

FREE

THRIVE^{CNY}

A healthy spin on life ■

**People in CNY
want MORE:**

MORE Health
Dr. Nanavati on
Integrative Medicine

MORE Happiness
Lose the Diet

MORE Fulfillment
The Dalai Lama's
Compassion Message

**PREMIERE ISSUE:
JANUARY 2013**



Sue Wallace, left, and Lisa Cavallaro

Greetings Central New York!

We're THRIVEcny and there are no words (or fonts!) large enough to convey our excitement for being here!

We are two women with varied, yet complementary backgrounds who believe that if an important message needs spreading, a FREE publication is one of the best ways to get the word out!

And have we got a message! It centers on total wellness for your body, mind and spirit.

THRIVEcny is a FREE monthly magazine that we've created because we love where we live and we love the people who share this community with us. We've noticed, especially recently, how you, our fellow Central New Yorkers (CNY-ers) are making efforts to bring more health and happiness into your lives... and we want to help you do it.

Our mission is simple:

**Every CNY-er... every month...
happier, healthier and wiser
than the month before.**

Each month, you'll find THRIVEcny on the FREE magazine rack at local grocery stores, and in libraries, pharmacies, fitness centers, hospitals, integrative health facilities and at the locations of many of our advertisers.

Speaking of our advertisers... we truly hope you'll consider supporting what they have to offer CNY. It's because of their willingness to serve that we are able to offer you this magazine. As we've gotten to know these talented people, we can honestly tell you how grateful and proud we are to do business with them. We think you will be too!

As our tag line states, THRIVEcny is all about "a healthy spin on life." You'll find a varied mix, this and every month, of articles that we think will motivate and inspire you to an even greater sense of fulfillment. We feature ideas and people that, rather than fit into molds, are out there blazing trails.

After all, some rules really were made to be broken. So if you have any rules regarding your own ability to feel healthy and happy, you have our permission to use THRIVEcny as your ticket to blast right through 'em.

We want to thank you for picking up your first issue of THRIVEcny. It's our hope that you find at least one nugget (but hopefully more!) of useful info that makes you want to tell your friends and most importantly, keeps YOU coming back for more!

Until next month... feel the thrive!

Lisa & Sue

Lisa Cavallaro and Sue Wallace



Editor

Lisa Cavallaro, MA
editor@thrivecny.com

Publisher

Sue Wallace
info@thrivecny.com

Advertising

315-751-TCNY (8269)
info@thrivecny.com

Website

www.thrivecny.com



Art Director

Christine Mosseau

Cover Photography

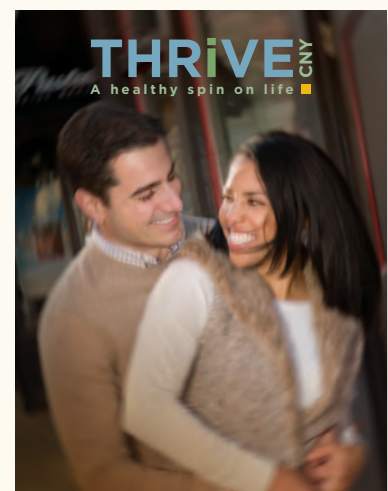
Susan Kahn Photography

Contributing Writers

Kara Loveland
Ellen McCauley
Kaushal Nanavati, MD
Ellie Phillips, DDS
Cynthia Powers-Broccoli
Maryann Roefaro
John Ruman
Maria Scaravillo
Mike Zoli

Advisory Committee

Kaushal Nanavati, MD
Maryann Roefaro, DD, MS, FACMPE
Cheryl Smith Roy



On the Cover:

Ralph and Kimily Torillo enjoy an afternoon in Armory Square, Downtown Syracuse.

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A healthy spin on life ■

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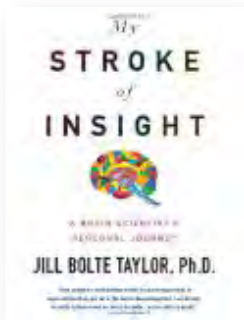
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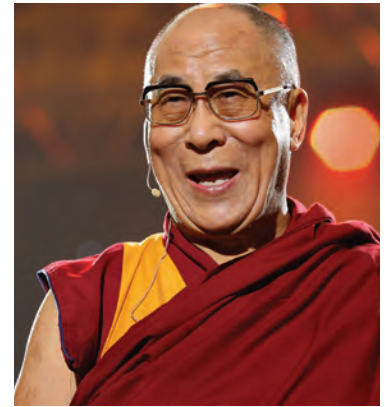
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Lose the Diet **First!**



For all those who have tried diets and failed — Good for us!

Diets can be helpful weight loss tools for *some* people. But for those born rebels (like me), who would rather struggle a bit than do what someone else tells us to do, figuring out our own weight loss can be one of the most life-changing, yet empowering challenges we ever take on.

Anyone who has ever dieted knows this all-too-familiar scenario:

1. We get excited about a new diet.
2. We follow the plan for a few days, weeks, or months.
3. We lose some weight (or not).
4. The weight loss doesn't happen fast enough.
5. We "fall off the wagon," declare "the hell with it," blame it on our "lack of willpower" and...
6. We call ourselves failures.

So... what if failing at diets is a good thing?

What if diets are not designed to work for ALL of us?

What if the truth is that some of us are *supposed* to fail at diets? Not because we are failures... but because the extra weight can actually help us *learn* about ourselves.

As a brilliant older woman once told me:
***If you always do what you always did,
then you'll always get what you always got.***

I like to take this one step further:

- If I always think the way I always thought,
Then I'll always weigh what I always weighed.
- If I always feel the way I always felt...
Then I'll always weigh what I always weighed.
- If I always act the way I always acted...
Then I'll always weigh what I always weighed.

Rules of Weight Loss

While I am not big on rules, I do have a few when it comes to weight loss. So here goes:

Rule #1: The past is irrelevant.

