

Turtle Soup

NORTH SHORE STROKE RECOVERY CENTRE

Editor: Hana Sykora

Photographer: Sue Carabetta, Karen Mah

March 2019

Make a Difference in Your Life

Here are a few key points about meditation:



- Meditation has the potential to improve both physical and mental health
- It isn't a matter of clearing the mind; it is just focusing on one thing at a time
- Start with focusing on the breath: feel the air going in and out of your nostrils
- 12 breaths takes about 1 minute so if you count 60 breaths that's a 5 minute meditation
- Anything is better than nothing! But MRI studies have shown that in 8 weeks of consistent meditation, we can see physical changes in the brain

"I loved it, Yeah!" – Gay Walker

"It's good, relaxing and really good." – Ferdinand Vargas

"It helps you when you are worried." – Amyn Sunderji

"I imagined white cloud coming in and dark smoke going out." – Janet Moore

Meditation Presentation By Tracy Dignum
Coordinator, Rehabilitation Assistant Diploma Program
Capilano University



We are fortunate to have two nursing students from BCIT with us at the center. Let me introduce you to Yasmin and Laura who are in their first term of nursing.

Yasmin enjoys working out, spending time with friends and travelling. Laura enjoys taking her dog up the mountain, skiing and going on adventures. Please take the opportunity to get to know them!



Smile Is Here Again

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France and I have been married for 20 years. Our marriage proved the matrimonial vows that we'll be together for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health and hoping till death do us part.

I had a stroke in 2009 which paralyzed me. I was completely dependent on her because I was unable to move. Life was difficult back then but I was thankful France did not give up on me. We were broke because of the expenses incurred from my treatments. Luckily her application to work in Canada was approved and in 2011, she flew to Vancouver, Canada, while I remained in the Philippines.

I was worried at first, because of my situation. I was still very weak and was dependent on someone else's help in almost everything I did. I tried however, to make it on my own because France was not around. In her absence, this made me push myself to be independent.

In the Philippines, I really enjoyed playing basketball with my friends prior to my stroke. It was my way to relax, exercise and release stress. Looking back, I realized basketball took away some of my time as a family man. For example, there were Sundays I would not attend church with my wife because I would be with my basketball peers. When I had my stroke, I could no longer play basketball and my social circle changed. Instead of spending time with my peers, all my time was spent with France. This strengthened our relationship - a blessing in disguise in a sense, although, in

a harsh way for me. I had to face a new reality, waking up one day and knowing I would never be able to play the sport I enjoyed the most. This was devastating. I have accepted my fate and maybe these things happened for my own good, for my wife... our family.

France worked in Vancouver as a live-in caregiver in 2011. After two years she applied for permanent residency with me while I still lived in the Philippines. When we got our permanent Canadian residency in 2017, I arrived in Vancouver with France's help in May of that same year.

To this day, France still provides for our needs (food, clothing, apartment, medicines etc...) I am continuously working on my road to recovery since my stroke in 2009. Life is still challenging for us because of my disability and I am looking for ways that I could assist France in anyway. To enhance my recovery, I came across the Brain Gain Program here at the North Shore Neighborhood House which connected me to North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre.

When I arrived in Canada, I wasn't sure what was going to happen to me in this strange country. Then the NSSRC gave me the opportunity to be normal again. I was really happy to find out there were organizations here, that help people like me with the same condition. I'm truly glad to be in the stroke recovery program because for many years, I had not been doing anything. I was always at home alone. I was slowly becoming anti-social, not wanting to see or talk to anyone. The NSSRC gave me hope that I could become better. I have begun to talk again, join in discussions, sing, do exercises and even play Scrabble. I'm more confident now and slowly becoming my old self, by attending these programs. The smile and laughter on my face is here again, thanks to the contagious laughter of the ladies at the NSSRC.

My thanks go out to the people behind the NSSRC, for painstakingly doing what they do. Thank you for giving us hope and life after stroke.

