



# INSPIRE U WELLNESS

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWS FOR U!

JUNE 2010

### **AGELESSNESS**

**“It takes a long time, Pablo Picasso wrote, to become young.”** The beauty of life is to find ourselves at the end of a very long life with a very young soul.

Something remarkable is hatching and happening in two of our Assisted Living Communities. Inter-generational friendships between an older generation and a younger one will reveal they are as important to the elder as they are to the child. Children give us a lifeline to the present and the future that is denied us if we sit alone in an assisted living unit.

Children release the child in us before it completely withers up and burns away. Our Wisdom Circles give evidence to the truth, we are not meant to be cordoned off from the rest of society. We are meant to be its wisdom center, its sign of a better life to come, its storehouse of the kind of lore no books talk about.

We are inspired to regain the right to learn from one another. Most of all, the older generation has been denied the right to teach. We have become strangers to one another...youth to elders! We are out of touch with the fullness of self.

Wisdom Circles are alive and well at both the Colony and Birchwood Arbors. The natural and necessary linkage between the old and the young cannot be reduced to a scheduled activity. We are talking about the heartbeat of a new culture. My world of late is being lived out in two contexts: among 12 and 13 year olds at two churches, and with Wisdom Circles comprised of residents who are 80-95 years young.

Reaching out to a child, who is not theirs, enables elders to reach out beyond themselves and the confines of a private life. Having the anchor and the wisdom of an adult who is not a parent or disciplinarian gives a child a world of new life and new love. This fall we will celebrate the generations living in community, young and old—it will be priceless. Ageless!!

When I think of the wellness wheel and its six dimensions, it occurs to me that this new intergenerational learning event encompasses the dimensions : spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, and vocational. Five of the six isn't bad.

P.S Forgive me for mentioning Jesus, at age 12, sitting at the feet of the elder rabbis in the temple asking and answering questions!! (Luke 2: 41-52)

**By Pastor David Holm, Director of Spiritual Services**

### Ingredients

32 graham cracker squares  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
2/3 cup dried apples  
1/2 cup sugar  
2 large egg whites  
1 large egg  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
1/4 tsp salt  
1/2 cup chopped walnuts,  
toasted  
2 tbsp confectioners' sugar

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 300. Coat an 8 by 12 inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Process graham crackers and cinnamon in a food processor until you have fine crumbs. Leaving about 1/2 cup in the working bowl, transfer the crumbs to another container. Add apples to the working bowl and process until coarsely chopped.
3. Combine sugar, egg whites, egg, vanilla, and salt in large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on high speed until thick, about 3 minutes. Fold in the reserved crumbs, apples and the toasted walnuts just until combined. Transfer batter to the prepared baking dish; smooth the top with a wet rubber spatula. Bake until the top feels dry, 30-35 minutes.
4. Let cool completely on wire rack. Dust lightly with confectioners' sugar and cut into 15 bars.

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## Laughter is strong medicine for mind and body

“Your sense of humor is one of the most powerful tools you have to make certain that your daily mood and emotional state support good health.~ [Paul E. McGhee, Ph.D.](#)

Laughter is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert.

With so much power to heal and renew, the ability to laugh easily and frequently is a tremendous resource for surmounting problems, enhancing your relationships, and supporting both physical and emotional health.

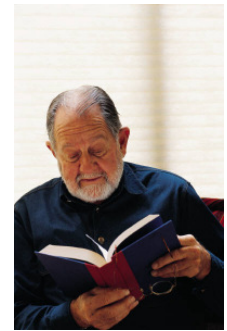
Laughter is good for your health

- **Laughter relaxes the whole body.** A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.
- **Laughter boosts the immune system.** Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.
- **Laughter triggers the release of endorphins,** the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.
- **Laughter protects the heart.** Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

Spiritual wellness is the process of getting in touch with your spiritual core. It is a dedication that is unique for each individual. This process can vary from attending church to practicing meditation, or both. It is the process of looking within to become more in touch with the spiritual dimensions of your life.

- **Explore your spiritual core** — Ask yourself the big questions: Who am I? Why did I come here? Why do humans/the world exist? Why is there evil? What happens after death?
- **Be quiet** — Spend time alone and meditate regularly. Meditation is the process of being fully here, with all concentration focused on the now. By living in the present and letting go of the past and not worrying about the future, we can achieve the inner peace that we strive for while practicing meditation. There are many forms of meditation; find out which one is right for you.
- **Be inquisitive and curious** — An attitude of active searching increases your options and your potential for spiritual centering. Don't shut doors before you check out what's behind them.
- **Be receptive to grief and pain** — Pain is a deepener. Allow yourself to feel the pain fully, then ask what it's trying to teach you.
- **Be and Do** — Spirituality is about more than reading; it's about "doing" and being fully in the present moment in everything you do.
- **Witness the choices you make in each moment** — Bring them into consciousness; ask yourself what the consequences of a choice are and if the choice will bring fulfillment and happiness. Listen with the heart and be guided by messages of comfort and discomfort. If there is comfort, go for it! If there is discomfort, pause and reevaluate.
- **Practice acceptance** — See that life right now is as it "should be." Do not struggle against the universe by struggling against the moment. Take responsibility for your life without blaming anyone, including yourself. See what the situation can teach you and how you can share this teaching with others.
- **Practice detachment** — Allow yourself and those around you the freedom to be who they are. Recognize uncertainty as an essential aspect of life. See that solutions come out of problems, confusion, and chaos, and that uncertainty is the path to freedom.
- **Be playful** — Spirituality is in music, art, dance, laughter, singing, and all of life.
- **Look for deeper meanings** — If you notice that certain themes keep coming up over and over in your life, rather than feeling like you have no control over the situation, ask for the deeper meaning of the pattern to come to you. See the gift in your greatest troubles/problems/challenges. The Chinese word for catastrophe is the same as their word for opportunity.

**Take "seven breath" breaks** — Stop periodically throughout the day, close your eyes, and take seven deep, slow belly breaths (breathe in to the count of seven, breathe out to the count of seven, seven times). Then, open your eyes and see your new world.



# Spiritual Wellness Assessment

The spiritual dimension of wellness involves seeking meaning and purpose in one's life.

Read each statement carefully and respond honestly by using the following scoring:

**Almost always = 2 points**                      **Sometimes/occasionally = 1 point**

**Very seldom = 0 points**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I feel comfortable and at ease with my spiritual life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. There is a direct relationship between my personal values and daily actions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When I get depressed or frustrated, my spiritual beliefs and values give me direction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Prayer, meditation, and/or quiet personal reflection is/are important in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Life is meaningful for me, and I feel a purpose in life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I am able to speak comfortably about my personal values and beliefs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I am consistently striving to grow spiritually and I see it as a lifelong process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I am tolerant of and try to learn about others' beliefs and values.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have a strong sense of life optimism and use my thoughts and attitudes in life-affirming ways.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I appreciate the natural forces that exist in the universe.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total for Spiritual Wellness Dimension

Score: **15 to 20 Points** - Excellent strength in this dimension.

Score: **9 to 14 Points** - There is room for improvement. Look again at the items in which you scored 1 or 0. What changes can you make to improve your score?

Score: **0 to 8 Points** - This dimension needs a lot of work. Look again at this dimension and challenge yourself to begin making small steps toward growth here. **Remember: The goal is *balanced wellness*.**

