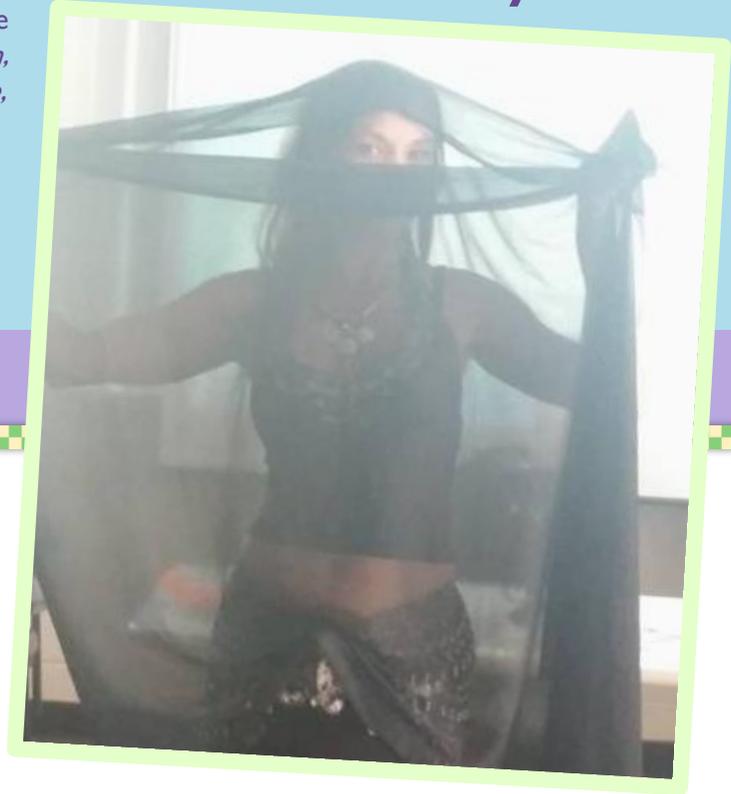




A newsletter about the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* initiative across the State of Tennessee.

Tomorrow Starts Today

November 2015



What's Inside?

Page 3	Donald's Move of the Month
Page 4	Championship Games in Jackson
Page 5	How to Talk to Your Primary Care Doctor
Page 6	Wellness Champions in West Tennessee
Page 7	Nashville Wellness Celebration
Page 8	Health and Wellness Fair at Alternatives Conference
Page 9	11 Fall Superfoods that Help with Weight Loss

Let's Dance! Wellness Coaches Bring Fun to 5th Annual CPRS Conference

By Julie Fann, Peer Wellness Coach

Belly dancing hasn't exactly been an American pastime, perhaps especially in the Southeast. But as the country becomes more diverse, so do our interests, and so does our knowledge about the healing effects dancing has on our mental and physical health.

This year, attendees of the fifth annual Certified Peer Recovery Specialists' Conference, learned the art of belly dancing, which, most of all, requires that you smile while you dance.

"It was great fun and also had the added benefit of being an effective form of stress release. After the class I felt energized and had a more positive attitude than I had come in with," said CPRS Glenda Edwards, Johnson City.

"Dance Your Way to Wellness" was one of 14 breakout sessions at the conference, held Sept. 16-17 in Murfreesboro at the Patterson Park Community Center. The *My Health, My Choice, My Life* initiative for the first time joined the CPRS conference to offer two days of growth and learning.

Photo, above: Peer Wellness Coach Dina Savvenas performs belly dance during the annual Certified Peer Recovery Specialists' (CPRS) Conference in September.

Wellness Coaches Bring Fun to Fifth Annual CPRS Conference *continued*



Above: Peer Wellness Coach Donald Williams



Center above: Peer Wellness Coach Lindsey Johnson



Right: Sue Bergeson, keynote speaker at the conference



Left: Gerald Pitts, TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate

Titled “Creating a Culture of Wellness in Tennessee: Transforming the Role of Peers in the Provision of Behavioral Health Services,” the conference featured keynote speaker Susan R. Bergeson, MBA and vice president for consumer and family affairs at Optum Behavioral Health. Bergeson spoke about the role of peer support services in healthcare integration.

