervous system, liver, and other organs and tissues; they are often fatal. Researchers at the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), both parts of NIH, will conduct studies on NPC and other lysosomal storage disorders with funding provided by Vtesse.

About the Image:

The cerebellum of a brain affected by Niemann-Pick Type C, a neurological disorder, at the end stage of the disease. The blue staining shows dense pockets of lipid accumulations throughout the brain caused by the disease. National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences and Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development researchers are conducting studies to advance treatments for NPC and other lysosomal storage disorders with funding provided by Vtesse, Inc.

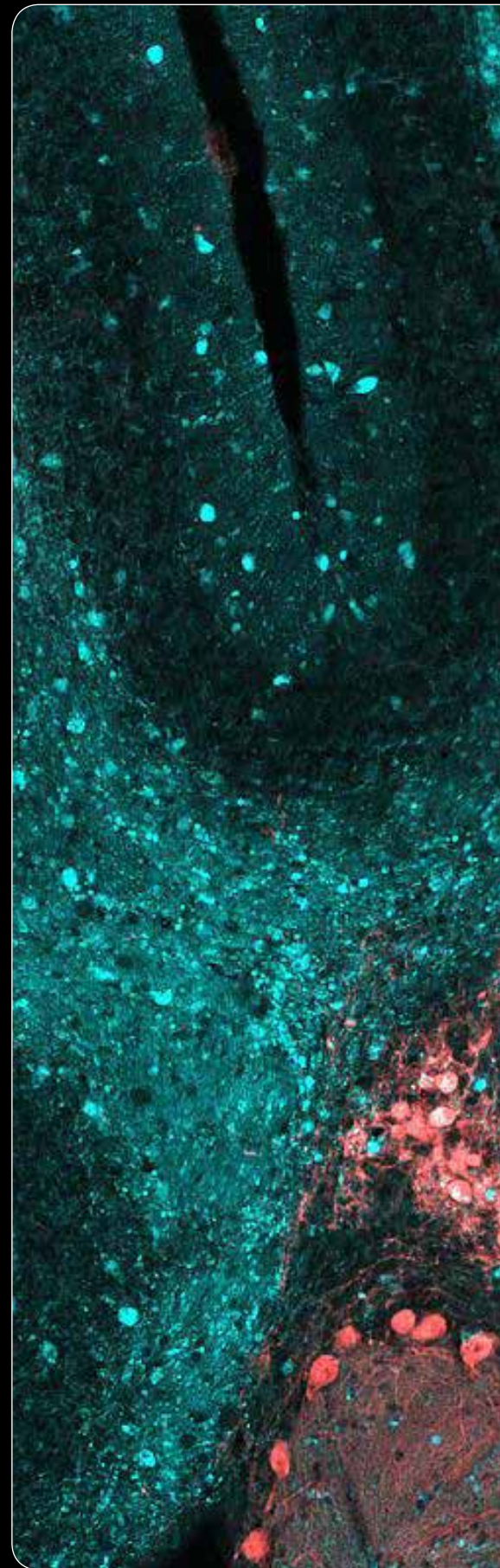
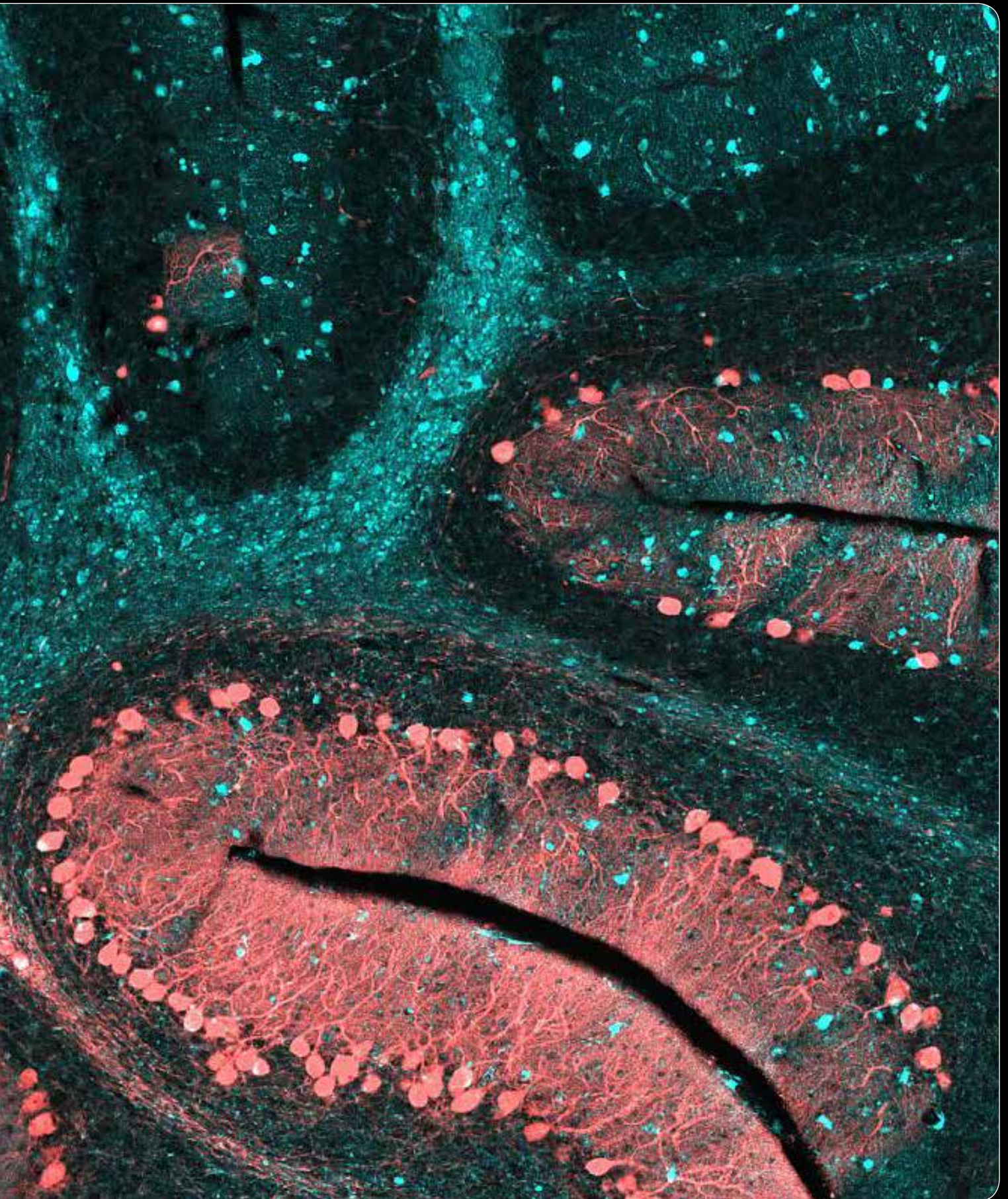


Photo Credit: Eunice Kennedy Shriver, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health





2018

Register at wellnesstogether.org/conference

CALIFORNIA STUDENT MENTAL WELLNESS CONFERENCE

Wednesday February 28th, 2018 - Thursday March 1st, 2018
Sacramento Area



WellnessTogether.org

Nonprofit Counseling



California Department of
EDUCATION

Wellness Together, in partnership with the California Department of Education, welcomes you to the 2nd Annual California Student Mental Wellness Conference. Join more than 700 educators and mental health service providers for this two-day event. Hear from the leading voices in mental wellness as we work together to promote student mental wellness and improve school climate across the state.



