

SEPTA NEWS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — JANE HELLBERG

SEPTA and spring have something in common: for both it is a time of new beginnings. SEPTA is now starting to make plans for next year. It is time to staff committees, brainstorm about speakers for future meetings, and plan fundraising activities. SEPTA is a wonderful way to stay informed about issues and exchange information with other parents, but we do need volunteers to

make this happen. A nominating committee form is attached to this issue of the newsletter. Please consider volunteering some time to keep SEPTA growing in 2005-06.

Though plans are underway for next year, this year is not quite over yet! The last SEPTA meeting for this year is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 26**. This will be an informative presentation about the

high school programs offered at BOCES. It is never too early to explore the opportunities a school district can offer a child, and BOCES offers some wonderful programs for students.

This is a new date for the April meeting, so **please note** there will be no meeting on April 28 as is indicated on the school calendar.

Happy Spring!

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

In honor of spring and the renewal and rejuvenation that defines this season, we wanted a theme of ideas to reflect that sentiment.

The articles in this issue of *SEPTA News* represent our overall feeling of rejuvenation and the possibilities of something new.

The ideas and techniques

compiled here are not endorsed or recommended by SEPTA as a whole or by individual members. We are simply sharing information that we have found interesting.

While none of these techniques are a panacea, they could be helpful in relieving the stress and emotional turmoil that students, parents,

and teachers may be experiencing.

We hope that you can find at least a small nugget of help to make life a little bit easier, a little more pleasant, and a little more enjoyable.

- The SEPTA Executive Board

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MEETING DATES

- ⇒ April 26 - 7:30pm, SIS Library
- ⇒ May 16 - Budget Q&A - **9:30am**, Primrose Cafeteria

LEGISLATION

Year 2004 Tax Benefits for Parents of Children with LDs

NOTE:The following information from www.schwablearning.org is a brief summary and should not be considered legal advice. Schwab Learning advises you to visit their website and print a copy of their tax guide for your tax advisor.

If you have a child with severe learning disabilities, AD/HD, or other physical, mental or emotional impairment, you may qualify for valuable tax benefits. Because tax laws are complex, and many tax preparers often do not have occasion to use these unique tax benefits, families are at risk of losing refunds worth many thousands of dollars.

IRS publications represent the most accessible form of guidance to the tax rules for the general public. The IRS also issues interpretations of the code and regulations called "Revenue Rulings." These interpretations are formal, binding policy statements.

Tax Benefits: Deductions v. Credits

It is important to distinguish between two different categories of tax benefits. One category is a "deduction from taxable income." The value of a deduction is based on the marginal tax rate of the taxpayer. If a person has a deduction worth \$1,000, the actual value of the deduction will be determined by the taxpayer's tax rate; so a taxpayer in the lowest tax rate bracket, 10%, will have taxable income reduced by \$1,000, and save \$100. However, a taxpayer in a higher bracket, 28%, will have taxable income reduced by \$1,000 and save \$280.

The second benefit is a tax credit, which is a dollar for dollar reduction in tax liability. An individual with a tax credit worth \$1,000 will have his tax bill reduced by \$1,000. This means that the actual amount of taxes is reduced by the amount of the tax credit.

Retroactive Claims for Refunds

The IRS allows taxpayers to file amended returns, and collect refunds for unclaimed tax benefits, retroactively for up to three years.

Medical Expense Deductions

The IRS has ruled that tuition costs for a special school that has a program designed to educate children with LDs, and amounts paid for a child's tutoring by a teacher specially trained and qualified to deal with severe LDs may also be deducted. Special instruction or training or therapy, such as sign language instruction, speech therapy, and remedial reading instruction also would be deductible. Related books and materials can qualify for the medical expense deduction.

Generally, to qualify for the deduction, the child's doctor must recommend the special school, therapy, or tutoring, and there must be a medical diagnosis of a neurological disorder, such as severe LD, made by a medical professional.