~ Ferdinand Vargas

Dreaming already about .. "Strides for Strokes"



This walk takes place in June, with all the NSSRC community on the seawall, and it's our main fundraiser for the year. We are starting to think now and to dream about how we can expand our fundraising efforts to maximize the full potential of this event and help make much needed funds for our programs. Think big with us and If you have any thoughts or ideas about this; family members who might want to get involved in promoting this or connections to corporate donors..... or to schools where kids may want to help raise funds and/or come out and walk with us.... Please feel free to brainstorm and let us know your thoughts - we are excited about getting rolling early this year in planning this popular event.

~ by Sue Carabetta



Next Caregiver's Groups

When: Wednesday, April 10th

Where: North Shore Neighbourhood House

Time: 10:15 a.m.

Group Facilitator: Sue Carabetta



Coquitlam Lunch Outing

When: Friday, May 3rd

Where: Coquitlam Stroke Recovery Branch

More Details to Follow

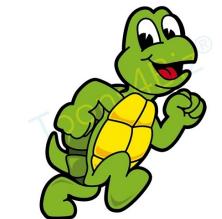


Annual General Meeting

When: Thursday, May 23rd

Where: North Shore Neighbourhood House – Inman Room

Time: 12:45 p.m.



Strides for Strokes – our major fundraiser of the year. Even if you can't attend, please consider pledges from family & friends. Pledge forms available at the Centre.

When: Saturday, June 8th, 2019

Where: John Lawson Park, West Vancouver

Time: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.



June Luncheon

When: Thursday, June 27th, 2019

Where: The Legion – Lynn Valley

Time: 12 noon

More details to follow.

~ Gail Snelling



FEAR OF FALLING? HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR CONFIDENCE AND DECREASE YOUR RISK OF HAVING A FALL.

VISION:

If there are changes in your vision you should see your eye doctor and go for review as recommended. Wear the glasses prescribed. Keep them clean and in good condition.

ENSURE YOUR HOME ENVIRONMENT IS NOT A FALLS RISK:

- Make your home as clutter free as possible. Do not do this on your own, get some help from your family, friend or social worker.
 - Clear pathways.
 - Remove loose carpets or rugs that you may trip over.
 - Use only non-slip rugs or non-skid mats.
 - Install nightlights in the bedroom and hallways. Light sensors are ideal.
 - Do you have handrails on Stairs and/or Bathroom?
 - Consider referral to OT or PT to assess your home environment.
- Pets can increase fall risk.... Be mindful of this.

TAKE CARE WHEN GOING OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY: PLAN YOUR TRIP:

- Consider Taxi or HandyDART services.
- Consider referral to OT or PT to assess outdoor mobility. Be weather smart.

STAY AS ACTIVE AS YOU CAN:

Maintain and or improve your balance, strength, exercise tolerance, mobility and functional ability safely. Exercise can be modified to your abilities so that it is not increasing your risk. Physiotherapy can help: A detailed Physiotherapy assessment can formulate a falls management plan specific to you. Exercise programs can be designed and onward referrals made to the right services if required.



WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL:

Take time to develop a plan of what you might do after a fall

Some things to consider are: Wear a personal alarm around your neck. Keep a phone with you at all times. Set up quick dial numbers on your home phone. Know your emergency contact numbers. If possible ask a friend or family member to call you daily and leave them a spare key, so they can get to you quickly.

~ by Charlene Dornan, Physiotherapist

North Shore Stroke Recovery Centre

Phone: 778-340-5803

Website: www.nssrc.org

Co-ordinators: Gail Snelling (Principal Co-ordinator), Sue Carabetta, Karen Mah

Days of Operation: Monday: 10:00 - 2:00 p.m. - Amica Lions Gate, 701 Keith Rd, West Vancouver

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday: 10:00 - 2:00p.m. North Shore Neighbourhood House, 225 East 2nd St, North Vancouver

Young Stroke Survivors- Monday 10:00am-1:00pm -Amica Edgemont Village, 3225 Highland Blvd., North Vancouver & Wednesday 10:30am-12:30pm- North Shore Neighbourhood House

EDITOR'S NOTE: 1. What is in the newsletter does not necessarily reflect the opinion of NSSRC Staff or Board. It is a newsletter written by/for stroke survivors and their families. 2. Grammatical errors are not corrected by the editor unless requested. Our newsletter is part of our recovery. Restoring confidence in self expression takes precedence over grammar.