Whatever happened in the past is perfect. As my brother said when he totaled my first car, "It's done. It's over. Can't change it. Move on." Whatever brought you to this weight got you to a point where you're going to not just drop some pounds, but you're going to do it in a way that empowers you in every area of your life.

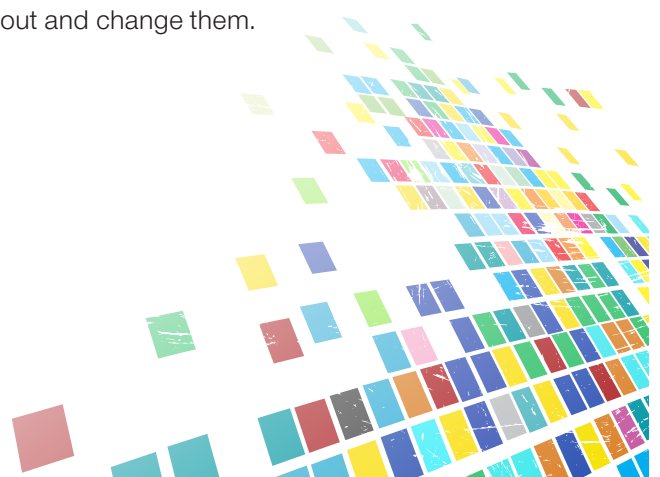
Rule #2: It's not about the food.

This was a tough one for me to swallow (pun intended!), but food is just a lump of matter that sits on a plate or in a container somewhere. It can't force itself down your throat or upon your hips. It may smell great, taste delicious, remind you of your childhood, and be a part of family traditions, but food cannot make you eat it.

And, no matter how much you want to believe otherwise, food cannot make you fat!

Patterns, however, are a different story. Patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting are exactly what cause us to overeat.

Patterns are simply habits that we create... usually without even realizing it. We tend to think, feel, and act in patterns... until we make a conscious effort to break out and change them.





Rule #3: Allow yourself to FEEL better!

How we think dictates how we feel. So if you're feeling some uncomfortable feelings (sadness, anger, guilt, etc.), experiment with different ways of thinking about things that will allow you to feel better. Or, take the topic that's causing these feelings off your mind entirely and think about something else (a tropical vacation, for instance!).

You'll be amazed at what a change of focus in your mind can do to improve the health of your body!

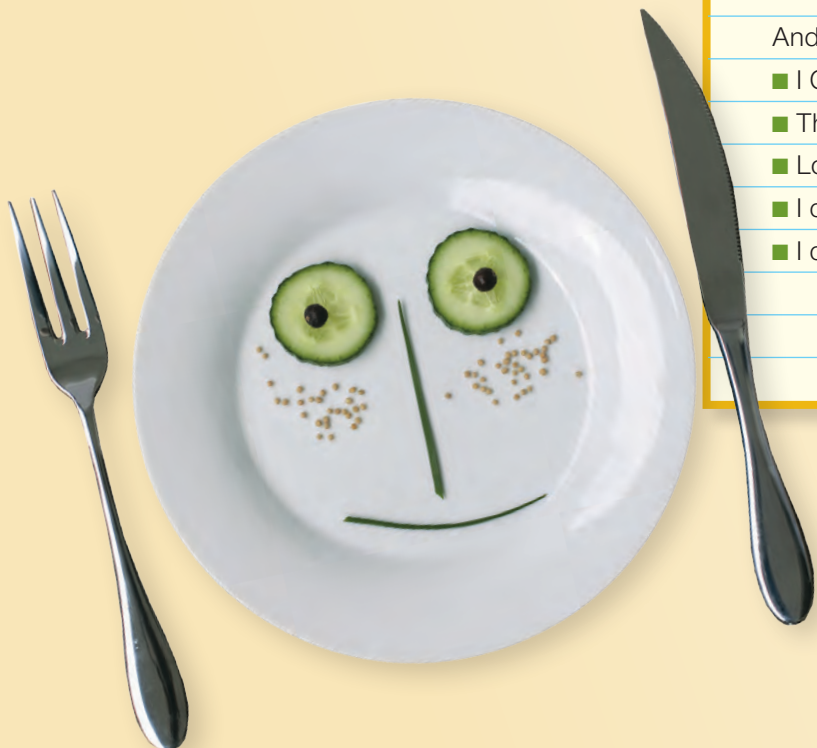
Tips for achieving Rule #3

If you currently believe the following, then STOP IT!

- I can't lose weight.
- I got the fat genes in the family.
- Losing weight is hard.
- I won't be able to eat what I like.
- I don't have time to exercise.

And allow yourself to believe these:

- I CAN lose weight.
- There's no such thing as fat genes.
- Losing weight is easier than I thought.
- I can eat whatever I like and in the proper amounts.
- I choose to make time to give my body the gift of exercise.



Rule #4: NO JUDGMENT ALLOWED!

While most would agree that Simon Cowell is at times, a ruthless, coldhearted judge, the fact is that we all make harsher comments to and about ourselves... in our heads. I'm not saying that we should love everything we do. But I do know that life becomes less stressed when we can simply notice things we want to change in ourselves and then work on changing them... rather than torturing ourselves the way we do.

As I am sure to remind each one of my weight loss clients:
Your weight IS what it IS.

In this moment, you have two choices:

1. You can weigh that number and feel hopeless.
2. You can weigh that number and feel hopeful.

It's no more complicated than that... but the difference is HUGE!



So, if dieting has never worked for you... Congratulations! You're in perfect position to start your own New Year's Revolution — a time for leaving the past behind, taking the spotlight off food, and putting your focus on thinking and feeling good.

Once you find your “feel-good groove,” you'll notice that making healthier eating and exercise choices feels less like forced action and more like inspired action.

