

## ABOUT SHARON



*"If you cannot afford wellness now – how will you possibly afford sickness later?"*

*If you care about your well-being and that of others, if you want a balanced scorecard for your work and your life – let's begin to create the individual and corporate solutions that you need for health, wellness, safety and the environment. Let's get started now!"*

### **Sharon M. Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN** *Biographic Information*

Sharon is an energetic, motivating and highly skilled consultant specializing in workplace wellness, corporate training programs and motivational speaking. She offers individual and corporate solutions for health, wellness, the environment and safety. If wellness is not yet a part of your corporate benefits initiative, outsource the service to Sharon...and discover the difference in attitude and performance that wellness brings to the workplace.

*"My target clients are individuals and businesses seeking a healthier work environment – who want to be healthy and more productive. This includes those who think 'green' and those with environmental health challenges. Imagine a life in balance, and what I can bring to your workplace, manufacturing plant, school system, hotel, office, and YOU!"*

Sharon's background includes 30 years as an educator in a diversity of environments on such subjects as: Workplace Wellness, Sleep, Creating Healing Environments, Feng Shui, Lifestyle Balance, The Air we Breathe, Leadership, Ethics, Stress and Time Management and Humor in the Workplace. She enjoys working with clients in a variety of industries, including, but not limited to – Construction, Healthcare, Education, Hospitality, Banking and Management. President, Core Consulting Group, LLC and Core Wellness International, Sharon truly leads the field. Her articles related to wellness have been published in *Remarkable Woman Magazine*, the *Sierra Club*, *Crain's* and the *American Organization of Nurse Executive's* newsletter, *Advance for Nurses*, as well as multiple other business publications. She has appeared on NBC news, local affiliate TV, and been quoted in newsletters and journal articles. She is the author of 7 books, including [B is for Balance](#) and [Workplace Wellness](#) (in development) and numerous peer-review manuscripts.

Recent engagements for the International Council of Nurses, the Alliance Library System, National Wellness Institute, American Holistic Nurses Association, Summit Management, Nightingale-Conant Corporation, and Bastyr University attest to her scope of knowledge and ability to engage others in the wellness process. She is adjunct clinical professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago College of Nursing.

Health and wellness is not just what she does – it is clearly who she is!

A nurse's guide for enjoying life at work and at home

B IS FOR  
BALANCE



SHARON M. WEINSTEIN

# Sharon M. Weinstein...

*"...I had my eyes opened. I have always been an advocate of East and West in my practice; this program reinforces my beliefs. This is a new day in America. Thank you for this enlightening, entertaining and visionary program."*

author • educator • inspirational speaker • corporate consultant •  
the "go-to" professional



Alliance Library System



NBC News



International Council of Nurses



National Wellness Institute



Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society

Sharon has been interviewed for radio, television, and print ...including NBC, the Sierra Club, Remarkable Woman, and more!

Her articles have appeared in multiple publications and she is widely quoted about creating balance in life!

She has presented to national and international audiences!

**Schedule Sharon for your program or event and discover what others have already learned!**

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## Alliance Library System

**From the front...**

**Wednesday, July 2, 2008**

**ALS Wellness Day: A Day with Sharon Weinstein**

**What participants said about Sharon Weinstein's 5 hour workshop...**

- What a fabulous role model – we all thank you; you were EXCELLENT!
- The program is the best that I have had!
- Very engaging and knowledgeable
- Great job...she kept me engaged during the whole program and involved the entire group
- Thoroughly informative and fun
- Best speaker we've ever had about anything
- Very engaging and entertaining speaker
- This was wonderful - thank you
- Was very interactive and appealed to everyone
- Wonderful and educated speaker who KNOWS and LIVES her stuff!

**Sharon Weinstein provides the following courses  
to diverse audiences:**

***A healthy school  
Is School a Healthy Place?***

Sit back, close your eyes and imagine for a moment a truly healthy and sustainable school or school district – *a Little Green Schoolhouse, in just 7 steps.*

Imagine if all our schools were to strive to be toxin-free—making choices about chemical use that employ a precautionary approach aimed to prevent harm to children’s health. Imagine if our schools were geared to minimize their impacts on the local and global environment. Imagine schools that generate their own energy, conserve water, are built with ecologically sound materials, reduce overall resource consumption, and purchase recycled paper, classroom and office supplies.