Transportation expenses to the special school or to the tutor also qualify for a medical expense deduction. If transportation is by car, the allowable expense

in 2004 is fourteen cents per mile plus parking and tolls, or the actual cost of operating the vehicle.

Diagnostic evaluations also qualify for a medical expense deduction. This can include testing by a speech-language pathologist, psychologist, neurologist, or other person with professional qualifications. **Note:** Expenses claimed as a medical expense deduction and later reimbursed by a school district or insurance company must be reported as taxable income for the year in which the reimbursements are received.

Medical expense deductions are subject to certain limitations.

Alternative approaches to obtaining tax benefits in connection with medical expenses may involve use of a Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Flexible Savings Arrangement (FSA). An HAS allows a worker to use up to \$5,150 in pretax income for medical expenses. An HAS may only be opened where the employee has a "high deductible" health insurance plan. Amounts placed in an HAS may be carried over to following years if not used.

A FSA can be part of a "cafeteria plan" of alternative fringe benefits offered by an employer. An employee can allocate pre-tax income to the account, and then withdraw it during the year to pay for medical expenses. Employers may also make contributions to the FSA, and the maximum amount is set by the terms of the employer plan. Two important conditions are: the amount to be placed in the account must be determined by the employee at the beginning of the year, and funds not used by the end of the year are lost.

Conference Deductions

In May 2000 the IRS issued Revenue Ruling 2000-04 which offers parents of children with disabilities some good news. Parents who attend conferences to obtain medical information concerning treatment for and care of their child may deduct the cost of admission and the cost of transportation to the conference. However, the costs of meals and lodging are not deductible. (**Note:** Lodging, up to \$50 per night, is deductible if travel and stay are necessary for receiving medical treatment.)

Child and Dependent Care Credit

This credit is allowed for work related expenses incurred for dependents of the taxpayer. In general, the dependent must be under 13 years old; however, if a child has a disability and requires supervision, the age limit is waived.

Expenses up to \$3,000 per year for one qualifying dependent and up to \$6,000 for two or more qualifying dependents are allowed. Expenses for regular childcare services, after-school programs, and summer camp (excluding overnight camp) qualify as credits. Payments to a relative to care for a child also qualify, as long as the relative is not a dependent of the taxpayer.

The credit is calculated at 20-35 percent of allowable expenses based on the family's adjusted gross income. (See IRS Publication 503, *Child and Dependent*

Care Expenses)

Exemption for Dependents

A taxpayer is entitled to claim an exemption for each qualified dependent. Although this appears relatively straightforward, caretakers such as grandparents, extended family, or even foster parents, may overlook these exemptions. Also, in some cases, a non-custodial parent who provides the majority of support for a child with a severe learning disability, and also pays for medical/educational expenses related to the child's LD, may likewise qualify for both the exemption and medical expense deductions. There is a five part test for qualification of exemptions.

Earned Income Tax Credit

Families filing a married joint return with adjusted gross income under \$35,458 may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) based on the presence of one or two "qualifying children" in the taxpayer's home. For EITC purposes, a "qualifying child" is a biological child, adopted child, step child, or foster child who resided with the taxpayer for more than six months during the calendar year, and is under age 19 at the end of the year. A "qualifying child" is also a child age 19-23 who is a full time student for at least one semester. Finally, a severely disabled child is a "qualifying child" without regard to age, even into adulthood, as long as the child continues to live with his parent(s). **Note:** a "qualifying child" for EITC does not have to meet the requirements for a dependency exemption.

Where To Get More Information

The IRS provides free booklets covering each of the topics listed above. The titles listed below may be ordered by calling the IRS toll-free number (800) 829-3676. Generally, taxpayers may order up to three copies of any publication or form. The following booklets may be helpful:

- ✂ IRS Publication 17: *Your Federal Income Tax*
- ✂ IRS Publication 501: *Exemptions, Standard Deduction and Filing Information*
- ✂ IRS Publication 502: *Medical and Dental Expenses*
- ✂ IRS Publication 503: *Child and Dependent Care Expenses*
- ✂ IRS Publication 596: *Earned Income Tax Credit*
- ✂ IRS Publication 969: *Health Savings Accounts and Other Tax-Favored Health Plans*

Also, extensive information may be obtained from the IRS. The American Bar Association Section on Taxation contains links to scores of tax related sites.