No matter what your past experience, losing weight really should not be hard. If it seems like it is, my intuition tells me that some of the things you believe about yourself and your weight are not only painful but are also holding firmly onto your body. I tell you from experience, that when you identify, challenge and change some of these thoughts, new possibilities will open up for you... not only on your scale, but also in the more healthy, exciting and fulfilling life ahead!



Who knew this about a sugar

People who know me may be surprised to learn that I've made sugar a part of my daily routine, and actually, I'm surprised myself! But I came across a product at a natural foods show. After my family and I used it for a couple months (and really liked it!), I asked its creator, Dr. Ellie Phillips, DDS to write about the main ingredient for our readers. Here is her story...

People interested in improving their oral health may want to know about one sugar that is actually a friend. **Xylitol** is a natural sugar found in plants and vegetables, and when used correctly, it can stop and even reverse cavities in teeth.

Cavities are caused by bacteria with the scientific name, Streptococcus (Strep) mutans. Everyone has a few of these cavity-causing germs in saliva, stuck on the tongue, or on teeth. Strep mutans don't cause cavities unless they become aggressive and multiply, building themselves into a sticky mesh known as plaque.

The more sugar and carbohydrates are eaten, the more these cavity germs are fed. Additionally, anything that makes the mouth acidic encourages a dangerous kind of Strep mutans to multiply and take charge. This is why snacking, or drinking acidic sodas, fruit juices, or citrus drinks encourages cavity germs to multiply, stick to teeth, and form cavities.

Fortunately there is a way to get rid of harmful cavity germs, even if you have been plagued with them your whole life. Many studies, and decades of use in Asia and Europe, have shown that xylitol can eradicate cavity bacteria and prevent plaque from forming on teeth.

The ideal is to have 1-2 grams of xylitol, 5 times throughout the day... preferably after meals and snacks. Since most people find xylitol products to be tasty, this can be pretty simple.

A rare side effect is that xylitol may cause slight digestive problems with loosened stools. This appears to be more of a concern for people with delicate digestive systems. The key is to start slowly, maybe eating one mint at the end of each

meal, and gradually working to the recommended dosage of 5-10 grams per day. Children rarely have problems with any amount of xylitol, but there is no additional benefit derived from taking more than 10 grams per day.

Xylitol also has some general health bonuses that include being anti-fungal in the mouth and possibly in the body. It has a low glycemic index of 7.0, helps stabilize blood glucose, is diabetic friendly, may cut sugar cravings, and has been recommended for osteoporosis. In the digestive system xylitol forms butyrate, a short chain fatty acid that aids digestion, feeds probiotics, and may increase the absorption of minerals for an anti-inflammatory effect.

Many health food stores have xylitol products available in the following forms:

- **Granular crystals (sold as a diabetic baking sugar)**
- **Baby tooth wipes**
- **Nasal spray (useful for sinus and nasal infections)**
- **Chewing gum**
- **Mints**
- **Chews (for kids)**

It sounds contradictory to everything we've been taught, but improved oral hygiene really can begin with a sugar!



Dr. Ellie Phillips, DDS has made it her mission to provide people the tools they need to enjoy cavity-free teeth and the benefits of ultimate oral health. In 2005, she founded Zellies, a xylitol product available at local grocery and health food stores. Read more about Ellie at drellie.com.





Compassion: A healthy choice

“Through compassion,
life becomes more happier!”

It may not sound like “correct” grammar, but the resounding message brought to Syracuse last October by the Dalai Lama is some of the best health advice ever offered!

His Holiness mentioned that peace of mind is important for good physical health and that science has proven that people who criticize carry more stress. His words remind me of a client who once asked me, “But what about liars and cheats? Why should I show compassion for people who deceive me?”

I knew the client wouldn’t like it (and he didn’t!), but my simple three-word response to him was: to feel better!

Since I didn’t really understand this back when someone said it to me, I thought it would be fun to offer a visual comparison between the opposing perspectives of my client and the Dalai Lama.

On One End We Have My Client, *Criticism*

- Criticism often doesn’t like some of the things others say and do.
- He feels angry, disgusted, annoyed, and can get rather opinionated.
- His body feels and definitely looks tense.
- His breathing is shallow and fast, and comes mostly from his chest.
- His muscles are tight.
- And his shoulders are just about stuck inside his ears.

The Dalai Lama sporting his SU visor.



As part of the Common Ground For Peace effort at Syracuse University last October, the Dalai Lama is photographed laughing with reporters during a press conference (left); welcoming Dave Matthews to the stage of the One World Concert at the Dome (center); and spreading his message to the more than 20,000 people in attendance (right).

On the Other End We Have the Dalai Lama, Compassion

- Compassion sees that everyone doesn't think and act as he does.
- He notes the differences between what he thinks and what others think, and he judges neither.
- His preference is to observe the differences.
- Another's actions and words may be the exact opposite of everything he stands for, but he chooses to simply notice and move on, rather than criticize and complain.
- His body is relaxed and comfortable.
- Each breath is slow and complete.

I don't know about you, but this was a huge AHA! for me. Compassion isn't something I do for other people. Showing compassion is something I do for myself — for my own physical and emotional health.

I may have used these two men for comparison purposes, but I'll be honest — I know how *Criticism* feels and I don't like it!

I fought and fought with this one, wondering:

Does it still count as criticism even if it's really true?

Yeah, nice try, Lisa! Unfortunately, our bodies don't care if what we're thinking is true or not. What our bodies do understand is the feeling we feel when we think the thoughts. If what we think causes anger, disgust, annoyance, or whatever, then that's what our bodies

feel — really feel — as in tight muscles, shallow breathing, pit-in-the-stomach. And what's really interesting is that sometimes we get so caught up in what angered us that we don't even realize this is going on inside.

So, what about those people who truly push my buttons? This brings us right back to my client's question — Why should I show compassion for these people?

I guess that depends on one thing:

Do I want to be right or do I want to feel good?

The Dalai Lama can talk for hours (and he did!) on Compassion. He was in Syracuse as part of A Common Ground For Peace effort, and his message was so very simple: "Peace must come through inner peace... taking care of others... get more friends... more genuine smiles... life becomes more happier!"