“It was so exciting to see so many Certified Peer Recovery Specialists and supporters come together to celebrate wellness and learn ways to increase wellness among the peers they work with,” said Lisa Ragan, TDMHSAS director of consumer affairs and peer recovery services.

Vik Moore, TDMHSAS peer recovery coordinator, taught breakout sessions on ethical standards in peer recovery. “For the first time ever, this conference provided all ten Continuing Education Hours, including ethics, and was absolutely free to attend. Also, each certified peer received a nice lapel pin. It was a great conference and was well managed by Teresa Fuqua and the Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations (TAMHO).”

Peer wellness coaches across the state facilitated several breakout sessions. Leanne Crawford, peer wellness coach for Cherokee Health Systems in Morristown, and Allison

Harwell, peer wellness coach from Pathways in Jackson, presented “Understanding the 8 Dimensions of Wellness”.

“It was an honor to help with the CPRS/Wellness Conference. I gained great experience by helping with the planning process and I really loved the fact that we were able to give everyone a ‘My Health, My Choice, My Life’ sling bag,” Allison Harwell said.

Mark Bresee, peer wellness coach from the AIM Center in Chattanooga, presented “Motivational Interviewing: Making Conversations Matter More” as well as “Leading the Change to a Wellness Culture” during a breakout session.

Peer Wellness Coaches Donald Williams, from Centerstone in Nashville, Lindsey Johnson, from Pathways in Jackson, and James Pincham from Ridgeview Behavioral Health in Knoxville, facilitated “The Science and Mechanics of Exercise.” Donald demonstrated how to use exercise equipment and how getting fit at home is as easy as going to a gym.

Approximately 227 people from behavioral health organizations across Tennessee attended.

What Is Belly Dance?

By Dina Savvenas, Peer Wellness Coach

The dance that Americans know as “belly dance” has gone by many names. The French call it *dance du ventre* or “dance of the stomach.” It is known in Greece as *the cifte telli*, and in Egypt as *raqs sharki*. Middle Easterners call it *danse orientale* to distinguish it from the *balady*, or country dance. It developed through the influence of many different geographical areas and continues its long process of development today.

Who can belly dance?

Traditionally performed by females for females, belly dance was originally intended to express the miracle of fertility and creativity on every level. In the Middle East, there was a time period in history when women were banned from performing in public, but the popularity of the dance form demanded that it be given to the people – so men took the place of women and performed the dance onstage. Many men today find it to be a path to self-expression and become quite skilled at the movements.

What can it do for you?

This rhythmic dance form has endured for thousands of years for good reason. It contours and tones the body and facilitates awareness of the mind-body-spirit connection. It is an excellent low impact, cardiovascular workout. Many people find a sense of empowerment by executing the moves. It has served as a path to wholeness and self-discovery for countless men and women around the world throughout antiquity



Donald’s Move of the Month: Legs Up the Wall

By Donald Williams, Peer Wellness Coach

How do you do it?

Lie on the floor on your back with your hips against a wall and then walk your legs up the wall. Press your backside as close to the wall as you can. Spend five to 30 minutes here, depending on how fit you are. Avoid this if you have glaucoma. If your toes get tingly, bend your knees, and with your feet together bring your feet closer to your pelvis.

What’s going on in this pose?

- Your femur bones are dropping into your hip socket, relaxing your psoas muscles. These are the muscles that help you walk and support your back.
- Blood is draining out of your tired feet and legs.
- Your nervous system is getting a signal to slow down. This is all about relief of stress, and recovery.

What are the benefits of this pose?

- If you do it before going to bed, it can help with insomnia.
- Relieves stress in sore legs after a run because it stretches the hamstrings
- Helps with poor digestion and circulation
- Helps to regulate the thyroid gland
- Great for a sore lower back

Celebrate Wellness: Championship Games Come to Jackson

By Jessica L. Collins, Peer Wellness Coach

As part of the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* initiative, the Championship Games are designed to promote physical health and activity among members of Peer Support Centers across the state. West Tennessee hosted its first Championship Games on September 29th and this was the first time that rain forced the event to move indoors. The generous staff of Humboldt Medical Center donated use of their large conference room at the last minute.