2017 Mental Health Awards Dinner

California Champions of Mental Health

Charity Awards Dinner and Jazz Concert



Daniel Hahn, Chief of Police, Sacramento Police Department, City of Sacramento and Kristene (K.N.) Smith

The evening began with a jazz networking reception with music performed by the Harley White, Jr. Trio. The intimate and creatively decorated setting, including live fishbowl centerpieces, paved the way for conversation and relationship building amongst professionals from a variety of industries including healthcare, law-enforcement, business, civic, education, mental health, and policy and advocacy. The goal was to share information and create resources and pathways for people in need of mental health services, especially those from unserved, underserved, and inappropriately served communities.

During the evening, Founder & CEO Kristene (K.N.) Smith, who is also an award-winning author, screenwriter, and 20-year marketing



On Friday, November 17, 2017, Mental Health California™ presented a richly layered, highly successful inaugural event to showcase its mental health education and training services to the community. With over 250 in attendance, the audience was treated to a variety of speakers across the mental health and wellness landscape, yet with a singular focus: education, awareness, and hope.

Senator Holly J. Mitchell and Mental Health California™ Founder & CEO Kristene (K.N.) Smith





Senator Holly J. Mitchell and Roberts Family Development Center Co-Founders, Derrell and Tina Roberts



Supervisor Don Nottoli, Kristene (K.N.) Smith, and event Co-Host



Wm. Jahmal Miller, Deputy Director, Office of Health Equity, California Department of Public Health, and Toni Collie-Perry and Sharon Chandler of Yes2Kollege

communications consultant, detailed her family history with mental health challenges, and discussed her own struggles with a past anxiety condition. She then asked the audience if they would be a “bridge” for her in troubled times, and she responded, “My team and I will be there for you in the case of any mental health emergency. We are here to build bridges with each other.” St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church music director and solo artist, Brenda Holloway, then began a rousing rendition of Bridge Over Troubled Water, accompanied by the Harley White, Jr. Trio, to much applause. The evening was punctuated with



Event Co-Host Leon Guidry, Kristene (K.N.) Smith, and Billboard's #1 Smooth Jazz Artist Eric Darius

”

During the evening, Founder & CEO Kristene (K.N.) Smith, who is also an award-winning author, screenwriter, and 20-year marketing communications consultant, detailed her family history with mental health challenges, and discussed her own struggles with a past anxiety condition.



Dr. Karen L. Smith, State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health and Mental Health California™ Founder & CEO



Daniel Hahn, Chief of Police, Sacramento Police Department, City of Sacramento



Guest speaker: Dr. Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, Founding Director, UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities



Event Co-Host Leon Guidry, Kristene (K.N.) Smith, and Senator Richard Pan, Chair, Senate



Guest speaker: Dr. John Boyd, CEO System Mental Health, Sutter Health



Honorees Garen and Shari Staglin Co-Founders, One Mind



Harley White, Jr. of the Harley White, Jr. Trio

other entertainment including excellent performances by local artist and musician, Rogeniv, and a poetry explosion by 8-time poetry champion, Terry Moore, and his two counterparts.

The event's esteemed honorees were Rusty Selix, the co-Author of Proposition 63, the California Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) for "Lifetime Achievement Award", Garen and Shari Staglin, Co-Founders of One Mind for "Brain Science & Research", Senator Holly J. Mitchell for "Legislator of the Year", and Dr. Karen L. Smith, State Public Health Officer and Director of the California

Department of Public Health for her excellence in "Cultural Outreach". Guest speakers included Sacramento County Supervisor Don Nottoli, Senator Richard Pan, Dr. John Boyd, CEO for System Mental Health for Sutter Health, and Daniel Hahn, Chief of Police, Sacramento Police Department, City of Sacramento, who shared their appreciation for the work of the organization as well as the honorees.

The evening was capped-off with a dynamic performance by saxophonist, composer, producer, and vocalist Eric Darius, an international smooth jazz superstar who's current single,

"Breakin' Thru", has officially reached #1 on the Mediabase Smooth Jazz Chart. The energetic, globe-trotting Darius has six critically acclaimed albums under his belt, a Number One hit single, and Seven Top 10 radio hits on Nielsen's R&R/Billboard Contemporary Jazz Charts, and has shared the stage with innumerable, world-renown, Grammy Award-winning artists such as Prince, Jamie Foxx, Mary J. Blige, Carlos Santana, Babyface, Wynton Marsalis, and George Benson, among many others.



The event was sponsored by UnitedHealthcare, UC Davis Health, The California Endowment, Sutter Health, Highlands Community Charter School, Arthur A. Benjamin Health Professions High School, Sierra Health Foundation, the CHELSEA Corporation, the California Black Chamber of Commerce, the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, RCJ Law Enforcement Consulting, CB Communications, the Sacramento Chapter of the Links, Inc., Woodbridge Wines by Robert Mondavi, Impact Foundry, Sac Cultural Hub Media, and the Natomas Unified School District.



Mental Health Awards Dinner

Smooth Jazz Artist Eric Darius, 2017



3 Foods That Boost Mental Health

by Jenn Bagley

It's undeniable that what we eat has a major impact on our health and well-being. From omega-3 fatty acids to vitamin K and magnesium, there are many nutrients that have scientifically-proven benefits for mental health.

When it comes to mental illness, healthy eating should always be included in treatment plans, especially since vitamin deficiencies can worsen symptoms. However, it can be overwhelming to change your eating habits, especially when you're struggling with a lack of motivation or loss of appetite. To help you get started, here are 3 delicious foods that have proven benefits for your mental health.

Seafood

Seafood lovers, rejoice! Research has shown that people who eat lots of fish are less likely to experience certain symptoms related to mental illness. Seafood is high in omega-3 fatty acids, magnesium, B12, and folate, all of which can relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety. Omega-3s may also be beneficial for treating borderline personality disorder, although more research is needed. To boost your omega-3 intake, seek out fatty fish like salmon, trout, and tuna.



Avocado

Avocado is a nutrient powerhouse that should be a staple in your diet. A single serving contains 20% of the daily recommended amount of folate, and 26% RDA of vitamin K. These vitamins are both effective for treating depression, and researchers have found evidence that folate can improve the symptoms of schizophrenia.