And did I mention this guy likes to laugh? A LOT!



Maryann Roefaro is the CEO of Hematology-Oncology Associates of CNY and author of *Building the Team From the Inside-Out*. Follow her on Twitter @ MaryannRoefaro or visit her website: www.DoltFromTheInsideOut.com

"Mare's 8 1/2 x 11" is a word or phrase shared each month that encourages us to look within — recognizing and embracing our innate gifts — as we create a life filled with vibrancy, joy and fulfillment.

Patterns

January is that time of year when we make all sorts of New Year's resolutions that begin with great expectations that fizzle into a memory of another New Year's resolution gone astray. This year, wouldn't it be powerful if instead of making resolutions we're stressed to maintain, we make a commitment to ourselves to evaluate patterns in our lives — patterns of thought, patterns of emotions, and patterns of activity — that shape and form how we respond to the stimuli of life?

Patterns are everywhere in nature as well as in the minds, creations and actions of people. As we look around, outside of ourselves, patterns can be noted everywhere. When we look within ourselves, we consider our own patterns of thought.

Patterns of thought generate feelings and emotions that control our lives and permeate our existence. Questioning the thought patterns that affect our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual lives can help us to outline and understand those patterns which no longer serve our highest good and the highest good of others and nature.

So let's start now — by asking ourselves one simple question: How do the patterns of love, gratitude, frustration, stress, anger, resentment, jealousy, judgment, lack and disappointment manifest in our lives?

Many of us, being creatures of habit, take comfort in the patterns of life. Some become complacent and accept patterns of thought and action because we do not want to expend the energy to change... even though patterns of thought often repel the very benefit of life we desire.

But when we take time out of our busy schedules to contemplate the patterns of thought that mold our actions, we become mindful of those thoughts and activities that don't serve us. And awareness is the first step toward healing.

So, as we progress throughout 2013, let us observe our senses to see what attracts us and what repels us. This effort helps us gain mastery over our reactions and allows us to learn how to better manage our moods and emotions.

Instead of reacting to this New Year...
Let's **create** it!

INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE: What's It All About?



There's a new term buzzing around Central New York and you've no doubt heard it. That term is Integrative Medicine. We at THRIVEcny are quite excited about the doctors and practitioners promoting this new approach to wellness and we're eager to share what we know with you... so excited, in fact, that we've asked Dr. Kaushal Nanavati to join our Team at THRIVEcny. Dr. Nanavati is the Director of Integrative Medicine at Upstate Cancer Center, as well as an Assistant Professor of Family Medicine. He is a member of our advisory board and will also be sharing leading-edge health information with our readers each month. In this, our first edition, we've asked Dr. Nanavati to explain what Integrative Medicine is and how it relates to other methods of treatment.



Integrative Medicine is a system of care that focuses on healing the Mind, Body, and Spirit. More specifically, Integrative Medicine is a **combination** of Conventional Medicine and Complementary Medicine intended to care for and heal the whole person.

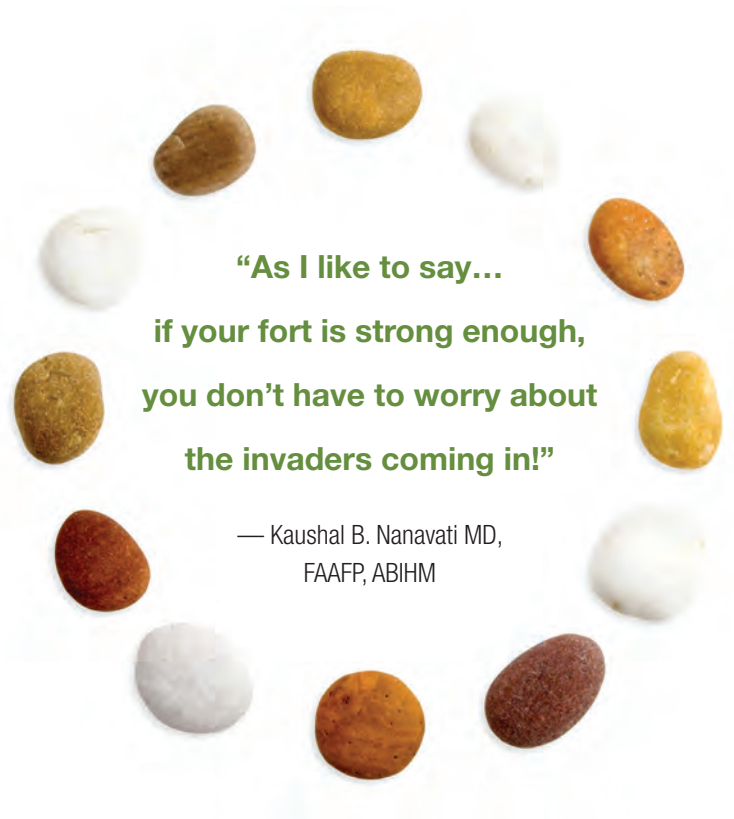
Conventional Medicine refers to a system of care that utilizes current medical concepts based in Western scientific theory and care. Tools of care include getting a good history from the patient, carrying out a physical examination, performing diagnostic tests, and finally diagnosing the problem, which either can be treated or possibly does not have an obvious solution. If treatment is prescribed then this can be in the form of medication, surgical intervention, psychotherapy, and/or physical therapy with the intent to treat the specific ailment or problem.

Complementary Medicine refers to systems of care that are thought to support conventional medicine and are grounded in science with some evidence to support their effectiveness. Physical Therapy is a complementary modality. So are methods such as Chiropractic care, Acupuncture, Herbal and Nutritional medicine, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Massage Therapy, Reiki, Homeopathy, and Ayurvedic Medicine, just to name a few.