Final Thoughts

This guide offers a brief summary of some, but not all, of the potential tax benefits that may be available to you. You should obtain copies of the IRS publications listed above and discuss with your tax advisor whether these benefits apply to you. Again, you should rely on this guide alone to determine whether you should claim any of the tax benefits reviewed here.

Challenger Little League by Garry Berger

Ridgefield Little League is forming a new division this spring, the Holland Division, which will be designed for special needs children, ages 5 to 12. This league will be open to children in Ridgefield and from the surrounding towns in Fairfield and Westchester Counties. We will play on Sunday mornings in May and June.

The Ridgefield Little League Board of Directors has been very enthusiastic and supportive. One idea we've come up

with is to have a "buddy system" where each Sunday a team from the League's major league division (10 to 12 year olds) will volunteer to come down as a team and "buddy up" with each of our kids to help out as needed. For example, they can show the kids how to swing, help them run the bases, help them catch and throw the ball in the field, etc.

I think it will be a great experience for all the kids involved.

If anyone would like to sign up, please let me know and I will send out a short application. All that is required is a \$50 fee.

I've done similar leagues now with soccer and basketball in Ridgefield and it's been a great success.

If you have any questions (or suggestions), please contact me at 203-438-3303 or at garry@bergerlegal.com

SEPTA NEEDS YOU!

If you would like to volunteer to work on a SEPTA committee, be sure to fill out the form at the back of the newsletter!

Hyperbaric Chamber Provides Hope For Neurological Disorders by Eric Gross*

From the day her daughter was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, Dr. Giespina "Jo" Feingold has dedicated her life to finding and providing therapies available to special needs children.

One intervention not readily used in Putnam until now deals with a hyperbaric oxygen chamber that enables patients to breathe pure oxygen at greater than normal atmospheric pressure.

During a visit to Dr. Feingold's Valley Health and Hyperbaric office, the physician explained that "hyperbaric was long recognized as a means of helping divers recover from the bends and deep-burn patients heal. The hyperbaric chamber is now gaining ground as a method to treat those suffering from a stroke along with those suffering from cerebral palsy and other neurological conditions."

After Dr. Feingold's daughter, Elisa, was diagnosed, the child underwent a series of treatments in a chamber with "marvelous" results. She began to talk and demonstrated better concentration.

Dr. Feingold explained that increased

oxygen levels resulting from the chamber improves the blood flow in the brain to areas that may be poor. "This translates into improvement of clinical outcome with the greatest improvement in the area of cognition.

Jane Geoghean praised Dr. Feingold for "making the impossible happen while not giving false hope."

Mrs. Geoghean's husband, who recently recovered from a coma, is now able to make sounds and lift his arms following the treatments. "Dr. Feingold combines the best part of western medicine with alternative medicine to come up with individualized and effective treatments," she said.

The number of treatments that a patient needs differs depending on the patient's diagnosis, and on the patient's response to the therapy. The average number of treatments is 20 to 40.

Valley Health and Hyperbarics uses hyperbaric oxygen therapy for treatment of the standard diagnoses currently approved by the FDA which includes:

- " carbon monoxide poisoning and smoke inhalation,
- " clostridial myonecrosis (gas gangrene),
- " crush injury, compartment syndrome, and other acute traumatic ischemias,
- " decompression sickness,
- " enhancement of healing in selected problem wounds,
- " exceptional blood loss (anemia),
- " necrotizing soft tissue infections,
- " Osteomyelitis (refractory),
- " radiation tissue damage,
- " skin grafts and flaps (compromised),
- " thermal burns,
- " intracranial abscess.

