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# Self-Management

*British Columbia*

## The LINK Newsletter

*Keeping Leaders and Coaches Informed*

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### Office News

#### **Goodbye and all the best to Gemma Fletcher**

We are sad to announce that Gemma Fletcher, Coordinator for the Online Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, has left the Ladner Office to pursue a new opportunity. Gemma has been an outstanding employee and asset to the organization. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors. We are currently searching for a replacement and hope to have someone in place for the new fiscal year. In the mean time, Mark Davies and Sherry Lynch will be "holding the fort" so to speak.



#### **Busy final quarter of the fiscal year**

January to March signals the end of the 2015 to 2016 fiscal year. This is a busy time of year and leaders are reminded to please contact their coordinator if they are interested in leading or promoting self-

management programs. Also, if you know of a free venue, please pass this information along.



## **Harvard study looks at volunteering and health care use**

A US national sample of more than 7,000 adults 50 years of age and older found that volunteers were more likely to engage in preventative health care than non-volunteers. For example, volunteers, when compared to non-volunteers, had 38 percent fewer overnight hospital visits. Female volunteers were 33 percent more likely to have mammograms. One reason that may account for this behaviour is that volunteerism increases a sense of purpose in life. Additionally, volunteering increases social connections which provide instrumental, emotional and psychological support which in turn lead to better health. The study was not able to determine what types of volunteering activity people were doing, and this may make a difference (e.g., volunteering in health may expose people to more awareness of preventative behaviour). The association still held true when the researchers controlled for a wide range of other factors such as baseline health, health behaviours, social integration, stress and personality traits. For more information about this study, visit the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health [website](#).



## **Chronic Pain Self-Management Program and chart error**

Please note that due to an error from Stanford, Chart 25 in the appendix (includes seven points) does not match the Chart 25 (includes six points) within Session 5, Activity 5. Please follow the Chart 25 in the activity and the charts will be corrected.



## **Get Ready to Sail Out for New Accomplishments - Chinese Leader's Annual Gathering 2016**

January is right between the solar New Year and Chinese New Year, which seems the best time for our volunteer leaders to *look back*, celebrate what we have accomplished together in the previous year; and *look into the future*, gaining more synergy to carry into another fruitful year.

The Annual Chinese Leader's Gathering took place on Jan 25th, with 24 Mandarin- and Cantonese-speaking leaders from around the Lower Mainland. Receiving the training and leading the workshop in either spoken language, Mandarin or Cantonese, leaders hardly have the chance to mingle with each other. The Gathering was aiming to break

this language *barrier*.

Through games the leaders were arranged into small groups where they could pick one of their co-leaders, and introduce his or her characteristics to the rest of the group. The brief description created positive and vivid images of the teammates. Qualities shared included compassion, dedication, team spirit, skillful delivery, lively examples, facilitating skills and good sense of humor.

In addition to getting to know one another, leaders also shared with their groups how they have benefited from their own involvement in self-management programs. Above all, they appreciated health improvements for themselves and their family members. Leading the program allowed them to systematically review major aspects of healthy living and make effective weekly Action Plans targeting personal health needs.

Apart from experiencing how six-week programs help them to optimize their lifestyle more consciously, leaders also recognized the importance of making continuous efforts down the road. So upon arrival, everyone first chose a greeting card at the door to write down his or her *Primary Healthy-Living Goal* in the New Year. Then they went around, asking old and new friends to add encouragements and good wishes on their cards, in order to extend the benefits of self-management into 2016.

In the spirit of *participation*, which is the key to the success of our programs, leaders brought a favorite dish or snack to the party. Everyone also took part in an interesting game in three teams, where they had plenty of opportunities to describe their own understanding of the features of CDSMP and DSMP, as well as of leaders and participants of the programs. Laughter and smiles coming out of the diverse and witty answers made winning and losing the game no longer matter.

The Annual Gathering is an appropriate time to honor Leaders' good work. Winners of last year's *Silver-Heart Award* and *Community Ambassador Award*, Sue, Ben and Suwen, came up to present symbols of the awards to our winners of 2016: Sam and Agnes. After making a full range of hearty contributions to the conduct and promotion of Chinese programs, Sam simply attributed all his dedication to the fact that he could best control his body weight whenever he leads a program, which certainly sounds quite motivating! Agnes said the best part for her was applying the newly acquired knowledge to take better care of her mom who lives with diabetes, and effectively pass on practical skills to her mom and help her become a better self-manager at home.

From year one, singing has always been part of the celebration. This time, however, everyone was led in dancing to two pieces of rhythmic and lively music instead.

David, who started as a CDSMP leader in 2012 and co-led our first Chinese DSMP, became a dance instructor in the last two years. He was very pleased to find the intensity of the dance combining whole body exercise and patting *energy points*, just right for his age and for lowering his blood sugar level.

Following David's beautiful demonstration, leaders experienced the joyful exhilaration process of dancing, which did not require too much space at all. David's success in maintaining his energy level and a high spirit in spite of living with diabetes for some 20 years is also encouraging to many leaders. Dancing could be a suitable exercise all year round with multiple benefits.