There is a further distinction to be made. Many people use Integrative Medicine synonymously with Complementary and Alternative Medicine. That is not necessarily the case since Complementary Medicine, as I mentioned earlier, is grounded in evidence while Alternative Medicine may not be.

Integrative Medicine can be thought of as comprehensive care that addresses not only the symptoms and ailment but also the underlying foundation that, if left untreated, could lead to a rise of the disease. An Integrative approach goes beyond disease treatment in that it addresses health promotion and disease prevention.

The goal is to achieve balance, vitality, and peace. People do not like feeling stressed... We want to feel alive and vibrant, and we wish to have peace and contentment in life. This doesn't just happen naturally and often times we need help in achieving these states. With this in mind, the Integrative Provider helps to optimize the balance of Body, Mind, and Spirit while guiding a person to optimize their nutrition, physical and psychological wellness, and sense of contentment or peace.



**“As I like to say...
if your fort is strong enough,
you don’t have to worry about
the invaders coming in!”**

— Kaushal B. Nanavati MD,
FAAFP, ABIHM



*Kaushal B. Nanavati MD, FAAFP, ABIHM, Assistant Professor, Family Medicine;
Director, Integrative Medicine, Upstate Cancer Center*

Examples of Integrative therapies include:

- **Providing Acupuncture or Reiki** to patients undergoing chemotherapy or Radiation therapy to reduce symptoms of nausea
- **Deep breathing techniques and meditative practice** to lower blood pressure
- **Physical exercise** to reduce the risk of recurrence of certain cancers
- **Nutritional counseling and support** to improve diabetes care, obesity, depression, arthritis, and bowel irregularities



From survive to **THRIVE!**

No pun intended, but it was a “no-brainer” deciding that Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor’s *My Stroke of Insight* would be the first book recommended by THRIVEcny. Dr. Taylor is a neuroanatomist, very familiar with the workings of the brain, who at the young age of 37 suffered a stroke on the left side of her brain. The book is her story of recovery... a journey of challenge met with love and compassion that transformed her life and those around her.

Any person who doubts their ability to affect their own health would be wise to read Dr. Taylor’s story.

One of the points that struck me most about this book was the connection between the author and her mother, who became her primary caregiver. They never focused on what Jill could not do, only on what she could — even when what she could do seemed almost trivial.

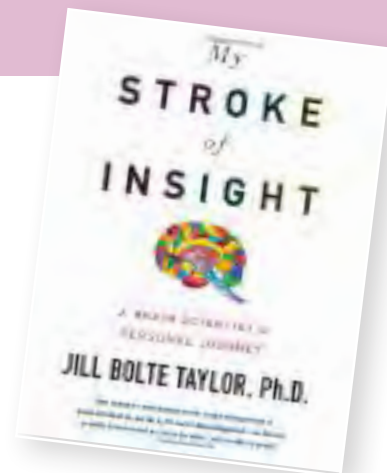
With the entire left side of her brain completely shut down, the author experienced firsthand how the *energy* of those around her affected the way her body felt. She devised a tool for this, which Oprah borrowed after reading the book. Dr. Taylor had a sign placed outside her hospital room door. Oprah has the same sign outside her office door. Both signs read:

“Please take responsibility for the energy you bring into this space.”

Sticking to her focus on energy, Dr. Taylor created a solution to the times when certain cells in her brain wanted to entertain negative feelings — such as fear and rage — that made her want to complain. She created a time schedule that allowed these cells to rant and rave — between 9-9:30am and between 9-9:30pm. These were what she termed *whine time*... and she used her sense of focus and persistence to stick to this schedule.

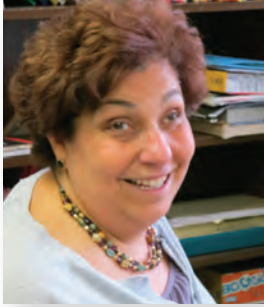
Dr. Taylor says she is a “devout believer that paying attention to self-talk is vitally important for our mental health.” Given her education and experiences, she seems more than qualified to make such a statement!

Whether you’re looking for a good dose of inspiration or just some truly amazing insight on how thought affects life, *My Stroke of Insight* might be just the medicine you need!





Parenting: It's a Matter of Style



Maria Scaravillo, LMSW, is a Middle School Social Worker with the Syracuse City Schools and has been with the district for 28 years.

Mom sat in my office desperately trying to remain calm, while proclaiming her daughter had a *behavior* problem. "Are you kidding me?" said Daughter, eyes rolled back so far that I saw only the whites of them. Jumping out of her chair, she insisted, "My mother has a parenting problem. She's a bubble-wrap Mom!"

As a school social worker, I thought I'd heard them all. But using "bubble-wrap" to describe a Mom was definitely new to me!

There are probably as many parenting styles as there are parents. And I am so entertained just exploring some of the names out there used to describe people, who in my opinion are doing the toughest job in the world!

The Mom in my office was accused of being a **bubble-wrap parent**, meaning she is one who doesn't necessarily smother her kids, but goes out of her way to protect her children from anything that might hurt them physically or emotionally.

Helicopter parent is another new term. These are the Moms and Dads who know a lot about what their kids are doing each day. They get involved in all aspects of their kids' lives to a degree that other parents may consider over-kill.

Eyes-on-the-Gold parents like to see their kids limit social activities in order to focus on achieving goals. Perfection is encouraged and even expected.

The newest term I've heard is called **Free-Range Parenting**, which seems the polar opposite of its helicopter rivals. Free-Range parents practice a more hands-off approach to parenting. *New York Sun* columnist Lenore Skenazy wrote about letting her 9-year old son take the New York City subway alone — which certainly gave the media lots to talk about!

These terms totally humor me — great metaphors! And such descriptive ways of looking at how different people do the same job.

Anyone who's ever held this position knows that parenting is not easy business.

As they say... Different strokes for different folks!

We all know successful and responsible adults who didn't necessarily *all* have perfect parents who *all* followed the same set of rules.