In addition to hyperbarics, Dr. Feingold's practice specializes in physical and rehabilitation services including integrated manual therapy, sensory learning, and IV therapies and supplements.

Dr. Feingold's offices are located in Brewster and Mahopac, and may be reached at 845-278-6363 and 845-208-3624, respectively.

*Sources: *Putnam County Courier* 12/2/04, and Valley Health PR Packet.

Medical And Therapy News

REIKI-The Gentle Art of Healing

Many ancient cultures, including the Japanese, Chinese, Indians, and Egyptians embraced the belief that life energy flowed through the body, deeply affecting our bodies, minds, and emotions. Current research strongly suggests that energy does extend throughout and beyond the physical body, and that disruptions or imbalances in its flow correlate to physical, mental, and emotional illnesses. The healing art of Reiki (RAY-key) addresses these imbalances to support your good health and well-being.

Reiki is the name given to a system of natural healing which evolved in Japan from the experience and dedication of Dr Mikao Usui (d. 1926). Dr Usui was inspired to develop this healing system from ancient teachings after many years of study, research and meditation. Today Reiki continues to be taught by Reiki Masters who have trained in the tradition passed down from Master to student.

Reiki is not massage, hypnosis, or a tool for diagnosing illness. It is a technique that addresses both chronic and acute conditions, gently and powerfully promoting balance among all the body's systems and the normal regenerative processes of the body and mind.

The practitioner is a channel which the energy is drawn through by the need or imbalance

in the recipient.

Still and focused, the practitioner will simply place his hands on or above your head, shoulders, back, chest, stomach, and limbs. The teachings say that the energy will flow through the practitioner, but not from the practitioner to you. You will receive the amount of energy you need to bring your mind and body into balance.

Medical research has verified the effects of Reiki. Among other studies that have cited pain reduction and improved immune and nervous systems functions, the Columbia/HCA Portsmouth Regional Hospital in New Hampshire has found that surgical patients decreased their use of pain medications, stayed for shorter periods, and reported increased satisfaction with pre-and post surgical Reiki sessions.

The Tucson Medical Center, St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco, and St. Mary's Medical Center in Pennsylvania have successfully integrated Reiki into numerous clinical settings to complement medical and psychological care.

The gentle art of Reiki benefits persons of any age and in any state of health by alleviating pain and stress, and promoting restful sleep, healing and relaxation. Relaxation in

itself promotes a host of benefits for the mind and body including a heightened sense of well-being, release of muscle tension, and relief from anxiety and depression. In addition, relaxation has been shown to help restore immune function and improve circulation, enhancing healing throughout your body.

While the effects vary from person to person, most people experience deep relaxation, and may perceive a tingling or pulsing sensation, and a feeling of warmth and comfort.

Results are sometimes subtle. Some recipients say they feel little during the session but afterward enjoy a sense of calm and well-being, and a deep, restful sleep. It is possible to experience powerful sensations or emotions during or after a session.

As running water smoothes the jagged edges of a rock until it is small enough to roll away, Reiki flows to the areas of need, soothing pain and supporting the body's natural ability to heal itself and restore balance in one's life.

If you would like more information, contact Janine Fleury, Reiki Master at 914-248-0330

*Information compiled from The Reiki Association and from *Reiki For Everyone*, information from Janine M. Fleury, Reiki Master

Integrative Manual Therapy

Integrative Manual Therapy is a powerful technology that yields profound results in returning the human body to optimal health. With three decades of successful outcomes, this unique science brings deep, long-lasting results to the challenges of habilitation, rehabilitation and illness.

This totally non-invasive, medication-free modality uses the most basic of tools - human hands - to support the body's innate wisdom to heal itself.

Integrative Manual Therapy (IMT) has been in development during the past 30 years by Sharon Giammatteo, PhD, PT, IMPC. She formally introduced this work in her first lecture on Structural and Functional Rehabilitation in 1981. It has remained the focus of clinical practice and continuing research at Center IMT Connecticut since its inception.