The presenter, a Fellow of the American College of Wellness and nurse educator, focuses on creating a green, healthy space involving teaching, learning, and engaging participants in environmental education, place-based learning, and the child’s role in the greening of their schools. In 7 simple steps, she will lead you through the process.

***WiFi...the wired generation  
WiFi...is it dangerous to our health and to our future?***

We are facing a serious threat, and with time, it will challenge our health and our future. It is no secret that the public is increasingly concerned about exposure, and thus, the IHF has created an EMF Education link to disseminate information about this serious problem and what it means.

Is there an invisible danger – wireless radio high frequency signals? Is it unsafe for students, and is it in your child’s school or in your own home? The impact on students’ health is real and is manifested as headaches, eye strain, a feeling that something is in your eyes, dizziness, and increased heart rate. The symptoms appear at school and disappear once the child gets home, if there is no WiFi at home, or if it is turned off when not in use! And cellular phones present similar challenges.

***Meditation beats Medication***

- Meditation can be a form of medication
- Meditation helps you enter a relaxation state that can lower your heart rate, your blood pressure, slow down your breathing and relax your muscles
- Meditation can be a "reset button" for your body
- Meditation is something that most people can safely try on their own
- Take time each day to meditate and connect with the silence within yourself
- Prayer and meditation is a way to be at peace
- Developing a deeper sense of peace and direction will give you a clearer sense of purpose at work and at home

*Are you ready to learn more?*

***Workplace Wellness***

A crisis exists today. Millions of people are unwell, suffering from the stresses that are part of modern living: lack of sleep, poor nutrition (and obesity), exposure to dangerous pollutants, no exercise, and time pressures. And people — millions of people — are looking for solutions.

Workplace wellness programs are beginning to earn their place among necessities within the environment. Model programs for disease management are decreasing days lost from work, enhancing lifestyle, and increasing performance. As workweeks are expanding and stress

levels are rising, more hours are spent at the workplace, and health takes a toll. Learn about the work-life connection and how to keep well in the workplace.

### ***Foaming at the Mouth***

Foam cups, plates, food containers—everywhere you turn someone's handing you the stuff. We think of it as Styrofoam but actually it's polystyrene. The name isn't important. What is important is that you recognize that it is a toxin. And, it is in all of our systems! What can we do? Listen to and learn from Sharon Weinstein as she shares what you can do to be on a poison-free diet.

### ***Healthy Living 101***

Healthy living doesn't happen at the doctor's office. The road to better health is paved with the small decisions we make every day. It's about the choices we make when we buy groceries, drive our cars, and hang out with our kids and grandkids. Think about your choices. Let's discuss wellness now – to avoid sickness later.

### ***The Magic Word is Attitude***

When was the last time you stopped to acknowledge all the good things in your life? Very often, when we're focused on a 'big' goal, or just caught up in day-to-day living, we often forget about the things that bring us joy. And when we're feeling down, it's very hard to remember that they exist at all!

Yet there is a definite physiological response when we acknowledge our gratitude. Try it now. Close your eyes and think of something (or someone) you're grateful for. Notice how your breathing changes? How it slows down? That you start smiling? And just feel better in general? It is amazing to me how something so simple can change my perspective. No matter what my attitude was when I started, I feel better. And the more things I can acknowledge my gratitude for, the better I feel. Let me show you a simple way to incorporate gratitude into your life on a regular basis.

### ***Humor and a healthy workplace***

- A valuable human experience
- Laughter puts us "in the moment", and "in the moment," we are less aware of our problems
- Laughter is therapeutic - it relaxes us and gives us a better perspective: a period of laughter gives us the opportunity to look at things differently and defuses painful emotions

### ***Aging...or not?***

Wow – look at Barbie!

Did you play with here as a kid?

Did you notice that she does not age – not at all!

She's been in the spotlight as long as we can remember - though she never seems to age. But Barbie Millicent Roberts did turn 50.

Barbie – at 50 – looks like she did at 20!!

How???

She is hydrated, she has a good night's sleep in her Barbie bed, and she pays attention to what she puts into her mouth.

The result – timeless beauty – from the inside out!