About 155 people attended the Games from Peer Support Centers that included Liberty Place, Outreach Center, C.A.R.E.S Center, Sunrise Outreach Center, the Hope Center, Rainbow Center, Comfort Center, Togetherness House and the Beers-Van Gogh Peer Center.

Games included “Clean Your Room;” 50-yard dash; 50-yard walk; a tennis ball relay race and, the most popular event, tug-of-war. Peer Wellness Coach Mark Bresee led a martial arts activity in which participants broke wooden boards. What a sense of accomplishment!

To identify their center, members created banners that were displayed at the games. Coaches voted on which center presented the most creative banner. Sunrise Outreach Center from Union City won the “best banner” plaque. Togetherness House from Ripley won a plaque for “most team spirit.”

Special thanks go to Peer Wellness Coaches Lindsey Johnson and Allison Harwell for organizing and planning the games, as well as Amerigroup for providing yummy bananas and Subway sandwiches to finish off the games with a healthy lunch!



Togetherness House in Ripley won Best Team Spirit at the Jackson Championship Games.

Sunrise Outreach Center in Union City won Best Banner at the Jackson Championship Games.



How to Talk to Your Primary Care Doctor

By Stella Melton and Febe Wallace, Cherokee Health

I hate to bother them. They don't seem to have much time to talk.

They'll think I'm dumb if I keep asking questions.

I'm too embarrassed to tell them about that!

I'm afraid of what they will think of me if I tell them about...

It's not their business what another doctor prescribes for me!

These are some of the reasons people give for not fully sharing information with their primary care provider (PCP). Unfortunately, these thoughts can harm the person receiving treatment, because the provider is working with incomplete information. Sometimes a small piece of information can be crucial to planning safe and effective treatment.

Incomplete sharing of information can lead your PCP to prescribe something that has already been given to you by someone else (in which case, you get too much of the medicine), or the PCP might prescribe a medicine that is dangerous to combine with another med prescribed elsewhere.

Remember that the PCP's role is to help you be as healthy as possible. Anything that is a health concern is an appropriate topic to bring up with your PCP. Please try not to let embarrassment keep you from being open with your PCP. Rest assured that they will not think badly of you for being honest! Please know that your provider has encountered many kinds of

health issues, and they will not be easily rattled by anything you might share.

It's perfectly acceptable to ask questions of your PCP. We want you to ask questions about your health issues and your treatment. The better you understand your health, the better your likelihood of having a good outcome. If you do not understand the treatment instructions, be sure to say so! It is important that you leave the office with a good understanding of the instructions. Perhaps the PCP can also have a nurse work with you to make sure that you have all the information you need.

Remember that your time with the PCP is exactly that: time for YOU. It's true that many PCP clinics and providers are busy and fast-paced. But your visit time is for you. Make good use of the time by thinking ahead of what you need to address, and feel free to come in with a written list of questions that you want to ask. It's frustrating to get halfway home and remember an important question you forgot to ask in the visit. PCPs like for their patients to come in prepared!

Your PCP is there to help you improve your health. But the PCP cannot take care of your health alone. You have to be part of the health care team in order to get the best results possible.

Febe Wallace MD is the director of primary care services at Cherokee Health Systems. Stella Melton LPN, BA, CPRP is a nurse who coordinates Cherokee's Psychosocial Day Programs.

West Tennessee Wellness Champions Say Wellness Is Achievable

By Allison Harwell, Peer Wellness Coach

Marta is the coordinator of Turning Point Peer Support Center in Memphis. Not too long ago, her doctor told her that she had pre-diabetes and if she didn't lose weight she also wouldn't be able to walk in one year.

After attending the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) and Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP) workshop training sessions, Marta realized she needed to take action and make gradual changes to improve her overall health.

When she co-facilitated her first CDSMP workshop, she started changing her habits by taking one small step at a time. "Making a weekly action plan during the CDSMP workshop helped motivate me," she said.

One action plan was to walk five days a week. Soon, Marta began making multiple changes. She began walking five to six days a week, increasing her vegetable intake, and controlling her portions.

She said the 21 Day Fix containers, along with CDSMP information, helped her determine how much protein, fat, and carbohydrates she should eat every day. Marta learned how important it is to eat three meals a day, and she learned how to read food labels.