While eating, drinking, and catching up with each other, four hours had passed by with three more games having to wait until next year!

At the end, Sam introduced the recent progress in dementia research, which unanimously points to the importance of prevention through learning comprehensive self-management skills and applying them to optimize life style, ideally from a young age. It drew a perfect conclusion that together we are doing something meaningful and valuable for our people, which is well worth our time and energy in the years to come! Courtney Kang and the volunteer leaders and trainers of the Chinese Self-Management programs wish the best to all leaders across the province in the *Year of the Monkey*.



## Tips for Leaders

### Setting up a workshop

If you have an idea on where you could secure free space for a workshop, please pass this information on to your coordinator.

Leaders are the eyes and ears of the community! In today's economy it is more challenging to secure free space, so any assistance is appreciated.



### Importance of the attendance sheet

The Ministry of Health requires monthly reports of Self-Management BC activity in order to justify continued funding. Therefore, the attendance sheets **are vital** to the documentation process. **It is very important** to return the attendance sheets with the box of supplies and take care to fill out the necessary information (dates, times, location) along with any withdrawals or absences. The Ladner Office is relying on leaders to communicate this information. Please also treat the attendance sheet as a confidential document. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Should you have any questions at any time, please contact your coordinator.



### Tip sheet for February

The following tips are available as a downloadable [PDF](#).

### **Brainstorming process**

Leaders can, over time, develop bad habits in brainstorming so please ensure that you follow the guidelines. Review the “Brainstorming Fundamentals for Leaders” in the manual for your information. The “Brainstorming” guidelines for the group (Chart 5 in Chronic Pain and Chart 4 in Chronic Disease) should be posted at all sessions. They are there to review before each brainstorm.

Here are some additional tips for brainstorming:

#### ***Facilitator***

- Facilitator does not show verbal or non-verbal reactions to the ideas.
- Facilitator repeats each idea loudly, facing the group.
- Facilitator does not allow questions or cross-talk.
- If less than 15 ideas have been offered, the facilitator waits to a count of 15 in silence before ending the brainstorm. If 15 ideas have been offered, end the brainstorm by announcing that you will take 2 more and then stop.

#### ***Scribe***

- The scribe only listens to the facilitator and writes exactly what the facilitator repeats.
- The scribe does not abbreviate.

#### ***Facilitator or Scribe***

- Read the list to the group; ask if anyone needs clarification.

### **Crying participant**

- You can say to them “It is perfectly OK to have real emotions.”
- Hand the person a tissue, then go on
- If necessary, one of the Leaders can leave the room with the person

### **Participant asks about a complementary or alternative therapy**



e.g., “Should I take fish oil for arthritis?”

- You can say to the participant “This is a good question to ask your health care provider.”

### **Participant doesn't want to make an action plan**

If the participant indicates that they are “already doing everything and don't want to make an Action Plan.”

- You can say to the participant “That is your choice. If you think about something you want to do during the week you can just make a plan with yourself.”
- Remember it is self-management and participants need to decide for themselves.

### **Participant makes vague action plan**

Participant makes an action plan by saying “I will exercise three days.”

- The Leader can say “That it's a great start, but let's be more specific.” Pointing to the Action Plan Chart, the leader can ask, “What exercise are you going to do? How long will you do it? On which days will you do it? Even having a specific time can be helpful.” Remember to include the confidence level.

### **Read your appendix “Dealing with Different Types of People/Situations”**

- Helpful tips are included in the manual.

### **Leader communication**

As a leader reading from the manual, remember to:

- Speak loudly and clearly. Use good voice projection. Do not mumble.
- Sound confident.
- If you make an error, correct it and continue.
- Use eye contact to make everyone feel involved.
- Pause. Don't race through the content.
- When people ask you a question, throw it back to the group and

suggest if no one has an answer, that the person look it up and share it with the group the following session. 8-1-1 is a good resource for medical questions.



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## Testimonial

### ***Active Choices Coach - Angela Sealy's comments***

Ellen has been a coach for just over a year and has proven to be a dedicated coach. She works well with the participants in supporting them to achieve their physical activity goals. The participants speak of her respect and friendship. Although Ellen is a busy grandmother she finds time for her own exercise program while coaching others. As the coordinator, I really appreciate Ellen's communication skills; she always inform me of challenges and successes. It is great to have Ellen as part of the Community of Coaches.

*Below is a photo of Ellen with her granddaughter.*



## Quotes

You control your future, your destiny. What you think about comes about. By recording your dreams and goals on paper, you set in motion the process of becoming the person you most want to be. Put your future in good hands – your own. – *Mark Victor Hansen*

Happiness is not something readymade. It comes from your own actions. - *Dalai Lama*

Goals provide the energy source that powers our lives. One of the best ways we can get the most from the energy we have is to focus it. That is what goals can do for us; concentrate our energy.” – *Denis Waitley*



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Please send your suggestions and feedback to [slynch@uvic.ca](mailto:slynch@uvic.ca)



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