Aging is a process, and while she avoided it, we cannot. But we can drink enough quality water, get a good night's sleep, and nourish ourselves. We may not live in Barbie's ideal environment – the Barbie townhouse – but we can thrive and survive in a wellness environment. Learn how...

### ***Essential - Effective - Efficient...it's your time!***

Developing time management skills is a journey – not a destination. Good time management Learn how to accomplish more with less effort, and reap the rewards in terms of time for you!

### ***Healthy environment and a healthy workforce***

Companies everywhere are facing a difficult balancing act—how to promote wellness and healthy lifestyles that will keep workers on the job, more productive and surrounded by a healthy work environment. Employees can control their own health and practice healthy living. Learn how to create a workplace wellness environment at your site.

### ***Diabetes***

The percentage of children who are obese<sup>1</sup> has more than doubled, and among adolescents the rates have more than tripled since 1980. Obesity is a risk factor for health conditions such as diabetes and is associated with problems such as poor self-esteem. The good news is that schools can help students and staff adopt healthy eating and physical activity behaviors that are the keys to preventing obesity.

Reversing the obesity epidemic requires a long-term, well-coordinated approach to reach young people where they live, learn, and play. Schools have a big part to play. Working with other public, voluntary, and private sector organizations, schools can play a critical role in reshaping social and physical environments and providing information, tools, and practical strategies to help students adopt healthy lifestyles. The speaker addresses 10 key strategies for success and applies them to the local community.

### ***TEAM...together everyone achieves more!***

- Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results
- Coming together, sharing together, working together, succeeding together.
- A successful team beats with one heart

Learn to analyze who's on your team and who will take you to the next level?

### ***Stress Reduction 101***

What if you could

- Gain a deeper understanding of your inner being and your ability to be all that you can be?
- Know how to relieve the stressors in your life that hold you back?
- Learn how to celebrate Wellness, Women, and Wealth

Step back, look at the big picture and use that perspective to help people feel well about themselves...that is the critical skill that's allowed Sharon Weinstein to touch the lives of women on a global scale.

Sharon combines her background in western medicine with integrative and functional medicine to help people feel better and live longer naturally. It's allowed her to address seemingly intractable health issues, the situations where tests may show everything is "normal" yet the patient still doesn't feel like her previous young self. It's allowed her to share the message of ownership of one's body and self to create total well-being.

### ***Eight Glasses a Day Keeps the Doctor Away***

Of water – that is! Learn how water and hydration can be the secret to good health, enhanced productivity, and the good life!

### ***Staying Fit While You Sit***

Do you?

- Sit at your desk for long periods of the day
- Experience back, neck or shoulder pain
- Seem to be gaining weight
- Lack muscle tone

### ***B is for Balance***

- Think of five things in your own life, and then begin your process!
- Eat simpler foods, but eat as a family.

- Drop memberships to free your time.
- Clear out the clutter in your life to make it easier to find things.
- Put things in their place.
- Do the laundry every other day, and straighten up – but do not clean up every day.
- Turn off the TV and spend TV time with the family.

### ***The Weight is Over!***

- There are fast-food franchise outlets in 13 percent of the nation's schools
- One American Medical Association study estimates that 300,000 Americans die each year from obesity-related causes such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke
- Obesity levels are sky-rocketing despite the fact that \$33 billion a year is spent on weight-loss aids

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Around the country and across the globe:

- Country after country follows the American lead and grows heavier
- Over consumption has replaced malnutrition as the world's top food problem
- From China to Russia, the world need only look to America to see its future
- There are now clinics for obese children in Beijing
- A new virus without natural enemies
- Our social systems (economics, health care system, even education) are a challenge
- Despite talk of an obesity crisis, obesity is increasing in all races, ages, income groups, and areas of the world

Learn more...