In case you're wondering... yes, I am a parent. I would describe my style as a healthy combination of all of the above... sprinkled with hearty amounts of good luck!



Sometimes It Pays To Say... **SO WHAT!**

“There’s no one in there that’s as big as me.”

Joe Re knew that the daily spinning classes available at his gym could be his ticket to better health, but at six-foot two-inches tall and 345 pounds, this 57-year old former football and basketball player was a bit intimidated by the fact that he was so much larger than the other bikers in class. So he avoided spinning... for a whole month!

Over the past 5 years, Joe had watched his weight climb to the point that he was scheduled for gastric bypass surgery. Realizing this wasn't the best long-term solution for him, he decided to cancel the surgery.

Both knees were damaged and in November of 2011, he had the left one replaced. The following May, he decided it was time to lose some weight before having the right one replaced too.

That’s when Joe bought a membership to Pine Grove Country Club in Camillus and began lifting weights. But roughly one month of stealing looks at the spinning classes was all that he could take. The following month, Joe decided it really didn't matter that no one in there was quite his size and he was determined to try his first class.

That was a whopping 65 pounds ago!

Today, Joe takes 6-8 spinning classes each week and even splurged for size 15 riding shoes so that he could clip-in to his stationary bike. His new love for the sport led Joe to purchase new mountain bikes so that he and his wife, Patty, can enjoy outdoor riding and he’s already talking about a new road bike so that he can go even faster on the outdoor road.



What began as a way to lose weight and rebuild damaged leg muscle has evolved into a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle for this now 58-year old Town of Onondaga resident.

I asked Joe if he had advice for anyone who doubts his or her ability to stick with a new exercise program. “Funny you should ask,” he said. “Just the other day, I saw a new guy at the club who was having trouble getting down the stairs. He looked pretty discouraged so I told him it to just keep moving because it will get better. “

“Just keep moving.”
Simple words... with life-changing impact!

Spin Class – a fancy name for stationary bike group exercise.

- Sweat... a lot!
- Ride at your own pace.
- Listen to energizing music.



The Rest of My Life

I was at the end of my rope! For the umpteenth time I had dieted, worked hard, lost weight and gained it back. “I am smarter than this,” I thought.

Eating cabbage soup and exercising like crazy for short periods of time may promote weight loss but I knew unless I make healthy eating and regular exercise a part of my lifestyle, I was dooming myself to the insanity of yo-yo dieting.

In 1999, at 5 ft. 11 in., I tipped the scales at 371 pounds. In case you’re wondering, I did not sit around watching TV all day, eating pizzas and washing them down with chocolate milkshakes. I assure you this was not the case. But I was eating too much of the wrong foods and I wasn’t exercising.

So I joined a weight loss group and lost over 100 pounds the first year, getting down to 245. But after five years I grew tired of going to weekly meetings. I figured I had lost the weight, so I quit.

Slowly and steadily, my weight climbed back up to 338.

I was so depressed but finally, the light bulb turned on and I got it: **I need to eat less and move more for THE REST OF MY LIFE.** I took things into my own hands and started my own weight loss group. It’s called **Pray It Off**. Our credo is: Eat less, move more, and ask God for help.

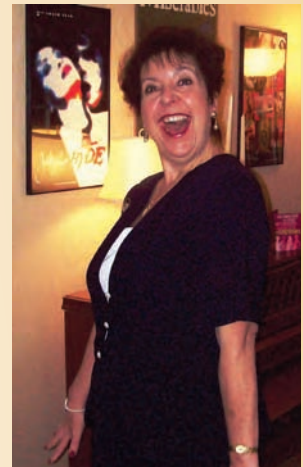
What started in 2009 as a group of 25 has grown to 100 members who have lost over 3000 pounds, collectively. Personally, I am down 138 pounds (171 from my 1999 high) and I have kept it off for almost 4 years.

Pray It Off doesn’t recommend one specific eating plan but instead encourages each person to discover what can work for him or her — for LIFE. Each week I select a different topic for discussion. We dig in to the emotional and psychological reasons we overeat. I also present different philosophies on healthy eating (i.e. low fat, low-carbohydrate, South Beach, Sonoma, Paleo, etc.)

It’s my opinion that many diets out there have merit. In fact, I found that when I removed the simple carbohydrates from my life, and increased my intake of fruits, vegetables, fish and lean meats, I lost weight.

But it wasn’t until I removed the diet mindset from my life and embraced a “rest of my life” mentality, that I was able to keep it off. I feel like I have more choices now and I’ve learned how to trust my own judgment, rather than rely on a diet to make choices for me.

Maintaining a healthy weight has become easier. Reaching out to help others and asking for God’s help are what fuel and motivate me. I know I can do this for life — the operative word here, of course, is life!

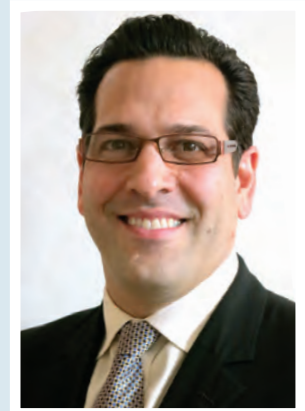


Ellen M. McCauley resides in Syracuse NY, is married with four children. She is the Volunteer and Activity Coordinator at Van Duyn Home and Hospital. Check out her Blog at <http://prayitoff.blogspot.com>

Pray It Off



Do You Have an **IRA** in Your Financial Tool Kit?



John Ruman (left) and Michael Zoli are financial advisors with Ivy Financial Group, in Manlius, NY. Their website is: www.IvyFinancial.com.

The bad news is that April 15th is right around the corner. But the good news is that if you think you're facing a greater tax liability this year, opening an IRA (or increasing your contribution) could reduce what you owe on tax day. An important factor for many families is that an early distribution for qualified educational expenses avoids the 10% early withdrawal penalty.