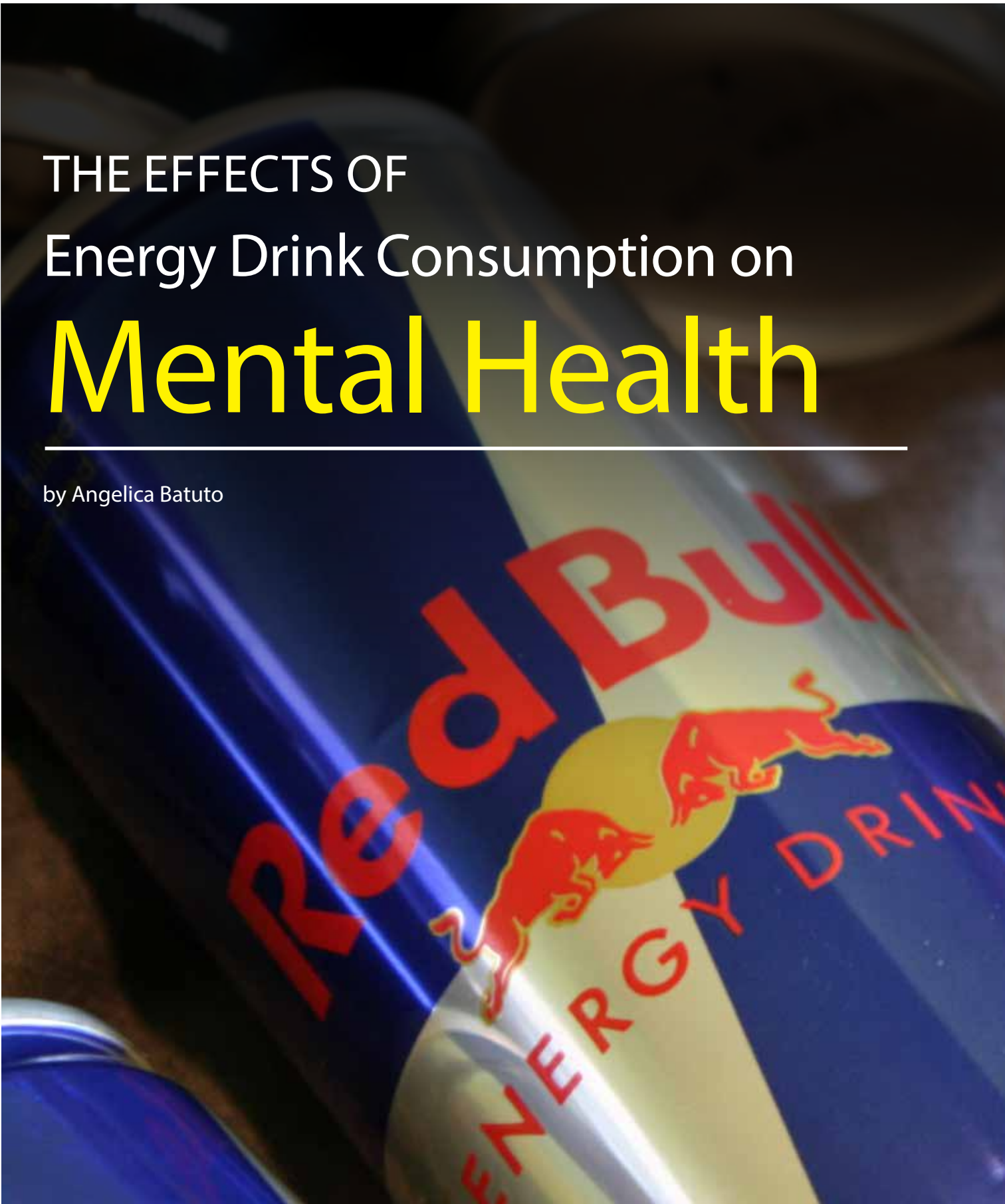
Spinach

Spinach and other dark leafy greens, like kale and swiss chard, are also good for the brain. They're packed with helpful nutrients like folate, vitamin K, and magnesium, and they also reduce inflammation. Struggling to get enough greens into your diet? Add them to pasta, use in sandwiches, or serve alongside a protein for dinner. If you're feeling adventurous, try adding a handful of raw spinach to a fruit smoothie.



THE EFFECTS OF Energy Drink Consumption on Mental Health

by Angelica Batuto



THE EFFECTS ON ONE'S HEALTH FROM ENERGY DRINK (ED) CONSUMPTION ARE FAR BEYOND A SHORT-LIVED ENERGY BOOST, BASED UPON THE LATEST RESEARCH ON THIS TOPIC PUBLISHED IN FRONTIERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH, AND HAS REVEALED THE ASTOUNDING, NEGATIVE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES ASSOCIATED WITH THESE DRINKS.

Effects on mental health include: Risk-seeking behaviors. Substance abuse (marijuana, alcohol, cigarettes, amphetamines); Aggressive behavior (bullying, fighting, truancy). Mental health effects. Stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, low academic achievement, suicidal ideation, plan or attempt.

Apart from affecting mental health, energy drink consumption can also increase the risk of hypertension, kidney damage, obesity, tooth erosion, and heart disease. The authors added that these health risks are usually concealed by a lack of regulation and clever marketing. 'The negative effects linked with energy drinks are compounded by the lack of regulatory oversight, along with aggressive marketing towards adolescents,' according to the authors of the published article.

Most energy drinks in the U.S. contain similar ingredients – water, caffeine, sugar, non-nutritive stimulants such as yerba mate, ginseng, guarana, taurine, inositol,

L-carnitine and D-glucuronolactone; as well as vitamins and minerals. In general, ED's high sugar, stimulant, and caffeine content can all pose a number of health consequences.

Besides the negative impact of energy drinks, the authors also noted mixing energy drinks with alcohol, which aggravates health risks. Such trends seems to lead to a greater level of alcohol consumption, particularly among young people.



With such magnitude of alarming health risks, the authors argued that energy drinks "should be considered a significant public health problem that warrants attention". As a final point, parents and their adolescents must be informed on the adverse nutritional content and the health consequences of these products so they can make informed decisions.

Using B Vitamins to Treat Depression

by Jenn Bagley

WHEN IT COMES TO TREATING DEPRESSION, THERE ARE MANY REASONS TO SEEK-OUT ALTERNATIVES TO PHARMACEUTICALS. MANY PEOPLE FIND ANTIDEPRESSANTS INEFFECTIVE, WHILE OTHERS WISH TO AVOID INTOLERABLE SIDE EFFECTS. RESEARCH HAS SHOWN BOTH VITAMIN B12 AND FOLATE (VITAMIN B9) TO BE EFFECTIVE REMEDIES FOR DEPRESSION.



It is well-established that vitamin deficiencies can worsen symptoms of depression. Vitamins can also affect one's response to medication as well. Multiple studies have found a relationship between folate levels and antidepressant effectiveness. This is true for vitamin B12 as well. Participants of one study saw reduced symptoms after 6 weeks of taking vitamin B12 alongside their medication. Both vitamins also show promising results when taken without antidepressants.

For best results, it is recommended to take 1000 mcg of vitamin B12, and/or 800 mcg of folate daily. Although it may be more convenient, a B-complex typically only provides the daily recommended amount of each vitamin, while the therapeutic dose is much higher.

To boost B-vitamin intake through diet, consume beef liver, which is very high in both vitamin B12 and folate. Other foods rich in vitamin B12 include clams, trout, salmon, and milk. Folate is found in various vegetables and legumes, such as spinach, black-eyed peas, and asparagus. Keep in mind that supplements usually provide much higher amounts than what's obtainable through food.



It's important to note that depressed individuals tend to have lower vitamin B12 and folate levels than the general population, which is why it's important to have nutrient levels checked regularly. Despite proper levels, there may be benefits to taking supplements to ease symptoms. Always check with your doctor first considering natural treatments can cause side effects or interact with other medications.