One of the body's most amazing attributes is its ability and propensity to heal itself. Most health problems simply come down to blockages and other dysfunction that prevent various aspects of the body from self-healing.

The fundamental premise of IMT is locating

the causes of dysfunction and reestablishing the body's structural and physiologic function. Once these inherent functions are reestablished, the body's innate healing abilities also return to optimum.

IMT is built on the philosophy of the Integrated Systems Approach - the concept that each client's body must be evaluated and treated uniquely, as a series of interdependent systems. The clinical process begins with Integrative Diagnostics - a manual diagnostics technology used to localize the source and exact site of the contributing patho-anatomy.

Once a treatment program has been designed, implementation begins. Patients play an important role in the effectiveness of their healing process, including their motivation for a homework program and implementation of dietary and lifestyle changes.

IMT address rehabilitation in two categories: Structural Rehabilitation and Functional Rehabilitation.

Structural Rehabilitation improves structural integrity of the body. It address joint mobility, muscle tone, soft tissue flexibility, range of motion,

muscle control and more. It corrects patho-anatomy in biomechanics of the spine and appendages, muscles, connective tissue system, organs, nervous system, blood vessels, lymphatic system and energetic structures.

Functional Rehabilitation restores functional outcomes according to the optimal potential of the client. It addresses balance, coordination, proprioception (internal joint sensation), exteroception (sensory capability), strength, endurance, hearing, vision, speech, smell, learning, behavior and more.

The relations between the two can be illustrated in the following analogy of a child playing the piano. If the piano is out of tune, the music will sound poor, even if the child is a master pianist. It is the structural integrity of the piano that will make the sounds poor. Once the piano is tuned, treated structurally, the potential for good music is there, but the child may need lessons. The lessons are Functional Rehabilitation that will help the child to reach his potential in creating beautiful music.

*From *Integrative Manual Therapy* - Center IMT. For more information visit www.CenterIMT.com

THE NEW HANDS-ON MEDICINE by Jane Hammerslough From: *Child Magazine* 5/97

If you've ever rubbed the back or your neck when you were feeling tense, massaged your child's forehead when she had a headache, or gently stroked your baby's stomach to soothe colic pains, you've instinctively practiced, and probably benefited from, the healing art of acupressure. This alternative medical treatment is based on the theory that applying pressure to points on the body (known as acupoints) can relieve pain and promote wellness.

The Chinese have been using acupressure to treat pain, nausea, colds, headaches, and other ailments for about 5,000 years. Now interest is growing among Americans as well, even as a treatment for children. "Parents are looking for more gentle, drug-free ways to take care of their children," says Edna Pytlak, MD, a pediatrician in private practice and assistant professor of pediatrics at Cornell Medical School in New York City. She recommends patients use acupressure-based massage for colic, asthma, stomach pain, and migraine headaches.

There are no statistics on the number of Americans who use or have tried acupressure. However, interest in and acceptance of this ancient hands-on therapy is clearly on the rise, even among traditional medical doctors. Seventy-three of the nation's 125 medical schools, including Harvard Medical School, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, and Stanford University School of Medicine, now offer courses in alternative medicine, some with lectures on acupressure. And a growing number of insurance companies now cover alternative treatments such as acupressure.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Acupressure—applying external pressure to the skin—is legally and medically classified as a type of massage. It is based on the same principles as acupuncture, in which thin needles are inserted into the skin. These treatments are rooted in the traditional Eastern philosophy that *chi*, or energy, flows through the body along pathways known as meridians. When energy in the meridians is uneven, physical and emotional problems can result. Practitioners believe that they can restore the balance of *chi* by stimulating (with pressure, needles, heat, or electricity) specific points on a patient's skin.