The IRA is one of the most versatile retirement savings tools available. It provides the opportunity to save for retirement and offers the potential for special tax advantages, depending upon your financial situation and the type of IRA you choose.

Here is a quick run-down of a few IRAs that might help you out:

- **Traditional IRA.** A traditional IRA may offer you a reduction in taxable income since **contributions are tax-deductible**. However, when you begin to withdraw IRA funds at retirement (or beginning at age 59-1/2), the funds are taxed as income.
- **Roth IRA.** While your contributions may not reduce your taxable income, the most distinctive benefit of the Roth IRA is that it offers **tax-free withdrawal** of funds starting at age 59-1/2 or when you retire, as long as certain requirements are met. This could be or may be a good option if you anticipate being in a higher tax bracket when you retire. The Roth

has no required minimum withdrawals during your lifetime. Upon death, required withdrawals apply to your beneficiaries, who will take these distributions tax-free while the balance of the plan continues to grow tax-free.

- **SIMPLE IRA.** The **S**avings **I**ncentive **M**atch **P**lan for **E**mployees (or SIMPLE IRA) is a simplified matching employee pension plan targeted to self-employed workers and small businesses with fewer than 100 employees. The SIMPLE IRA is one of the few IRA types that are **employer-sponsored**, though it has features similar to a 401(k) profit-sharing plan.
- **SEP IRA.** The Simplified Employee Pension IRA is ideal for **self-employed individuals and small businesses**. The SEP IRA is most similar to a traditional IRA, only it's highly simplified and easier to administer.

The bottom line is that an IRA could help you reduce your own bottom line this April 15th. If you're not sure which options would work best for you, we recommend discussing your situation with a trusted financial advisor. Understanding your current situation and goals are key factors in deciding which, if any, IRA is best for you.

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“Life is a field of unlimited possibilities.”

— Deepak Chopra



Crabby Customers Are Awesome Teachers



Kara Loveland is a graduate of West Genesee High School and is currently a Senior, majoring in Journalism, at Ithaca College. She's a THRIVEcny intern and is also employed by Wegmans.

I absolutely LOVE customers — well, most of them! Let's face it — some are a little easier to love than others. I once read that Americans will tell 24 people about a negative customer service experience, but I wonder how many of those 24 people ever think about the perspective of the person on the other side of the desk.

Working for five years in customer service, I've got a few stories of my own... experiences that have actually helped me become a really good customer myself.

For example, I had an instance with a Mother whose son's name was misspelled on his birthday cake. The woman stormed up to customer service and began yelling at me about how her son's 8th birthday was absolutely ruined and it was our bakery department's fault.

Honestly, the mistake could have been corrected by strategically placing a candle over one letter... but there's really more to this story.

Could one little letter really cause one crazed mother, one annoyed customer service clerk, a silently aggravated and scrambling manager, and a frightful scene witnessed by innocent bystanders?

It sure can! But it doesn't have to.

As a customer service rep, I've developed a style that helps me deal with the occasional irate customer. But what's great about this job is that it's taught me how to get the help of customer service reps when I am the customer.

I thought I'd define my ideal customer and I doubt my responses are any different from what most customer service representative's responses would be. I like to serve someone who offers a smile and an understanding tone of voice, says please and thank you, and appreciates my service. Even if they've got a really tough problem, these are the people I want to help all day long!

Regarding poor customer service, I like to think that those 24 people aren't hearing any disaster stories about MY service. But one thing I know for sure is that I've got a winning record when it comes to actually *getting* really good customer service.

I suppose you could say that getting good customer service is a piece of cake — mis-spelled name and all!



Choosing YOUR Kind of Yoga

It seems as though new yoga classes and studios are popping up everywhere these days. Celebrity endorsements like Jennifer Aniston's sculpted body and LeBron James' incredible endurance and flexibility on the court have also contributed to the buzz. Your interest may be piqued, but:

- a. The thought of being in tight yoga pants in downward dog among super-fit strangers leaves you trembling,
- b. You can't touch your toes, and/or
- c. You have a serious fear of being asked to "gently" twist like a pretzel while standing on your head!

Take a deep breath and relax because all yoga studios offer beginner classes that lead you safely into poses that will build your strength, endurance and flexibility slowly over time! Also, there are men and women of all shapes and sizes doing yoga today, so there is no reason to feel self-conscious.

Traditionally, Yoga is an intensely rich ancient philosophical and spiritual discipline that can bring deep healing and peace to the practitioner. The poses (asanas) and breathing techniques (pranayama) you will find in most yoga classes, no matter the style, help calm the nervous system in such a way that the incessant mind chatter we think is who we are begins to silence itself (even if only for a breath or two, at first). Then we are able to feel, sometimes for the first time in our lives, our Divine-Self, or Spirit, shining through.

This connection, or union, with our Spirit brings with it a deep sense of peace that feels like coming home. The asanas and breathing techniques have profound healing benefits for our physical bodies as well. Unlike other exercise, yoga nourishes the internal organs while stretching and toning our muscles and connective tissue. With our mental and physical bodies stronger, we are calmer and more empowered in our daily lives.

So, how do you pick a yoga class with so many styles and teachers to choose from? The first thing to do is to pick a yoga style that best matches your goals and personality — clarify your goals and determine the style of yoga that will best suit you. Why yoga? Do you want to lose weight, gain flexibility, rehabilitate an injury, reignite your spirituality, or reduce stress? It's a good idea to start with a series of beginner yoga classes. Most studios offer a 6 to 8 week program for beginners. This is the safest and most effective way to begin practicing yoga.

Popular styles of yoga include:

1. Vinyasa Flow

In Vinyasa Flow yoga, the movement from one pose to the next is synchronized with the breath. The poses flow together and become like a dance. This is an incredible way to burn fat while gaining strength and flexibility. Prepare to sweat, which expels toxins and re-energizes the body. The focus on the breath relaxes your mind and helps relieve deep-seated tension in the body. No two vinyasa flow classes are alike and the style of each teacher can vary greatly. You may want to try a few studios and teachers to find the classes that best suit your personality. Most studios offer Hot Vinyasa Flow classes too, where the room is heated to 85 degrees or higher.

