Good News…

One good bit of news to come out of our survey last summer was that we aren’t required to evaluate your competency yearly any longer. We only need to do this once every 3 years! That makes a number of us very happy indeed! However, we do need to annually update the designated driver’s information. If you are a volunteer driver, you have been sent your test and request for current documentation via e-mail. Please complete this information as soon as possible and return it to Dianne. This is a very special service we offer our patients, and your continued willingness to drive is a tremendous help.

Indirect Care Volunteer Training
June 22nd 2:00–5:00 pm

If you know someone who might be interested in non-patient-contact volunteering, please have them contact Dianne at 788-6892 or dgillespie@peacehealth.org prior to June 22nd.

Good News…

Heal the Healers with Sound Therapy
Monday, June 11th
1:30 – 4:30 PM

R.S.V.P. Dianne, Gina or Jenny by Sunday June 10th Noon

Close your eyes and receive healing songs and experience sacred vibration meditation during the next Hospice Volunteer In-Service Monday June 11 in the Shuksan Conference Room inside the Administration building.

The Bellingham Threshold Singers are gifting healing song to the hospice volunteers and caregivers including intentions for those not able to be present. And crystal singing bowls will demonstrate how tones affect one’s energy centers and chakras for healing, balancing, and meditation.

Dress in layers if you tend to get a chill when you sit still. Bring a bottle of water to charge by the vibration and enjoy later.

Two of these three hours will be quiet, sacred time, however you will be free to get up, move about and leave the room if necessary for your comfort. Refreshments and snacks will be served.

Please accept this restorative gift to you for all of the healing that you provide to others.

Pertussis: Story From a Volunteer

I caught Pertussis from my 2-year-old grandson three years ago. I thought that I was OK because I had a shot when I was a kid, but not true. The vaccination wears off. I came down with whooping cough and was miserable for over three months. In addition, while I was contagious, I almost infected over 100 other people. It was a mess and an embarrassment. The Chinese are said to call it “The 100 day cough.” The consequence of taking the risk and not getting the shot is simply not worth it. I still have a lingering cough three years later. — Bob Jones

As you may know, we are experiencing a historic epidemic of pertussis (whooping cough). According to the Washington State Department of Health, the number of confirmed cases of pertussis in the state soared from 134 at this time last year to nearly 1,500 this May. Whatcom County has one of the state’s highest rates of the illness, which manifests with a lingering cough.

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that is preventable by the Tdap vaccine. While people of all ages can suffer with pertussis, which is spread through respiratory droplets, infants are the most vulnerable. They cannot be fully vaccinated for several months and are more likely to suffer severe complications, including death. Adults often have only mild cold symptoms and can spread the disease to young children. There have been many reported instances of infected healthcare workers and hospital visitors spreading the disease to patients. This is a preventable disease and there are things we can do to prevent its spread once it occurs. It is our responsibility to do all we can to protect babies in our community.

Responsibilities of every caregiver:

Get a pertussis (Tdap) vaccination. **THIS IS NOT A REQUIREMENT** This is free for caregivers through Occupational Health. Call them (738-6300 ext. 2563) to make an appointment.

Do not come to work if you have a runny nose or cough, symptoms that could be due to pertussis. This applies to everyone, even if you have had the vaccine.

Exclude visitors who come with a runny nose, or fever, or cough. New signage will soon be posted and visitors will be actively screened in our highest risk areas (Childbirth Center and Pediatrics).

Use Droplet Precautions for any patient with symptoms of an upper respiratory infection, i.e. runny nose or cough.

Get your loved ones vaccinated for pertussis. See the Whatcom County Health Department website for where to get pertussis vaccine: [http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/health/flu/pdf/Tdap.pdf](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/health/flu/pdf/Tdap.pdf)
12 Things Happy People Do Differently
by Jacob Sokol

“I’d always believed that a life of quality, enjoyment, and wisdom were my human birthright and would be automatically bestowed upon me as time passed. I never suspected that I would have to learn how to live—that there were specific disciplines and ways of seeing the world I had to master before I could awaken to a simple, happy, uncomplicated life.” —Dan Millman

Studies conducted by positivity psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky point to 12 things happy people do differently to increase their levels of happiness. These are things that we can start doing today to feel the effects of more happiness in our lives. (Check out her book The How of Happiness.)

I want to honor and discuss each of these 12 points, because no matter what part of life’s path we’re currently traveling on, these ‘happiness habits’ will always be applicable.