If you think this sounds a little flaky, you're not alone. Western researchers are trying to get a more scientific handle on why acupressure seems to work on certain ailments. They haven't completely uncovered the mystery, but they have some strong theories. Some scientists see a similarity between the electromagnetic fields (measurable patterns of electricity and magnetism generated by the normal nerve functions) that exist in the body and the idea of energy flowing in meridians. Other studies have shown that pressing the skin can release hormones and other biochemicals. "Stimulating specific points

triggers the release of endorphins, the neurochemicals that relieve pain," says Michael Reed Gach, PhD, author of *Acupressure's Potent Points: A Guide to Self-Care for Common Ailments*. And research on touch has shown that massaging the skin helps increase blood flow and relieves stress and muscle tension.

So far, there isn't much research on acupressure, but interest in the medical use of *chi* is growing. The National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, recently funded a series of studies in the field, and preliminary results of one, by Neil Sonenklar, MD, of the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, show that a combination of acupuncture and acupressure may be a useful treatment for children with ADHD. In addition, "some studies indicate acupressure and acupuncture are effective in treating nausea and vomiting," says Kathi Kemper, MD, associate clinical professor of pediatrics and health services at the University of Washington in Seattle and author of *The Holistic Pediatrician*.

Because they're so closely linked, much of the current support for acupressure is based on research that exists on acupuncture. The main difference is that the benefits of acupressure are not as intense as the benefits of acupuncture. For instance, research shows that acupuncture can block the pain of surgical procedures, while acupressure is thought to be effective on less severe pain such as headaches. "Acupressure could be considered the over-the-counter version of acupuncture," says Russell Erikson, MD, a Richmond, California, pediatrician and acupuncturist. "Anyone can do it if they know the points, whereas acupuncture requires training to use the needles."

"The main advantage to acupressure is that it's a home remedy that doesn't cost anything. All you need are your fingers and a map of pressure points. And unlike conventional, over-the-counter medicines, acupressure doesn't cause side effects," says May Loo, MD, a San Jose, California, pediatrician and acupuncturist who teaches patients and their parents to use acupoints for asthma, allergies, headaches, sinus problems, and other ailments. Dr. Loo is also conducting research on the use of acupuncture in the treatment of ADHD.

PUTTING PRESSURE ON SAFELY

Despite their enthusiasm for acupressure, practitioners are quick to point out that this treatment cannot take the place of conventional pediatric medical care, particularly for potentially serious illnesses such as asthma, and infections. "I see myself not as alternative but as complementary," explains Michael Phillips, a licensed acupuncturist and dean of students at the Traditional Acupuncture Institute, located in Columbia, Maryland. "Pediatricians inform us from their perspective, and there are times when we absolutely defer to them," observes Phillips, whose two children have undergone acupressure for vomiting and ear pain.

While we wait for definitive proof that acupressure works, the current thinking in the medical community is that it's safe to try, as long as it's used along with more traditional medical treatments. It's best thought of as a way to reduce pain and anxiety, which can foster healing. It is not a directly curative therapy. You should also heed these cautions: Never perform acupressure on broken or recently scarred skin, or during pregnancy without first checking with a healthcare provider (it's believed some acupoints can stimulate contractions and jeopardize a pregnancy). Otherwise, acupressure is safe for all ages.

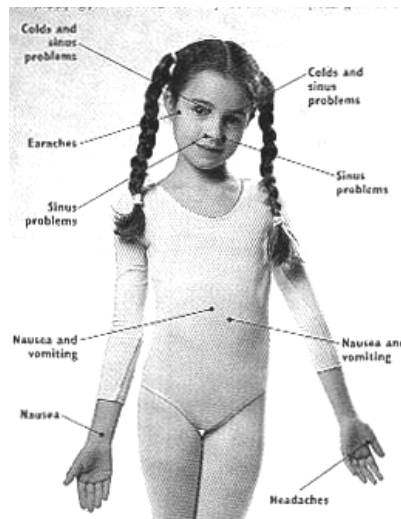
You're not likely to hurt your child by experimenting with acupressure, but you'll get better results by first seeing a trained acupressurist or acupuncturist, who can give you specific advice on treating your child. As you become better at manipulating the points and your child gets older, you can teach her to press her own skin when she feels pain or uneasiness. Children as young as 4 can learn some simple pressure points.