# Sharon M. Weinstein...

*You can hear Sharon yourself at one of the following events -*

- *March 30, 2011 – NAWBO Combined Strategic Forums, Healthy, Wealthy and Wise – Marriott O’Hare, Des Plaines, IL*
- *April 29, 2011- Leadership in Safety and Quality – Marriott Hotel, Yerevan, Armenia*
- *May 3, 2011 – Living longer, Living better, Living well. Guy Viti Insurance Co., Highwood, IL*
- *May 20<sup>th</sup> – Emcee, Florida Hotel, Orlando, FL*
- *July 26, 2011 – Rotary Club, WiFi...the hidden dangers, Skokie, IL*
- *August 6, 2011 – Graduation Speaker, Kaplan University School of Nursing, Chicago, IL*
- *September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Breakout Session: The Wages of Stress...the importance of life balance, OR Managers Conference, Hyatt Hotel, Chicago, IL*
- *September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Closing Session: Life your Life...Dream your Dreams, OR Managers Conference, Hyatt Hotel, Chicago, IL*
- *October 30, 2011 – STTI Biennial Convention - Comparing nurse physician collaboration in the US and Eastern Europe: Are there lessons to be learned? Grapevine, TX*
- *October 30, 2011 – STTI Biennial Convention – Transforming Global Health...new models and new thinking, Gaylord Grapevine, TX*
- *October 31, 2011 – STTI Biennial Convention - Pedagogical principles in professional online education in global health, Grapevine, TX*
- *February 10-11, 2012 – Energy Medicine; University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL*

**Schedule Sharon for your Wellness Event or Workplace Wellness Initiative**

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Retirement communities have evolved drastically over the last 50 years. Turn to page 7 to read how.

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Changing the Face of  
Retirement Communities

## Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of *Always a Nurse* in 2010! This issue shares exciting new initiatives from the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), as well as articles focusing on laughter, retirement communities and much more!

To view issues of *Always a Nurse*, visit STTI's "Membership" Web site, [www.nursingsociety.org/Membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Membership),

and click on "Always a Nurse." As always, we would love your feedback or article ideas for future issues. Please e-mail suggestions to [alwaysanurse@stti.org](mailto:alwaysanurse@stti.org).

If you have any questions regarding *Always a Nurse*, contact Janell Jackson via e-mail at [janell@stti.org](mailto:janell@stti.org) or call 888.634.7575 (U.S./Canada) or +1.317.634.8171 (International).

## Inside the Society

2010 is the centennial year of the death of the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale (1820-1910).

To celebrate this historic milestone, the 2010 International Year of the Nurse (IYNurse) was established to actively involve the world's nurses, estimated to be more than 15 million, in a celebration of commitment to bring health to their communities, locally and worldwide.

The founders of this initiative, STTI, the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH) and the Florence Nightingale Museum (FNM), London, seek to recognize the contributions of nurses globally and advocate for the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs are eight international development goals that 192 United Nations Member States and at least 23 international organizations agreed to achieve by the year 2015. They were officially established at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, where world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration from which these Goals were promoted.

The goals center around sectors including health, poverty, education, gender and environment, and aim to



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## Inside the Society

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focus the world's attention on critical issues impacting the health of humanity.

A special Commemorative Service is being conducted 25 April at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., USA from 4:00-5:00 p.m to honor Florence Nightingale and IYNurse. The event is open to the public.

How will you celebrate 2010 IYNurse? Events, stories, poems and special tributes from around the globe have been collected and submitted to the IYNurse Web site, [www.2010iynurse.net](http://www.2010iynurse.net). Please add your events or stories today!

## BookMarks

### *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual and Kind Diet: A Simple Guide to Feeling Great, Losing Weight, and Saving the Planet*

On a recent "Oprah" show titled "Before You Shop Again: Food 101," Oprah spotlighted two books, *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual* by Michael Pollan and *The Kind Diet: A Simple Guide to Feeling Great, Losing Weight, and Saving the Planet* by actress and vegan Alicia Silverstone.

Pollan's book offers easy to use rules for shoppers to become more mindful of the foods we eat. On the show he spoke of the "common sense" rules shoppers should

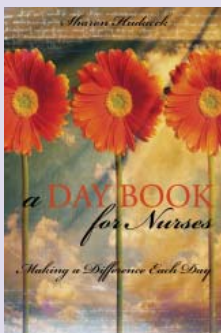
use, like avoiding food products containing ingredients that a third-grader cannot pronounce, eating food that will eventually rot and, my favorite, eating all the junk food you want as long as you cook it yourself. Silverstone's book is a collection of about 100 easy and earth-friendly recipes.

More information on "Oprah" and the featured books is available online at [www.oprah.com](http://www.oprah.com).

### Honor yourself or a special nurse with a gift from Nursing Knowledge International!

Now through 12 May 2010, receive US \$10 off orders totaling US \$50 or more or US \$20 off orders totaling US \$100 or more. Enter code NURSE10 at checkout.