3 Ways

To Combat Seasonal Affective Disorder

by Gina Marie Guarino, LMHC

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD) IS A DISORDER THAT CAUSES PEOPLE TO EXPERIENCE DEPRESSION, MOOD SWINGS, INSOMNIA, SADNESS, AND LONELINESS. IT CAN BE QUITE DISTRESSING TO SUFFER FROM SAD BECAUSE IT CAN CAUSE A DRAMATIC CHANGE IN MOOD AND PERSONALITY.

SAD can be difficult to cope with during the cold winter months, so be sure to follow these three important steps to take care of your mental health during the winter:

Stay Active

Cold air and shorter days tend to prevent us from remaining active during the daylight hours, but just because the sun is down and it is cold outside does not mean you cannot get out and get some exercise. Bundle-up and stay active to prevent seasonal depression. Be sure to do things outside like taking walks and exercising regularly to prevent yourself from being cooped-up inside your home.

Supplement Vitamin D

During the winter months, the sun's rays reach the Earth's surface with less intensity and frequency, causing a deficiency in Vitamin D. To

compensate for the lack of Vitamin D you get from the sun, consume foods that are rich in Vitamin D including fish, eggs, dairy, mushrooms, and red meat, as well as Vitamin D supplements.

Socialize

When it's cold outside it is hard to stay motivated to go out and meet-up with friends and family. Being outside may be uncomfortable, and it is tempting to stay in the cozy indoors. A major reason why a person may suffer from SAD is because they are not seeing their loved ones as frequently as during the rest of the year. Loneliness can be detrimental to a person's mental health, so be sure to brave the cold and keep-up with social activities to prevent loneliness, boredom, and a depressed mood.



Like Us, Follow Us
on Facebook!



29th Annual 100 YOUTH Conference

*"What They See,
Is What They Will Be"*

Saturday, February 24, 2018

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

SCUSD Serna Center

5735 47th Avenue

Sacramento, CA 95824

*(Sac City Unified School District HQ @
Highway 99 & 47th Avenue east)*

General Sessions - Workshops - Speakers - Activities

This event is limited to youth between the ages of 12 and 21. Parents, guardians, and other family members or caretaking adults are encouraged to attend. Online registration is FREE until **Wednesday, February 21, 2018**; \$10.00 thereafter. Please note: no sagging pants, no hats on inside the building. Workshops and activities for students and parents. Come hear excellent speakers, take classes, and participate in activities to help you **learn, grow, and achieve!**

Registration & Continental Breakfast: 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Opening Session: 8:30 a.m.

Workshops: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Complimentary Lunch, Door Prizes & Vendors: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Closing Session: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Register Online Today for FREE @ **Eventbrite**

For more information, please contact Terry Gibbs at (916) 601-1740
or Sam Williams at (916) 826-0706 and visit www.100bmsac.org

Mental Health and Faith

Community Partnership

The Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership is a collaboration between psychiatrists and clergy aimed at fostering a dialogue between the two fields, reducing stigma, and accounting for medical and spiritual dimensions as people seek care.

by Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder



The convening organizations are the American Psychological Association, the American Psychological Association Foundation, and the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition, a program of the American Association of People with Disabilities.

The partnership provides an opportunity for psychiatrists and the mental health community to learn from spiritual leaders, to whom people often turn in times of mental distress. At the same time, it provides an opportunity to improve understanding of the best science and evidence-based treatment for psychiatric illnesses

among faith leaders and those in the faith community.

Available resources include:

- ▶ **Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders**, a guide that provides information to help faith leaders work with members of their congregations and their families who are facing mental health challenges.
- ▶ **Quick Resource Guide**, a companion resource.
- ▶ Additional resources are available at: <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/faith-community-partnership>

For more information,
please contact:

Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroeder
Coordinator
Mental Health Ministries

www.MentalHealthMinistries.net

LAUGH





LOVE



Seasonal Goodness

by Organic Facts

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF LEMON ARE DUE TO ITS MANY NOURISHING ELEMENTS LIKE VITAMIN C, VITAMIN B6, VITAMIN A, VITAMIN E, FOLATE, NIACIN, THIAMIN, RIBOFLAVIN, PANTOTHENIC ACID, COPPER, CALCIUM, IRON, MAGNESIUM, POTASSIUM, ZINC, PHOSPHORUS, AND PROTEIN. IT IS A FRUIT THAT CONTAINS FLAVONOIDS, WHICH ARE COMPOSITES THAT CONTAIN ANTIOXIDANT AND CANCER-FIGHTING PROPERTIES. IT HELPS PREVENT DIABETES, CONSTIPATION, HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, FEVER, INDIGESTION, AS WELL AS IMPROVE THE SKIN, HAIR, AND TEETH. STUDIES CONDUCTED AT THE AMERICAN UROLOGICAL ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHT THE FACT THAT LEMONADE OR LEMON JUICE CAN ELIMINATE THE OCCURRENCE OF KIDNEY STONES BY FORMING URINARY CITRATE, WHICH PREVENTS THE FORMATION OF CRYSTALS.

The health benefits of lemon include treatment of indigestion, constipation, dental problems, throat infections, fever, internal bleeding, rheumatism, burns, obesity, respiratory disorders, cholera, and high blood pressure, while also benefiting your hair and skin. Known for its therapeutic property since generations, lemon helps strengthen your immune system, cleanse your stomach, and is considered a blood purifier. Lemon juice, especially, has several health benefits associated with it. It is well known as a useful treatment for kidney stones, reducing strokes, and lowering body temperature. As a refreshing drink, lemonade helps you stay calm and cool. Many people also use lemon as a washing agent, because of its ability to remove stains. The scent of lemons can also repel mosquitoes, while drinking lemon juice with olive oil helps get rid of gallstones. It is well known for its medicinal power and is used in many different ways. As per the results reported in a study by the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases, lemon provides protection against inflammatory polyarthritis and arthritis, too.

Lemon Curd Crumble made by K.N. Smith. Get the lemon curd recipe below, and enjoy.



Nutrition and Mental Health

Snacks for Brain Health

by Kristene (K.N.) Smith

Healthy snacks play a vital role in our overall health, which includes our brain health. Being prepared ahead of time with a variety of life-sustaining snacks helps the day go by smoothly and fills us with vital nutrients essential for brain health.

Because the brain is the most complex and important organ in the body, the sum of our actions, movements, thought processes, emotions, and nervous system are controlled by it. Many scholars including scientists and researchers have contributed their time and knowledge to understanding the complex systems in the brain. Brain cells are made of 100 billion neurons, which control its functions. Damage to the brain can cause permanent brain injuries and memory loss. When it comes to diet, we generally refer to meals and breakfast, but must not overlook the importance of snacks. Healthy snacking for the overall growth of organisms and how they can help fight brain deficiencies and memory loss is of utmost importance. Benefits of healthy snacking include: appetite control, maintaining a healthy weight, regulating enzymes to improve the digestive system, producing energy for the body and the brain, and improving immunity. Snacks should be healthy, portable, and light, and should supply adequate minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates, protein, water, and healthy fat. In considering healthy snacks, which can also promote proper blood sugar levels depending on what is consumed, packaging ahead to save time and stress is key for a busy lifestyle. Some options may include

fruit, veggies, nuts, whole grains, eggs, berries, tomatoes, and legumes. Important substances present in food that promote mental health are:

Amino Acids: To restore functions of the brain and central nervous system, protein and amino acids are important. Amino acids that are crucial for brain health are arginine, tyrosine, tryptophan, phenylalanine, and histidine. Glutamic acid and aspartic acid are well-known neurotransmitters.