"The key to working with children is using a light, steady touch," says Phillips. "A little goes a long way. I recommend pressure that's similar to the amount used to check the ripeness of a melon." "It should always be pleasant, never painful," says Dr. Pytlak. "If your child is bothered by it, you should stop."

"WILL IT HELP MY CHILD?"

The only way to answer this question satisfactorily is to try acupressure on your children or yourself and make your own decision.

Apply steady pressure to the acupoints illustrated using 2 to 4 fingers for at least 1 and up to 3 minutes, as often as needed. See your doctor for ear pain (in case of infection) and if any symptoms last for more than 2 to three days.



Aromatherapy

In the early 1980's, modern aromatherapy became a popular phenomenon in Great Britain, then started to spread throughout the rest of the English-speaking world. Since then, many people have learned about the numerous ways in which aromatherapy and essential oils can improve their lives. Aromatherapy is the practice of using naturally extracted essences of aromatic plants to promote the health and well-being of your body, mind, and emotions. These essences (essential oils) are what gives plants their characteristic smells and contain the vital life force of fragrant botanical plants.

Aromatherapy works with your body in a very natural, holistic way. By gently activating your body's own healing energies, aromatherapy helps to restore balance to your body, mind, and spirit. It complements almost any other type of therapy or healing practice, whether conventional or alternative.

Essential oils work on several levels, the first of which is smell. Odors are identified by the limbic system, which is also the part of the brain involved in the experience of emotions. It is here that odors can trigger memories and influence behavior.

Since the limbic system also works to coordinate the pituitary gland and hypothalamus to regulate hormonal activities, odors can thus trigger the production of hormones that govern appetite, bodily functions, insulin production, overall metabolism, stress levels, sex drive, and temperature.

The limbic system affects the nervous system as well. Desires, motivation, moods, intuition, and creativity all originate within the limbic system.

Because they act on the limbic system, smells can improve your psychological disposition, in addition to enhancing your physical health.

While offering easy ways to enhance the quality of your life and improve your health, aromatherapy can prompt your mind and body to function more effectively.

Stress plays a major role in almost all illness, both physical and mental. The regular use of essential oils can help you control stress, alleviate anxiety and tension, and minimize their physical aches and pains they cause.

Aromatherapy, also, has a positive influence on the emotions. Many essential oils can help you regulate your moods - some are uplifting and energizing; others are calming and sedating; and still others work to restore balance.

The forces of commerce have made their imprint on aromatherapy. There are an avalanche of products that are "aromatherapy" in name only, with inexpensive synthetic ingredients being used in place of pure essential oils. The aromas derived from synthetic scents offer no therapeutic value whatsoever.

When purchasing essential oils, you should be aware of a number of warning signs that may indicate that you are not getting the purest product available.

Adulteration is the addition of other substances to extend or alter the appearance, the chemical composition, or the smell of an essential oil. Adulterating essential oils with vegetable or carrier oils is perfectly acceptable and the label should reflect this addition. However, adulteration one essential oil with a dif-

ferent one is a frequent and fraudulent practice.

Also, if a company sells all of its essential oils for the same price, chances are they aren't pure. Essential oil prices vary dramatically.

And finally, if the label on a product doesn't specify "essential oil" or "pure essential oil," the product probably is not an essential oil. However, even this is not a guarantee of purity.

While the understanding of the biological interactions that essential oils initiate is still very limited, anyone who would like to use them is reminded that in order to garner the full support that essential oils can provide, they must make sure that any essential oil used is truly the product of a biological organism rather than the product of a laboratory.

Health is a reflection of the inner world you created with your thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes. Equally, health is a reflection of the outer world that you create with your actions, lifestyle choices, and priorities.

Healing demands that you look beyond symptoms to discover their sources, for silencing symptoms can heal neither body nor mind. Investigating underlying causes lets you look closely at your life and the lifestyle factors that cause or contribute to discomfort and disease. It brings awareness and offers opportunities to make changes that can restore health and balance.