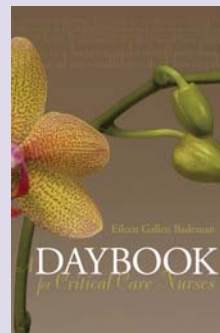
Find inspiration in books from the *Daybook* series and other popular titles.



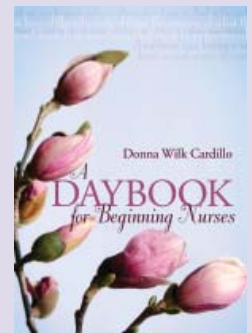
*A Daybook for Nurses*  
US \$15.95  
More than  
12,000 sold!



*A Daybook for Nurse  
Leaders and  
Managers*  
US \$19.95



*A Daybook for  
Critical Care Nurses*  
US \$19.95  
New!



*A Daybook for  
Beginning Nurses.*  
Price US \$19.95

## "So, what about laughter?"

### Meet Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN



Sharon Weinstein

As a diploma graduate from Pennsylvania Hospital School of Nursing, Philadelphia, I continued my education in Florida and Texas as I moved around the country and around the globe – somewhat of a pioneer at the time. No, I was not in the military, although that might have been a great choice. Rather, my husband, a successful hospital CEO, and I took turns relocating for one another – always advancing within our careers. During this time, I also had three children...and they became expert networkers as they navigated within school systems and new neighborhoods. To some, this might appear stressful. To us, it represented a journey, an opportunity to meet new people, make new friends and to exercise humor in the process.

And so, our journeys enabled us to own 14 homes in as many states and an apartment in Moscow. Our journeys enabled us to look on the bright side of moving about – clean closets, constant purging, lack of clutter and the development of incredible organizational skills. In spite of this constant activity, or perhaps because of it, our adult children are incredibly well-adjusted, outgoing, and yes, they do see laughter as the best medicine.

I completed master's degrees in gerontology, health administration, and business in Texas and Illinois, and I am Adjunct Clinical Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago College of Nursing. Like many Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) colleagues, I, too, have paid my dues...and my career has been, and continues to be, so rewarding. My career has spanned infusion therapy, home care, medical school, nursing school faculty and international. I feel blessed to have always been a step ahead of the pack – leading the field and creating opportunities for nurses and nursing.

As director of the Office of International Affairs for an 1800-hospital alliance, I created partnership opportunities for our North American hospital and their foreign counterparts. I served as U.S. advisor to the Kremlin Hospital (Central Clinical Hospital in Moscow) for 10 years and created the international patient department.

As founder of the International Nursing Leadership Institute hosted by the American International Health Alliance, I had the opportunity to collaborate with many STTI leaders as we shared knowledge and expertise with our peers from the new independent States of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern European nations. We focused on learning as fun-damental and we put the edu-tainment in education. Our goal was to create a cadre of nurse leaders/educators.

A series of leading management books were used by faculty to generate the curriculum. Students and faculty, in full costume, acted out the stories. For example, the parable, "Who Moved My Cheese," encouraged students to have contingency plans and to expect change. The book, *The Oz Principle*, told students that they could be or do whatever they wanted...if they wanted it badly enough! The book, *Goldilocks on Management*, featured a series of revisionist fairy tales for serious managers. Thirty-four of our graduates have been granted international membership in the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) and more than 68 graduates have been inducted as community leaders in STTI.

(Continued on page 2)

## "So, what about laughter?"

### Meet Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN

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So, what about laughter? For years, our children referred to me as 50 percent...meaning that 50 percent of the time (or less), I had a good sense of humor. I actually "got" a joke; I could laugh at myself. I think that I have now graduated to 80 percent. Sometimes, I am the first to see the humor in a situation or to come up with a great line. Of course, family members are still amazed! Sometimes, I get "it" – whatever "it" might be! And, my level of awareness has increased as I have transitioned within my career from a focus on intervention to one of health and wellness – prevention and health promotion.

It is fascinating to work with colleagues who embrace ownership of one's body and the need to advocate for self-care, self-reflection, meditation and laughter. Laughter definitely has a place within every aspect of one's life. Laughter has enabled me to change my mindset, shift my paradigms and it has enhanced my well-being!