Zinc: Zinc is a mineral that is present in the choroid layers in the retina, which are extensions of the brain, glial cells, and neurons. Insufficient zinc can inhibit growth of cells.

Potassium: In order to nurture neural health, the role of potassium is undeniable. Potassium ions act as electrolytes and boost brain cells. The exchange of sodium and potassium in the cells contributes to our ability to react to situations, so keep bananas and other potassium-rich foods close by for snacking throughout the day.



A close-up portrait of a man with grey hair and a goatee, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a dark blue t-shirt. The background is a soft, out-of-focus yellow-green.

The Medicine HUNTER

An Interview with Chris Kilham
by Kristene (K.N.) Smith



The Japanese have done some very impressive work with walking in the forest. What happens is that trees are constantly emitting these showers of nanoparticles called phytosomes that modify our moods in pleasant, uplifting, positive ways.

MENTAL HEALTH CALIFORNIA™ FOUNDER & CEO, KRISTENE (K.N.) SMITH, RECENTLY ENGAGED INTERNATIONAL PLANT-BASED MEDICINE EXPERT CHRIS KILHAM, THE MEDICINE HUNTER, IN A SPIRITED DISCUSSION ON NATURAL MEDICINE AND HOLISTIC WELLNESS. BY EXPLORING CHRIS' PHENOMENAL, WORLDWIDE JOURNEY TO OVER 45 COUNTRIES, HIS AUTHORIZING OF 14 BOOKS, AND THROUGH DEEP DISCUSSION ON ORGANICS, MENTAL-WELLNESS, AND OUR INDIVIDUAL SENSES OF COMMUNITY, WE'RE ABLE TO GAIN MEANINGFUL INSIGHT INTO HIS INCREDIBLE, GLOBE-TROTTING WORLD TO HELP SHAPE OURS TO BECOME THE BEST IT CAN POSSIBLY BE.

K.N. Smith: Let me open by congratulating you on not just your career choice, but how deep you've gone into this and how educational it is for other people, including all the books you've written. This must be a phenomenal journey for you. We want to extend congratulations on all of your success.

Chris Kilham: Well, thank you for that. I wish I could say that I planned this path, you know? But I wasn't actually that organized. It sort of really just came together. And it's been a wonderful, extremely satisfying endeavor for a long time now. Fortunately, it's done good for a bunch of people. It certainly has been a remarkable experience all the way along.

K.N. Smith: Was there any influence in your family when you were younger in terms of health and wellness?

Chris Kilham: Well, yes and no. My grandfather was a minister. And he wasn't an "only at the pulpit" minister. Most of the time, he spent his time serving people. He was in hospitals, marrying people, burying people, going to nursing homes, and seeing people in their homes and counseling them. He would see and help anybody. I would say that in terms of service attitude, I certainly got that from him and from my mom, who also did a lot of marvelous volunteer work. My father was diabetic, he had type-one diabetes, so he was insulin

dependent. At a very early age, I was well aware that food had everything to do with health, because I saw it daily with him. I saw him either have a diabetic reaction or do well depending on what he ate. I think those two influences played well in terms of fashioning my consciousness about service and health, but nobody in my family really had any activities around anything natural in this way.

K.N. Smith: In terms of career, were you a medicinal plant researcher for Naturex?

Chris Kilham: Yes, "explorer in residence" was my sort of official title. And with them, I went around the world investigating either plants that they didn't currently have in their portfolio, but I thought that maybe they should, or in a lot of cases, projects that they had ongoing that I went to vet or improve, make recommendations about—whatever. For Naturex, it was a 21-year engagement; the first ten years with Pure World, and they were purchased by Naturex and I continued on. All in all, that particular client engagement was 21 years. I have an independent consultancy. For example, there's an Ashwagandha company in India, they make the KSM-66 Ashwagandha, and I work with them. I did one last year with the Malaysian Government and I did some work also last year in Thailand. I continue to do the same thing, but more project oriented with many of these companies, rather than long, ongoing relationships.



Chris Kilham, the Medicine Hunter, Chief's Dance

K.N. Smith: You work and travel a lot, but you're aware of self-care and our need for down time and a bit of vacation here and there. It's a good thing that you're doing that. I'm very aware of self-care. Having been overloaded previously, myself, with too much anxiety, just running around and starting a business, single-parenting at one time. There's a lot going on sometimes, so you really have to balance out your life.

Chris Kilham: I also think that when we love what we do it relieves enormous burdens from us. Additionally, we should spend time in nature. I'm very fortunate I get to do that. We know now—not that we needed the science, but we've got the science—we know that nature and exposure to it intrinsically balances us mentally. The Japanese have done

some very impressive work with walking in the forest. What happens is that trees are constantly emitting these showers of nanoparticles called phytosomes that modify our moods in pleasant, uplifting, positive ways. We see a global society just urbanizing more and more every day. Naturally, there's much more estrangement from that fundamental beauty and healthy balance. People are a lot more stressed out.

K.N. Smith: Absolutely. I love what you said. That's very true. I also believe in things like gardening, and I go walking in a little preserve near our home to get out in nature. I advocate for exposure to nature in terms of mental balance for people. It's about getting out in nature and connecting with the elements to enact spirituality, if you will, because it comes from that source.

For me, that's the connection.

Chris Kilham: As for meditation and intentional mindfulness practices, I'm very fortunate, I've been practicing yoga and meditation daily since 1970. When I'm in the Amazon or Siberia or Thailand or Morocco—wherever—I'm still practicing. That makes all the difference in the world in terms of feeling more in balance and poised and able to navigate fluidly whatever circumstances are happening at the time.

K.N. Smith: Absolutely, and again, I'm applauding you because you look really healthy, you look young, and full of vitality. It's not a surprise that you're in this business. Of course, you have access to a lot of information and products that people don't always know about.

Chris Kilham: You're so right. We have, in our kitchen, this closet that has got to have at least 2,000 samples of different things in it. It's rare that there's a health condition that I can't rummage around in the shelves and find something for. Just having the herbal supplements and the specialized extracts and things on a regular basis is, unquestionably, not only a real privilege, but it makes a real contribution to my health and to (my wife) Zoe's health as well.

K.N. Smith: I'm curious, you mentioned a lot of exotic places that you've traveled to, which all sound wonderful. Do a couple of them stand out, in particular?

Chris Kilham: Two places stand out: One is Vanuatu, South Pacific, which is way, way, way deep in the South Pacific, where I did a lot of work with kava, and also with a healing skin oil called Tamanu Oil. And there, over a ten-year period, I got to go very, very deeply into the culture, into the plants, into the trade. I wound up knowing everybody. I was their official diplomatic representative to the United States for three years, and I'm a Chief there. We've fire-walked there for six years. I would say the same thing is true with Peru—notably, the Peruvian Amazon. At this point, I've been there about 35 times or so. I'm going back in another week. As a result of that, Zoe and I have had lots of experiences on different rivers. For example, I've been able to explore about 15 rivers or so over time, which is pretty amazing, and I have been with really diverse tribal groups and experienced different medicines and have gone quite deeply into Ayahuasca with shamans. So I think in both instances, the repeated visits and the time with people, allowing for real friendships and familiar relationships to develop, that has loomed very large with both of those locales.