1. **Express gratitude** – When you appreciate what you have, what you have appreciates in value. Kinda cool right? So basically, being grateful for the goodness that is already evident in your life will bring you a deeper sense of happiness. And that’s without having to go out and buy anything. It makes sense. We’re gonna have a hard time ever being happy if we aren’t thankful for what we already have.

2. **Cultivate optimism** – Winners have the ability to manufacture their own optimism. No matter what the situation, the successful diva is the chick who will always find a way to put an optimistic spin on it. Shes knows failure only as an opportunity to grow and learn a new lesson from life. People who think optimistically see the world as a place packed with endless opportunities, especially in trying times.

3. **Avoid over-thinking and social comparison** – Comparing yourself to someone else can be poisonous. If we’re somehow “better” than the person that we’re comparing ourselves to, it gives us an unhealthy sense of superiority. Our ego inflates – KABOOM – our inner Kanye West comes out! If we’re “worse” than the person that we’re comparing ourselves to, we usually discredit the hard work that we’ve done and dismiss all the progress that we’ve made. What I’ve found is that the majority of the time this type of social comparison doesn’t stem from a healthy place. If you feel called to compare yourself to something, compare yourself to an older version of yourself.

4. **Practice acts of kindness** – Performing an act of kindness releases serotonin in your brain. (Serotonin is a substance that has TREMENDOUS health benefits, including making us feel more blissful.) Selflessly helping someone is a super powerful way to feel good inside. What’s even cooler about this kindness kick is that not only will you feel better, but so will people watching the act of kindness. How extraordinary is that? Bystanders will be blessed with a release of serotonin just by watching what’s going on. A side note is that the job of most anti-depressants is to release more serotonin. Move over Pfizer, kindness is kicking ass and taking names.

5. **Nurture social relationships** – The happiest people on the planet are the ones who have deep, meaningful relationships. Did you know studies show that people’s mortality rates are DOUBLED when they’re lonely? WHOA! There’s a warm fuzzy feeling that comes from having an active circle of good friends who you can share your experiences with. We feel connected and a part of something more meaningful than our lonesome existence.

6. **Develop strategies for coping** – How you respond to the “craptastic” moments is what shapes your character. Sometimes crap happens—it’s inevitable. Forrest Gump knows the deal. It can be hard to come up with creative solutions in the moment when manure is making its way up toward the fan. It helps to have healthy strategies for coping pre-rehearsed, on-call, and in your arsenal at your disposal.

7. **Learn to forgive** – Harboring feelings of hatred is horrible for your well-being. You see, your mind doesn’t know the difference between past and present emotion. When you “hate” someone, and you’re continuously thinking about it, those negative emotions are eating away at your immune system. You put yourself in a state of suckerism (technical term) and it stays with you throughout your day.

8. **Increase flow experiences** – Flow is a state in which it feels like time stands still. It’s when you’re so focused on what you’re doing that you become one with the task. Action and awareness are merged. You’re not hungry, sleepy, or emotional. You’re just completely engaged in the activity that you’re doing. Nothing is distracting you or competing for your focus.

9. **Savor life’s joys** – Deep happiness cannot exist without slowing down to enjoy the joy. It’s easy in a world of wild stimuli and omnipresent movement to forget to embrace life’s enjoyable experiences. When we neglect to appreciate, we rob the moment of its magic. It’s the simple things in life that can be the most rewarding if we remember to fully experience them.

10. **Commit to your goals** – Being wholeheartedly dedicated to doing something comes fully-equipped with an ineffable force. Magical things start happening when we commit ourselves to doing whatever it takes to get somewhere. When you’re fully committed to doing something, you have no choice but to do that thing. Counter-intuitively, having no option—where you can’t change your mind—subconsciously makes humans happier because they know part of their purpose.

11. **Practice spirituality** – When we practice spirituality or religion, we recognize that life is bigger than us. We surrender the silly idea that we are the mightiest thing ever. It enables us to connect to the source of all creation and embrace a connectedness with everything that exists. Some of the most accomplished people I know feel that they’re here doing work they’re “called to do.”

12. **Take care of your body** – Taking care of your body is crucial to being the happiest person you can be. If you don’t have your physical energy in good shape, then your mental energy (your focus), your emotional energy (your feelings), and your spiritual energy (your purpose) will all be negatively affected. Did you know that studies conducted on people who were clinically depressed showed that consistent exercise raises happiness levels just as much as Zoloft? Not only that, but here’s the double whammy... Six months later, the people who participated in exercise were less likely to relapse because they had a higher sense of self-accomplishment and self-worth.