2. Ashtanga and Power Yoga

Ashtanga Yoga is one of the most vigorous yoga styles. All Power Yoga classes are derived from Ashtanga Yoga. Ashtanga and Power Yoga build stamina, strength and flexibility. Classes run through a sequence of poses, beginning with sun salutations. Most of the poses are held for 5 to 10 breaths, helping to tone and build lean muscle mass.

3. Yin Yoga

In Yin Yoga, you are led through a series of poses that are held for longer than usual (2 to 5 minutes for most poses, and up to 20 minutes for others). This style of yoga targets and stretches the connective tissues of the hips, pelvis, and lower spine and is a good complement to the more rigorous styles of yoga that work on building strong, lean muscles.



4. Iyengar Yoga

Iyengar Yoga focuses on precise alignment in postures. Props such as blocks, blankets and straps are used to make the poses more accessible to all levels. This is a great style for beginners and for those who really want to learn proper alignment.

5. Bikram Yoga

In Bikram Yoga, the room is heated to around 105 degrees Fahrenheit with 40 percent humidity. Every Bikram class is exactly the same no matter where you are or who teaches it. You will be lead through a series of 26 postures twice in each class. If you love heat and routine, this is the style for you!

6. Kundalini Yoga

Kundalini Yoga is meditative and spiritual. It can be quite challenging depending on the teacher. You will do a lot of breath work and chanting in this type of class.

7. Restorative Yoga

Restorative Yoga is a therapeutic and gentle style of yoga that uses props to support the body to deepen the benefits of each pose. It is a very soothing and restful practice that promotes the effects of conscious relaxation. If you are trying to reduce stress and nurture yourself, restorative yoga is your kind of yoga!

There are many other styles of yoga. If the studio you are interested in offers another style, ask about the focus and benefits of that style before taking a class.

Pick a studio and teacher

Check out the studios in your area. Which studios teach a style that you are interested in trying? How many classes are offered each week? Do they allow drop-ins or will you have to commit to a monthly fee? If you do not have your own equipment, find out if the studio has the equipment you will need. (Most studios will have equipment for student use.) Inquire about the teachers at each studio. What are their qualifications? How long have they been practicing? Where were they certified? Read each teacher's bio and class descriptions. Finding a teacher you like and trust, and whose style you enjoy is key.

No matter which style you choose, try to make a commitment to practice regularly so you can experience the powerful and healing benefits of a consistent practice.

And remember, the more you engage in yoga — linking movement and breath — the more you begin to let go of old thought patterns that keep you stuck. You begin to see and feel the joy in the present moment. There is no worry about the future or anxiety about the past. You simply let go and just BREATHE! You feel your body move... your heart beating... your lungs expanding and contracting... without attachment. Then, as if by magic, something inside of you opens up — you see yourself and your world in a new, more peaceful light!



Cynthia Powers-Broccoli, RYT, has been a 200-Hour Certified Yoga Instructor since 2005. She teaches Yoga for Fertility, Couples Yoga, and Power Vinyasa Flow — incorporating a mix of ancient, modern, and soulful music for an energetic, fun and spiritual class experience.

What does it mean to be **healthy**?

BY Carrie Lazarus

There was a time when people would define themselves as healthy if they went for regular checkups and took their medications.

Today, we know better.

Good health doesn't happen at the doctor's office.

It happens all day, every day of your life.

It starts with what you have for breakfast.

Will you find time to exercise?

How will you deal with the stresses that inevitably will come your way?

We can't choose our genes, but we can make choices each day that can help keep us healthy.

Making good choices requires good information.

That's why I am so pleased about *THRiVEcny*. It's another valuable resource Central New Yorkers now have to get good information and share it with friends and family.

Congratulations
on your first issue!



Carrie Lazarus is the co-anchor of NewsChannel 9 at Noon, 5:00, 5:30 and 6:00. Her Family Healthcast was one of the nation's first daily local health segments, and has been a Central New York institution for more than twenty years.

THANK... an expression of gratitude.

If this page had volume controls, they'd be cranked way up because this is the shout-out page... a public thank you note to people who go above and beyond in how they do their jobs. These people don't just do their job because it's a job... they do it because they care. And as much as we know they're not looking for anything in return, we think it's important to let them know just how appreciated they truly are!

We welcome all readers to submit letters of thanks they'd like to send to people who have a habit of making other people's lives better. Your special "above-and-beyond" (AAB) can be anyone from an especially patient sales clerk to the airline rep who goes out of his way to help you re-schedule a cancelled flight.

We've noticed several AAB's throughout CNY and we invite you to notice them too. When you do, just shoot an email to editor@thrivecny.com and we'll do our best to help you thank them on this page.

thank you Floradell Clarke!

FROM Lisa Cavallaro

For starters, I'd like to personally thank a woman named Floradell Clarke, of Marcellus. I've never met this wonderful woman, but she works as a Physical Therapist with the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA). As part of her job, Floradell visited my husband's parents' home twice each week to help Dad regain the use of his legs. Twice each week, we would hear brags from Dad about how Floradell taught him ways to get up and down the stairs, walk with a cane and exercise in his recliner. When Floradell first met Dad, he was able to walk about 30 steps with a cane. By the time their work ended a few months later, Dad was up over 900 steps!

Without even realizing it, Floradell made a huge positive impact on Dad, Mom and our entire family. Her attitude was always very positive. She made them laugh. She showed great enthusiasm for the progress Dad was making. In her own special way, she challenged him and most importantly, *expected* him to succeed... and that he did!

Floradell Clarke, thank you for going above and beyond for our family — you are one very special lady!



**“Don't ask what the world needs.
Ask what makes you come alive,
and go do it. Because what the world
needs is people who have come alive.”**

— Howard Thurman