K.N. Smith: Are you finding that with people you meet in these cultures, just their attitude towards life and

each other, is it very different from western civilization? What have you learned about the way they carry themselves and treat each other, as opposed to, let's say, in the U.S.?

Chris Kilham: Well, in Vanuatu—which is, for the most part, a rather undeveloped country of only 250,000 native people—one of the most striking things is their very close-knit communities, and their innate friendliness. They're quick to trust you and like you, unless you give them reason to do otherwise. With regard to the communities, they really do function as communities together. They do well together. I've seen, among those people, a joy in simplicity. I mean, if you give three kids a coconut and a stick, they can play on the beach all day long and never get tired, never lost interest, never cry, never get into a fight, and just have a blast. There's something to be said for that. And for example, if you go to Morocco for a business meeting, the very first thing you're going to do is take me to your home and feed me fruit and nuts and breads and cheese and cake and tea. And we're not going anywhere until that happens. It's a beautiful, lovely, friendly, open-hearted custom.

K.N. Smith: Like you said, they've got an advanced sense of community with each other, and the stresses are going to be there, but they're different. You know, we pile a lot onto ourselves.

Chris Kilham: Well, I think there is truth to that. We are less likely to die from injuries and diseases of sanitation and hygiene, okay? That's where they have trouble. When you break your leg there, you've got a real problem. We don't. We go to the hospital, it'll get set, it'll get fixed, we'll be okay. On the other hand, when you look at the U.S., conspicuously, we have far and away by multiples the largest, most horrific consumption of anti-anxiety drugs and antidepressants. I

mean, what are we so anxious about? What are we so depressed about? We have our needs met better than virtually any culture on earth—except Switzerland, Finland, a few places. But, really, what is that? It seems very much self-imposed and due to the hysterically overblown cravings that are promoted and the dissatisfaction that's promoted with not having all the great stuff, whatever that stuff is—and it really is just stuff.

K.N. Smith: In other words, you're fine with what you have, be grateful, thankful for what you have. And if you get more over time, that's fine, but “things” are not the essence of life. It's the other things that we need to develop in ourselves, like our personal relationships, spirituality, life-balance, better habits, our creativity—those are the things that are much more sustainable than having a bunch of stuff that's not going with you when you die from this world anyway.

Chris Kilham: Yes.

K.N. Smith: And then people can become overmedicated with all of this anxiety, and if they're not medicated through some sort of prescription, then perhaps it's self-medicating with the wrong things, like drugs or alcohol, and then you have dual diagnosis and it gets even worse.

Chris Kilham: Earlier you were talking about us, largely, being habit based. For mental health professionals, at least for many of them, this is increasingly interesting. We're now seeing thoughtful, clinical use—in addition to non-clinical use—of psychedelics that were very discouraged since the early '70s. We're seeing clinical use of LSD, psilocybin, MDMA now in its third-stage clinical trial for PTSD with soldiers, and of course millions—millions of people drinking Ayahuasca in different settings around the world to overcome things that don't get



resolved or relieved by other means, whether it's talking therapies or the psychiatric drugs. And we also, at the very same time, have this huge body of science that is growing—I mean, almost weekly—showing, for example, with magic mushrooms, that they rapidly, in one event, help to create new neural pathways in the brain. And we know this is true with the other psychedelics. If you go to southern Mexico and you talk with people about the mushrooms, or you go to the Amazon and you talk about Ayahuasca, or you go to the Andes and you talk about San Pedro, or you go to the Texas border, you talk with the natives there, they'll talk about peyote. They all use the same exact name for all of these—"the medicine." That's what they call it, because that's what it is. And, you know, we've seen endless numbers of people resolve very, very challenging and burdensome emotional and mental issues either completely or at least enough so that they weren't dogged by them and just constantly reacting in their lives as a result of whatever it might be—physical abuse as a kid, sexual abuse, war, you name it. So I think that part of the exploration that I've been doing around the world has also been paying attention

to these psychoactive agents, mild or powerful, which show enormous health benefits.

K.N. Smith: And you wrote a book on this, specifically, kava.

Chris Kilham: Yes, kava, which is a root that comes basically from the Pacific Islands, contains a group of compounds—very, very, well studied—call the "kavalactones." And they are simultaneously muscle relaxant in very friendly ways, and also they work on the amygdala of the brain, the primary anxiety center, and kava relieves stress and anxiety. In the Pacific Islands, kava is consumed in the afternoon or early evening among people. Nobody goes off and drinks it by themselves. It's made into a beverage—a non-cooked, non-alcoholic beverage. The roots of this plant are pounded. And it's actually called "kava time." So you go drink kava with your friends, and it's an agent of community. We know from research going back quite a few decades that kava relieves mild to moderate anxiety. We saw two very positive Duke University Medical Center studies affirming this use. A conclusion line in one of them was, "Kava demonstrates equivalent

efficacy to the benzodiazepine class of drugs for the relief of mild to moderate anxiety." What that sentence doesn't include is that it's non-habit-forming, you can't become addicted to it, you can't seize if you stop taking it, like you would with Xanax. It's very safe. But kava, it's a sad saga, actually. A report came out saying that kava had killed 21 people in Europe due to liver toxicity. It devastated the kava market overnight. The kava trade collapsed completely, insurance companies went after companies that were selling kava, and what happened was that teams of medical researchers, U.S. researchers, German researchers, British researchers—people all over the world worked on all these cases. Basically, what they discovered was that this entire report was a fraud. And it was timed so that it came out four days before a breakthrough Duke University Medical Center study showing kava's efficacy for mild to moderate anxiety. So it was very suspicious. Unfortunately, the people who suffered the most were the people in the Pacific Islands who lost their income in a day. But kava is safe, as it always has been. And if it weren't safe, I mean, the people living in the Pacific Islands would promptly die in their early teens because they consume more kava than you ever could taking it as a supplement. So that's a little bit about kava.

K.N. Smith: That's interesting. Yes, I was looking at some of the reports about the liver. I appreciate you clarifying that. It went on to say something about reports not being accurate, that they were tied to people who already had issues with their liver or other things that were discovered. On another note, I also know people who have anxiety who just prefer cannabis. Can you speak to that considering reports about disruption of brain development in younger kids, the pre-teens into teens, who ingest cannabis?

Chris Kilham: I certainly do not disagree with you about this being



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As for meditation and intentional mindfulness practices, I'm very fortunate. I've been practicing yoga and meditation daily since 1970.