Now that she eats breakfast, she has more energy and can focus throughout the day better. Keeping a water bottle at work helps her stay hydrated. "At the beginning it was a challenge but it got easier," she said. "Once I started seeing results it motivated me more to continue to do it."

Marta says that her health and her children are her

motivation. She has lost 18 pounds and said, "My doctor has told me the diabetes risk is gone as well as my high cholesterol." Not only has she noticed physical changes, but she also has a more positive attitude. And she plans to keep making healthy choices to improve her overall wellbeing.

Another West Tennessee peer, Thomas, was smoking about a pack of cigarettes a day when he first began working with a Peer Wellness Coach. From the very beginning, Thomas decided he wanted to decrease his smoking, so for his first action plan he decreased his cigarettes by two for five days. He planned to smoke 18 cigarettes for five days during the first week of coaching.

Thomas completed his first action plan, and he liked decreasing his cigarettes by two each week so much that he decided to decrease his total daily cigarettes by two again for his next goal.

After eight weeks of coaching, Thomas is down to only six cigarettes a day. Saving money and being able to breathe better has motivated Thomas.

To help with cravings, he goes for walks and eats candy. Increasing his physical activity has helped him lose weight and brought his total body mass index into the normal range.

Thomas plans to continue decreasing his smoking and maintaining his weekly physical activity.



Marta has started walking and has lost 18 pounds!



Thomas has dropped from smoking a pack a day to just 6 cigarettes per day.

Nashville Wellness Celebration

By Donald Williams, Peer Wellness Coach

Nashville hosted a Wellness Celebration during National Wellness Week at Centennial Park. Members from ReConnect Nashville, Enrichment House and Park Centers East and South attended the event on September 15th. Approximately 40 people participated.

To help everyone warm up, we played an intense game of “Simon Says,” which, believe it or not, can be physically and mentally challenging for all ages. Then everyone enjoyed a competitive game of T-ball, which has become a popular game for peers because everyone can participate no matter what physical limitations they may have.

Not part of the formal competition was a game called “Clean Your Room.” The goal is to throw as many household laundry items (not the type that could cause physical harm) as possible from your team’s designated space into the other team’s space. The team with the fewest items in their area when time is called wins.

The final event was a relay race, which provided an opportunity for peers to demonstrate team work and encourage each other when they saw

a friend struggling. The Wellness Celebration concluded with a dance contest, which was the most popular event.

All federal peer wellness coaches and Vik Moore, the state’s peer recovery coordinator, assisted with the event. The weather was perfect for a party, and a smaller group allowed for full participation from the members, who had such a great time they stuck around afterward for lunch and to enjoy each other’s company.





Peer Wellness Coaches Lead Health and Wellness Fair at National Alternatives Conference in Memphis

By Leanne Crawford,
Peer Wellness Coach

As a peer wellness coach with Cherokee Health Systems, I've never had the opportunity to attend a national mental health, peer-led conference, but this year, I did.

Over the summer, the "Alternatives" Conference planning committee invited the *My Health, My Choice, My Life* team to conduct a health and wellness fair at the conference. "Alternatives" is a conference in which SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) partners with peers to create a learning environment that promotes recovery and wellness through peer leadership.

An estimated 500 people from across the country and around the world attended this year's 29th annual conference held in Memphis. The theme was "Believe" and focused on peers gathering, uniting and believing that peer leadership plays a significant role in recovery and wellness in the mental health system.

The *My Health, My Choice, My Life* health and wellness fair served an estimated 180 people and included these stations: body mass index; smoking cessation and carbon monoxide blood level monitoring; blood pressure; blood glucose, A1C; fitness; heart health; lifestyle risk (including drug and alcohol assessments); wellness coaching (action planning, discussing goals/future); and free prizes.

As participants entered, we gave them their "health passport." We recorded their results at each station for them to keep and share with their doctor when they return home. Many told us it was the best health and wellness fair they have ever attended.



The Alternatives Conference Health Fair Team (L to R): Leslie El-Sayad, James Pincham, Daisy Jabas, Kim Moore, Vik Moore, Allison Harwell, Jessica Collins, Lisa Ragan, Leanne Crawford, Mark Bresee, Julie Fann, and Donald Williams. (From L) Marva Butler and Dina Savvenas (kneeling). Not pictured: Galal El-Sayad.