As nurses, we all need to assume responsibility for the joys of life! As nurses, we work in stressful environments. Humor allows us to deal with stress more effectively; humor impacts healing and recovery time. And, humor has enabled me to grow personally and professionally.

As I have transitioned within my career, a sense of humor has definitely helped. In my work with foreign Ministers of Health, Education and Finance, I always needed to see the big picture of what was possible, but perhaps not always probable. In my consulting practice, I have integrated humor in my work related to positive practice environments and wellness. As founder of the Integrative Health Forum ([www.ihfglobal.com](http://www.ihfglobal.com)), I am leading the field in creating the evidence-base for nursing's wellness practice. My practice interest is in offering solutions for health, wellness, safety and the environment. I collaborate with organizations insuring between 500 and 2,000 lives, and I help them to maintain healthcare costs through WellWorks™ programs. And, I work with nurse entrepreneurs, helping them to envision the next phase of

their nursing careers and executing the process.

So, like me, step back, look at the big picture and use that perspective to help people feel good about themselves...that is the critical skill that's allowed me to touch the lives of people like you and me on a global scale! I can combine my background in western medicine with integrative and functional medicine to help people feel better and live longer naturally. From personal experience, I know that sometimes it all comes down to the environment in which we live and work. That environment can hinder our ability to be well and can create stress-induced illness. This can take a huge toll on energy levels and the feeling of well-being we all rely on to have optimal vitality and wellness.

I have had a long and exciting nursing career; I often joke that I should be at least 100 years of age given all that I have crammed into 40 years as a nursing professional. And, the best is yet to come. Visit me online at [www.corelimited.com](http://www.corelimited.com).

**Sharon Weinstein is a member of Alpha Lambda Chapter of STTI; she is the author of multiple publications, two of which have been published through Nursing Knowledge International: *Nursing Without Borders: Values, Wisdom, Success Markers and Bs for Balance: A Guide to Creating Balance at Home and at Work*. Sharon has contributed an article to this issue of *Always a Nurse*, available on pg. 5.**

## Share your story!

If you would like to share your advice or retirement stories with *Always a Nurse* readers, please e-mail [alwaysanurse@stti.iupui.edu](mailto:alwaysanurse@stti.iupui.edu). Your article may be featured in an upcoming issue!

# Laughter: The Best Medicine

By Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN

**“What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul.”**  
—Yiddish Proverb

Without question, one of the best feelings in the world is being overcome with uncontrollable laughter. You know the kind; when you laugh so hard you cry, and you keep chuckling each time you relive the moment, even hours after the “fit of laughter” has left you. Laughing, it turns out, lowers blood pressure, reduces stress hormones, increases muscle flexibility and boosts the immune function (Berk et al., 1989). It does this by raising the levels of infection-fighting proteins and cells that produce disease-destroying antibodies—T-cells and antibodies IgA and IgB. Additionally, one study at the University of Maryland Medical Center revealed a connection between laughter and the healthy functioning of blood vessels (Miller, 2000).

With today’s hectic pace, we need a few moments of daily laughter—the more the better. It is free of charge and readily available. In the face of frequently dispiriting news from around the globe, it is easy to become glum and irritable, and that can quickly and quietly throw off your balance.

## Health Benefits

Laughter has enormous health benefits for those with a diversity of clinical conditions from chronic diseases, such as diabetes, to lowering risks of heart attacks and everything in between. In the world in which we live, replete with modern medical breakthroughs, who would

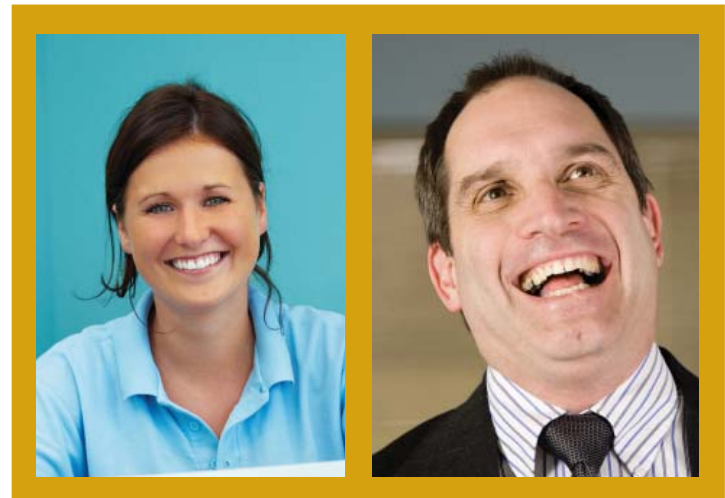
ever dream that something as simple as laughter could induce such amazing benefits for your health?