Chris Killham, Sacred Mapacho Iquitos Market by Tracey Eller

an adult-use plant. For the more fully developed adult brain, it just seems like that's a better time to employ cannabis. I also think one of the things that we're not really fully acknowledging, because I think it's kind of a big body of knowledge to swallow, we now know something we didn't know 20 years ago, and that is that we have an entire master system that regulates many aspects of life from growth and development and brain function to cardiovascular and immune function in the endocannabinoid system. In our bodies, we discovered this new system we didn't know was there. And it turns out that there is nothing in the world that so adequately nourishes and feeds the endocannabinoid system in a positive way—and enhances gene expression in a whole host of ways—as cannabis. So it doesn't mean that all cannabis is good. I mean, I really do not like that a lot of commercial operations are growing it with pesticides and fungicides. That's just wrong. You don't have to do that. It can be done completely organically. It's absurd to have toxic residues in a medicine. But I also think that we're at a time when people do realize that this is vastly safer and healthier than alcohol. And we've seen reduced alcohol sales in Colorado, for example, which I know is worrisome for the alcohol lobby, but that will have the concurrent reduced spousal abuse, reduced death due to intoxication behind the wheel, that whole thing. So I think it's a very positive trend. And look at kids who are being given cannabis oil who maybe are seizing 100 times a day, and it gets down to two times a day. Talk about compassionate medicine, what a relief both for the children who suffer and for the parents who just go through the agony of seeing their kid go through this all day, all night. I really believe that this is part of a continuing body-mind natural awakening.

K.N. Smith: Regarding women's health issues, in certain Asian



Chris Kilham with Elizabeth Cohen of CNN, Peru. Photo by: Zoe Helene

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If you go to southern Mexico and you talk with people about the mushrooms, or you go to the Amazon and you talk about Ayahuasca, or you go to the Andes and you talk about San Pedro, or you go to the Texas border, you talk with the natives there, they'll talk about peyote. They all use the same exact name for all of these—"the medicine."

cultures, for example, women who have soy-rich diets have lower incidents of menopause, hot flashes, and all of that. Is that correct from what you know about the effects of plants on health?

Chris Kilham: Well, soybeans are rich in what we refer to as "phytoestrogens"—plant estrogens. While a soy-rich diet wouldn't be good if you had breast cancer, in terms of menopause or perimenopause, there is little doubt that it makes a positive contribution to an easier time or reduced severity of symptoms. But pretty much every 50-year-old woman I know is going through it regardless of the health of their diet. But who knows? A woman might breeze through or not. One of the things that I don't think we can adequately gauge is, for example, if you grow up in a society in which you're eating tempeh and tofu and other soy products on a regular basis throughout the course of your life, not just in adulthood, and not just approaching menopause, what's the impact of that on health, versus kind of "soying-up" as you're more age appropriate to the need? We don't know. We don't have the answer to that.

K.N. Smith: Some time ago, I specifically searched for "natural remedy for fatigue", and your website came up in the search, and this is when I came across Schisandra berries. I'm pretty energized, but changes do occur with age. Upon a little bit more research, I went down to the health food store, got some, and it just seemed to me that within a couple three days or so, it turned my fatigue around almost completely. That was amazing!

Chris Kilham: Well, yes. Schisandra is a class of botanicals called "adaptogens." And they help you to adapt—like Rhodiola and Ashwagandha and Schisandra, they're all part of that class, which is

a very, very tiny number of plants that do this. They help you to adapt to all forms of physical and mental stress, they cause your body to produce more intrinsic energy, so actually causing the cells to produce more ATP, which is the primary fuel on which our entire body runs. They enhance immune function, they enhance cardiovascular function, strength, endurance, and stamina. The science on these adaptogens is spectacular—thousands and thousands of published papers on these. So many people are fatigued, and especially brain fatigued due to stress, due to high cortisol levels that really dull the mind and make it difficult to concentrate for long. What all of these do is they bring that cortisol down to a healthy level, and we know this from endless studies, when you bring that cortisol down, in addition to enhancing the production of ATP, you liberate energy. Stress is an energy suck, you know? It just takes it out of you. And when you're not stressed out, when you're relieved, well, you've got more juice. And that fatigue goes away and people experience increased mental clarity, focus, and sharpness. There are endless studies on enhanced concentration and improved mental function as a result of consuming these adaptogens.

K.N. Smith: Should a person take one at a time? More than one? What do you recommend in terms of adaptogens?

Chris Kilham: Not to sound glib, but it's almost like a salad. You can just eat cucumbers if you like, but a mixed salad is often more interesting. You can do one or more of these—Rhodiola, Ashwagandha, or Schisandra. A lot of companies combine them, and in traditional Chinese medicine, they combine them. In the formerly secret Soviet Union Olympic Training Program, with the adaptogens, they combined them. These don't make a little difference in health. They can make a revolutionary difference in health, and that's the beauty of plant-

based medicine. People are used to thinking "medicine." You're sick, you take something to relieve symptoms. Yes, there's truth to that. But also, medicinal agents can feed us and can enhance our function and improve our sense of well-being overall and brighten our moods, whether or not we're in some sort of clinically defined distress. That's the beauty of plant medicine. You consume these things, yes, just like you eat onions every day. You're not going to have a blood lipid problems if you're eating enough onions every day. You're just not going to. Onions are the great blood thinner of all time. You eat certain foods rich in Lutein, foods rich in Zeaxanthin, you're going to greatly reduce the risk of macular degeneration. You drink coffee every single day, your risk of colon and rectal cancer plummets, just plummets. There are thousands and thousands of instances of this. Even when a person doesn't have a clinical problem, a clinical disease, the benefits that can be accrued by using these different very concentrated plants of all kinds—the super berries and things like the adaptogens—these can make an overwhelmingly large difference in our lives, in our longevity, in our energy, in our sleep, in our overall sense of well-being, lack of stress, strength, and endurance. It goes on and on and on.

K.N. Smith: Wow, these are incredible, natural products. We really need to be open to learning as much as we can. We're here for a very short period of time, so it's important for us to reach out and understand our problems, and try to get to the best solutions. Your sharing has just been extremely generous. I can't thank you enough for all of your insights.

Chris Kilham: Well thank you, Kristene. And I think with regard to what you're saying, we're also seeing now, and we will continue to see a shift in the landscape. What is defined as a health professional?

Previously, when I was growing up, it was medical doctors and nobody else. Now we recognize the real clinical value of acupuncture, chiropractic, and various types of body work, deep-tissue work, neuromuscular release, massage, herbs—on and on and on. I think that overall, we're looking at a future in which people will be, increasingly, health specialists, rather than disease-care professionals. I think that while we absolutely need medical doctors and we need the so-called conventional therapeutic practices that have increased life and have helped people to overcome many types of disease, I also think that we need the whole new breed of actual healthcare people, not only disease-management or crisis-intervention specialists. I think the whole notion of complementary medicine—as Andy Weil and others have been pushing for and educating for—I think that's the smart future.

ABOUT CHRIS KILHAM

Chris Kilham is a medicine hunter, author and educator. The founder of Medicine Hunter Inc., Chris has conducted medicinal plant research in over 45 countries. Chris works with companies to develop and popularize traditional plant-based food and medicinal products into market successes. Chris also works to bridge worlds, regularly sharing information about other cultures through presentations and media. CNN calls Chris "The Indiana Jones of natural medicine." Chris lectures extensively on holistic health and botanical medicines, throughout the United States and the European Union, Hong Kong, Thailand, Dubai, Australia, Peru, Vanuatu and many other countries. He is also the author of 14 books. Visit Chris at medicinehunter.com

Exercise and Mental Wellness:

Strategies for Living Fully

by Cillian McDowell



IT IS NO GREAT SURPRISE THAT REGULAR EXERCISE IS GOOD FOR THE BODY. IT CAN CONTROL WEIGHT, COMBAT PROBLEMATIC HEALTH CONDITIONS AND DISEASES, PUT THE SPARK BACK INTO YOUR SEX LIFE, AND EVEN ADD YEARS TO YOUR LIFE.