We would like to extend a very special thank you to Vik and Kim Moore, Gerald Pitts, Leslie El-Sayad, Galal El-Sayad, Daisy Jabas, Marva Butler, and even, at the last minute, our volunteer greeters, Amy Rogerson and Dan Hamer. Your assistance helped us make this happen.

After the fair, Lisa Ragan, Director of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services for TDMHSAS; Peer Wellness Coach, Mark Bresee, and myself conducted a workshop titled: *My Health, My Choice, My Life in Tennessee: The Role of Peer Wellness Coaches in Motivating Others Toward Greater Wellness*. The hour-and-a-half workshop included information on how our initiative began at state peer support centers and how it now extends into many areas.

We provided an overview of the Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management, Well-Body and Tobacco Free Workshops and one-on-one coaching. We discussed cultural considerations, evaluation techniques and outcomes, and how to implement wellness in their own state. Mark Bresee provided skills training in motivational interviewing, and we ended the workshop by leading a wellness activity.

We were thankful to be a part of this amazing event and to have the opportunity to meet so many incredible people who are warriors in the peer support and recovery movement. We came, we saw....we BELIEVE!

11 Fall Superfoods that Help with Weight Loss

By James Pincham, Peer Wellness Coach

Now that we are in the fall season, it's tempting to reach for those comfort foods as we approach the holidays and want to stay warm and cozy. In fact, it can be easy to become discouraged about maintaining or achieving a healthy weight during this time of year. But focusing on eating even just one of the following foods below that has been deemed a "superfood" is better than not eating any food that is healthy for us.



Grains

Whole grains are an important part of creating natural, long-lasting energy. They are well known for their high fiber content, and aid in our digestion. Eating whole grains (as opposed to refined and processed grains) substantially lowers total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and insulin levels. They help us to lower the risk for heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. Examples of whole grains include brown rice, quinoa, barley and oats.



Beans

Beans are good for you because they are a fabulous source of vegetarian protein and fiber. They help us feel full and satisfied, while stabilizing both our blood sugar and moods. They are also rich in iron, low in fat, and have a high antioxidant content, which helps us fight colds and the flu. Beans also help lower blood pressure and help maintain healthy cholesterol.



Nuts

Nuts are a rich source of vitamins and minerals such as vitamin E, vitamin K, vitamin B6, and iron, as well as potassium, calcium and magnesium (which help reduce blood pressure). Nuts are also an excellent source of fiber and protein for our diets. Nuts help us control our weight by preventing hunger pains which lead to snacking and overeating. Lastly, nuts help reduce wrinkles and sagging skin. Examples include almonds, walnuts, pistachios and cashews.



Bell Peppers

Bell peppers are full of vitamin C, are low in calories, and rich in carotenoids, which help keep your eyes strong. Just one cup of red bell peppers brings a wide variety of health benefits, so be sure to fit this food into your fall lineup.



Brussels Sprouts

Each sprout is only ten calories, half a gram of fiber, and half a gram of protein. They will help keep you satisfied longer while eating fewer calories. Don't sabotage this nutritious vegetable by cooking them with pancetta or bacon—try roasting them with olive oil, garlic, and a sprinkle of salt and pepper, or try making Brussels sprout chips—peel off each leaf, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper, then roast until crispy.



Beets

Beets are high in fiber and satisfy your sugar cravings with minimal calories. Beets have gotten a bad rap for being high in sugar, but these folate-rich veggies only contain eight grams of sugar per serving.



Pears

Pears are high in fiber, help regulate your digestive system, and their pectin makes you feel full. At only about 100 calories per pear, this juicy, sweet fruit is great as a stand-alone snack, with a meal, or as a dessert.



Kale

Kale is a dark, leafy green vegetable, rich in magnesium and fiber, antioxidants, vitamin C and K. Just one cup provides you your daily recommended dose of vitamin C, which will strengthen your immune system and boost your metabolism, all while decreasing your risk of certain cancers. Kale is often used in salad or soup.



Pumpkin

Pumpkin is naturally sweet, full of potassium, protein, and vitamins A and K. Pumpkin will keep your metabolism high, your skin glowing and aid in muscle recovery.



