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Taking Care of Our Emotional Health



john postons

M.S.W.

"What's Your Plan?"

One fundamental strategy to maintaining emotional health is planning and having a plan to guide us. It sounds simple, but many of us take it for granted. Financial experts tell us that good money management involves having a plan. Weight and diet gurus extoll the virtues of having a good eating plan, so much so that I've heard it said by Weight Watchers that "failing to plan is planning to fail"! When you think about it nearly everything we do in life, from having a career to building a house, from going on vacation to dealing with difficult relationships, involves good

planning in order for it to be successful.

Why plan? Planning keeps us focused and grounded. It gives us a sense of control and something tangible to hold onto and to guide us. A good plan points us in a direction and instills confidence in both our desire and ability to achieve a goal. Without a plan, we wander aimlessly. The old saying is loaded with truth: "If we don't know where we're going, we'll get there every time!"

A good plan has three essential ingredients:

1. A **goal** which is specific, measurable, realistic, and time-limited.
2. A **program of action** which gives clearly defined steps to reach our goal.
3. A method of regularly **reviewing** and **charting** our progress.

It is often a good idea to put our plan in writing, keep it visible, and have someone to review it with. I do planning with people around issues such as depression and anxiety, marital conflict, stress, work dissatisfaction, and healing from a trauma or bereavement. But we don't necessarily need a troubling personal issue to give us a reason to plan. When we plan out our day, how we are going to live our life, and what we want to do with our time, talent, and resources, then we find ourselves living with purpose and meaning. Our emotional health is just one of the beneficiaries.

So, early into 2007, what's your plan?

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Free sessions on 'Living with Liver Disease'

The Windsor Essex County Chapter of the Canadian Liver Foundation is offering a free series of information sessions on "Living with Liver Disease".

Each monthly session will offer different topics related to the function of the liver, diseases and treatment, and support in coping with liver disease. This program offers a forum for patients and families to connect with one another and share their experiences. It also offers the opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns and benefit from a supportive group dynamic.

The next session will be held on Monday, Jan. 15 at 7 p.m. at The Parish of the Atonement Family Centre, 2940 Forest Glade Drive in Windsor.

Focusing on Exercise and Relaxation Therapy, this session will focus on how to conserve energy and increase energy levels, different approaches to relaxation, as well as pres-

entation and demonstration of Tai Chi.

Liver disease affects more than 2.5 million Canadians of all ages and is the fourth leading cause of death by disease. The Canadian Liver Foundation is committed to reducing the incidence and impact of liver disease by providing support for research and education into the causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of the more than 100 diseases of the liver.

These free information sessions are open to the public and would be of interest to liver disease patients, their family members, and anyone else in the community who would like to learn more about liver health and coping with liver disease.

To register for the Living with Liver Disease Program, interested persons are asked to contact the Windsor-Essex County Chapter office at 519-974-8008.

Rt. Hon. Herb Gray to provide keynote address at ERCA annual meeting

The Essex Regional Conservation Authority (ERCA) will hold its annual general meeting on Thursday, Jan. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Essex County Civic and Education Centre, 360 Fairview Avenue West. The Right Honourable Herb Gray, Canadian Chair of the International Joint Commission, will provide the keynote address at the meeting.

ERCA will present its annual report, highlighting some of the past year's accomplishments in creating a future of sustainability for this region. As well, the 2006 Conservation Awards will be presented to seven recipients. A wine and cheese reception will follow, and the meeting is open to the public. Please contact Phil Darrell-Smith at 519-776-5209 ext. 398 if you plan to attend.



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