However, exercise is about more than just the physical benefits. It can have a profoundly positive impact on depression, anxiety, ADHD, stress, and memory. Exercise also helps with sleep and boosts overall mood. Research also indicates that benefits can be reaped from even modest amounts of exercise no matter one's age or fitness level.

How much exercise is considered a moderate amount? Probably not as much as you think. Although the ideal amount of exercise for mental-wellness has yet to be agreed upon, there is some evidence to suggest that doing more exercise leads to greater benefits. However, it is important to keep in mind that even just a few minutes of physical activity is better than none at all. If you do not have time for, or are unable to complete, 15 to 30 minutes of exercise, then start with a 5 or 10 minute session. The key is to commit to some level of physical activity on most days.

For example, cleaning the house, washing the car, tending to the yard and garden, and mowing the lawn with a push mower are all considered light physical activity. These activities can often be overlooked as actual exercise, but they are no less valid than going for a walk. The key is to get moving, take in oxygen, and get blood circulating on a routine basis. In



However, it is important to keep in mind that even just a few minutes of physical activity is better than none at all.

addition, when nature serves as a backdrop for physical activity, mental-wellness benefits get a boost and can add unique qualities for relaxation and inner peace. Overcoming physical and mental health obstacles to exercise can be difficult. For example, when you

feel tired, stressed, or depressed it can feel like working out will only make it worse. Yet studies show that regular exercise can reduce fatigue, anxiety, and depression and increase energy levels. Feeling tired or down? Set small, achievable goals and build-up from there.



It's important to remember that physical disability or injury may limit the ability to exercise, and may cause pain. Talk to your healthcare provider about ways to safely exercise, and consider getting physical under water to reduce joint or muscle discomfort. For mental-wellness and improved overall health, treat exercise like a private mini-appointment with yourself. Schedule it in daily and watch the rewards grow.

WORKOUT





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Highlands Community Charter School, Sacramento, California



You are more likely to encounter someone: a friend, family member, co-worker, neighbor, or member of the community, in an emotional or mental crisis than someone having a heart attack. You can help them. Join us; join the movement. Become a Mental Health First Aider. For inquiries and to schedule training for your organization, please visit mentalhealthca.org.

Hearing Voices With Bipolar Disorder

KATIE, WHO HAS BIPOLAR DISORDER, DESCRIBES HER EXPERIENCE OF HEARING VOICES WHEN SHE IS MANIC OR DEPRESSED.



by Katie Conibear

DURING MANIA, THE VOICES CAN BE COMFORTING. I HAVE MANY IDEAS RACING THROUGH MY HEAD DURING A MANIC PHASE, AND THE VOICES I HEAR ADD TO THE JUMBLE. THEY GIVE ME IDEAS AND FILL ME WITH CONFIDENCE THAT THEN ELEVATES MY MOOD FURTHER. I OFTEN SPEAK OUT LOUD TO THEM AND THEY REPLY VERY AUDIBLY, AS IF THEY WERE IN THE ROOM WITH ME.

I remember instances when I'd been in my bedroom alone and I would run downstairs extremely excited, like I had just spoken to a friend on the telephone who I hadn't seen for a while. I've had conversations with people where I've become distracted or 'zoned out' because there is a voice speaking to me. Sometimes I might make a joke that no one understands but myself and the voices, or laughed out loud for seemingly no reason. Over the years, the voices have become my friends and I think I would miss them if they were gone. If my mood becomes very elevated, I know they will be there and I look forward to hearing them.

When I'm severely depressed, I have heard screaming and shouting in my head. It's often incoherent with a few words and sentences scattered about and all of it incredibly loud. The loudness of it all makes it an extremely intense experience, like being at the cinema with the sound booming all around you. Sometimes it feels directed at me and at other times the shouting feels intrusive, like somebody is ranting and raving

at nothing or no one in particular. The worst part of this is not knowing how long it will go on for, and knowing I can't escape it. It often happens when I'm in bed and can't sleep, but it has happened during the day, too. I'm sat or lying in the dark when the screaming starts. The screaming is constant and then there is a voice shouting "Everyone hates you", "You're worthless". It frightens me immensely. I've found myself covering my ears to escape the noise. I've curled into a ball and cried on the floor or in bed as the screaming continues. Very occasionally, I hear tapping. It usually happens when I'm extremely irritable, which can happen when I'm depressed or manic.

When I was younger, I thought having someone who talked to me in my head was normal. I know people have conversations out loud to think through a problem, but the difference is they know exactly what the next sentence is going to be. As I've gotten older, I've realized that my experiences are not the same. Now, I find it embarrassing and I don't like discussing it with anyone. I



have been caught a couple of times. I was on a train with my partner when I answered a question out loud. He said to me looking confused "Who are you talking to?" I remember turning red and saying "Oh sorry, I thought you asked me a question." and left it at that. I also felt that if I told anyone about the screaming and shouting they would think I was disturbed and crazy. I've tried a few times to reach out to people, but I can never seem to articulate exactly how it feels, or even to admit to the problem. I find writing and blogging to be therapeutic and it's an easier way to explain how I feel.

At the moment, I am taking Lamotrigine, a mood stabilizer, and Aripiprazole, an antipsychotic. They have helped balance my moods, giving me stability. It's not perfect, and I still have manic and depressed phases where I sometimes hear voices. I'm learning more about how to deal with these episodes, such as trying to rationalize what is happening, and ignoring it when I feel able to.

Managing Bipolar Disorder can be daunting at first, but there are many tools to utilize:

- ☀ Find support as soon as possible. At appointments with your doctor, try to be confident and assertive, to ensure you receive the support you need. This can be incredibly difficult when you're ill, so take a family member or close friend with you who understands your illness.
- ☀ If you have psychotic symptoms, it's important to be able to stabilize your moods. When stable, the symptoms should subside. Find a good stabilizer that works for you.
- ☀ Become an expert on your illness. The more you know, the more you will understand and find solutions to combat Bipolar.



- ☀ Find a Bipolar support group near you, or online. Hearing other people's experiences and struggles, and how they have overcome them can be inspiring and informative. They are often a great resource to find advice.
- ☀ Although medication is important to treating Bipolar, it should not be relied upon alone. Therapy can help you to understand the triggers that result in depression or mania, such as a lack of sleep or stress. It can also encourage you to challenge disordered thinking that may contribute to extreme moods. Therapy is a useful tool that can cast light on past experiences that may have contributed to the formation of your illness. Talking about these issues can be difficult at first, but ultimately will help you to deal with and understand your illness.
- ☀ Eat a healthy balanced diet, and exercise regularly, which releases mood elevating endorphins.
- ☀ Drink plenty of water and limit your alcohol intake.
- ☀ Have a dedicated sleep routine, and try to sleep 7-8 hours every night.
- ☀ Find time everyday to de-stress and relax. Meditation helps to calm the mind and find focus.
- ☀ Make sure you are not deficient in any vitamins. Research shows vitamins B and D are vital to combating Bipolar. Adjust your diet or take vitamin supplements.

LIVE

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