Pomegranate

Pomegranate is a fruit that can only be found in the fall, but it contains a variety of antioxidants, helps improve skin, bone quality, digestion and the immune system.

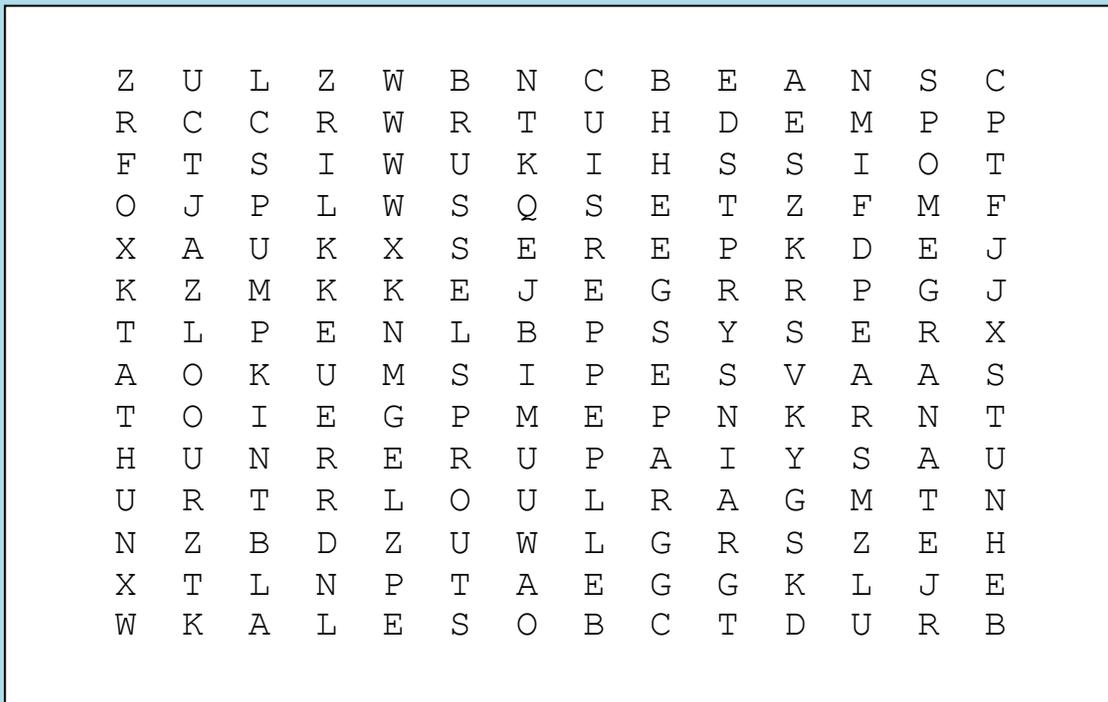


Grapes

Grapes can be found year-round, and are also high in antioxidants and vitamin C. That combination makes them a cold and flu buster, as well as a sweet snack to offset those cravings for unhealthy snacks.

Source: *MSN Health & Fitness. Weight Loss. Diane Gerstacker. The Active Times. 10/29/2015.*

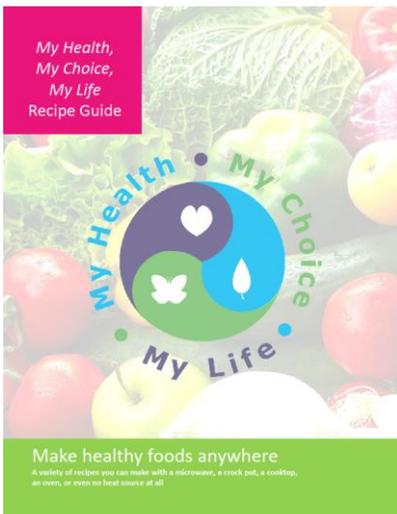
Find 11 Fall Superfoods



Word Bank

grains
 beans
 nuts
 bell peppers
 Brussel sprouts
 beets

pears
 kale
 pumpkin
 pomegranate
 grapes



COMING SOON!

My Health, My Choice, My Life Recipe Guide

Make healthy foods anywhere! A variety of recipes you can make with a microwave, a crock pot, a cooktop, an oven, or even no heat source at all.