From: *Aromatherapy: Essential Oils for Vibrant Health and Beauty*, by Roberta Wilson

For more information visit: www.ifa.org.au or www.naha.org

The Mission of the PTA

- ☞ To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.
- ☞ To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children.
- ☞ To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Jane Hellberg
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SECRETARY Laura Hanlon
TREASURER Katherine Realbuto

“Together we can make a difference.”

Somers Central School District

Special Services Barry Whalen
 277-3777 Alethea Schepperly
 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joanne Marien
 248-7872
 Asst. Superintendent Mrs. Kathy Mason
 248-5531

Please note our new website address

We're on the Web!
www.SomersPTACouncil.org/SEPTA

PLEASE NOTE: The following is a compilation of resources that SEPTA members have used and found helpful. While SEPTA does not endorse any individual resource, we do hope that you find this list useful.

NYS PTA Special Education Chairperson

Josephine Macchia Dalerone@aol.com 631-893-5123

Child Psychologists

Marta Flaum, PhD Chappaqua 238-1438
 Beth Raines, PhD Goldens Bridge 232-1102
 (Specializing in adolescents)

Books

School of Dreams By Edward Humes
Dealing with Anger By Marianne Johnston
The Out of Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping With Sensory Integration Dysfunction By Carol Stock Kranowitz

Story Books For School-Age Children

My Name is Brian By Jeanne Betancourt
How Dyslexic Benny Became a Star: A Story of Hope for Dyslexic Children and their Parents By Joe Griffith
Josh: A Boy with Dyslexia By Caroline Janover
Zipper: The Kidd with ADHD By Caroline Janover
My Brother Sammy By Ellen O'Shaughnessy
Pay Attention, Slush By Mark Smith

Websites

directionservice.org/cadre Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education
 excite.com Excite K-12 Special Education
 help4adhd.org CHADD National Resource Center
 interdys.org International Dyslexia Association
 support@kidssource.com Kidsource Online
 LDAmerica.org Learning Disabilities Association of America
 ldonline.org Learning Disabilities Online

* This is only a partial list and will be changed in each issue of the newsletter. For a complete list, please see our website.

The Simple Life

From: No Ordinary Moments, by Dan

Life is very simple for the body. The body lives in linear time, in the present moment; although it handles many internal functions at once, it can only be here now. But for the mind, it's a different story. When we are caught in rush-hour traffic, for example, our body just sits there in the car, but our mind is standing on the front bumper, pushing the car in front, yelling, "Come on!" Come on!"

How many of us wake up in the morning with our mind like an "In" box piled with a stack of "Things to Do." But consider: When we awaken, we only need to do one thing at a time: First we sit up, then we put our feet on the floor, then we stand.

For the mind, life seems very rushed, frantic,

and complex. For the body, life seems very simple: one thing at a time. No matter how "busy" our day is, it still has only one thing to do - the next thing.

We would all like peace and simplicity in our lives, but peace seems more of an *internal* quality than an external one. Those who seek simplicity by living in a cabin in the woods may feel peace in those quiet and beautiful circumstances for a little while. But soon enough, the mind noise chimes in: "Damn! Gotta find a way to the raccoons out of the garden. And those deer! Gee, I'm lonely. Joe and Susie aren't carrying their share of the work load!" And so it goes.

For some of us, inner peace remains a distant

and fleeting goal; however we chase it, it remains forever ahead and, yet, right in front of our nose.

The body holds the secret and the key. *Come back to the body; let go of the mind.*

It's only natural to project our awareness into the future in order to plan our day. We may want to project our awareness into the past, to use our memory to review and learn and heal.

But when we feel troubled by fear, anxiety, or regret, these concerns signal us to take a breath and ask: *Where am I? Here. What time is it?* Now. When the mind is creating troubles, it's time to come back to the body and the serenity of the present moment.