A study of patients with Type 2 Diabetes revealed that laughter helps regulate gene expression (Hayashi et al., 2006). Studies also suggest that laughter positively affects rheumatoid arthritis by affecting the level of the condition as well as psychological benefits in controlling stress and stress-related conditions.

Laughter makes it easier to handle life and its challenges because it puts us “in the moment.” When we are in the moment, we are less aware of our problems. Remember a time when you have laughed and things have somehow seemed different? Going back to childhood, our parents and grandparents would try to get us to laugh through our tears after a skinned knee. Later, it was over a broken heart or a betrayed friendship. Throughout life, even at the lowest points like the death of a close loved one, remembered laughter can lighten the load and help restore equilibrium to our lives.

Laughter is therapeutic because it relaxes us and gives us a better perspective: A period of laughter gives us the opportunity to look at things differently and defuses painful emotions. With practice, we can and should make laughter a part of our everyday lives.

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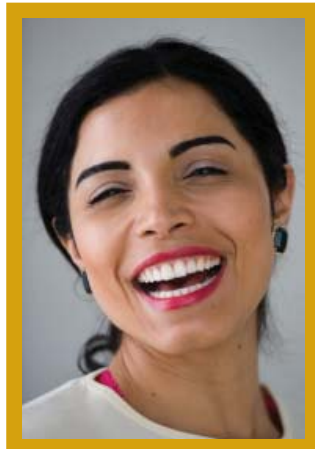


# Laughter: The Best Medicine

(Continued from page 5)

In office-work environments:

- Decorate your office with toys that you and your visitors can play with when things get difficult. Play dough is a great office tool!
- Start a Laugh-In club with contests for the best (appropriate) jokes or clowning around.
- Make those around you laugh at least three times a day, and they will return the favor.
- Keep silly photos of you and your loved ones around you.
- Keep "dress up" items like silly costumes found at garage or yard sales in your office. When the stress gets too high, walking the halls in a curly rainbow wig or Superman cape can lighten the atmosphere considerably.



- Bring in music that calms you.

Don't forget humor in your personal life too. Remember, a smile goes a long way, and laughter will:

- Promote a positive environment.
- Create an air of trust.
- Cheer you and others around you.
- Rechannel energy to something more positive.
- Release tension.
- Reduce stress.
- Work the diaphragm and increase the body's ability to use oxygen.

If you can laugh at something, it ceases to be so overwhelming. Remember: Laughter is contagious. Have something in your workplace that automatically makes you smile.

Once you're smiling, spread it around and make your co-workers and patients smile too!

## Celebrate Nurses Week

**Be Inspired. Be Motivated. Be Renewed.**

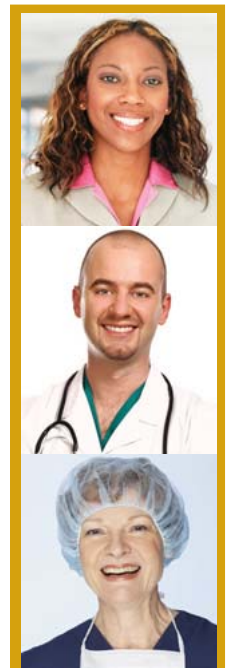
Do you remember the person that inspired you to become a nurse? The mentor that made a difference in your life?

Nurses Week, 6-12 May, and International Nurses Day, 12 May, are great times to celebrate the nurses that have made a difference in the lives of people worldwide. STTI has several resources currently available to help you start celebrating.

Submit stories and tributes to be posted on *Reflections on Nursing Leadership (RNL)*, STTI's online magazine. Share the link with the nurses that have inspired you and let them know how much they have impacted you and your career! Comments will be displayed throughout Nurses Week. Visit [www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org](http://www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org) to post your tribute today!

You can also go online to download a special Nurses Week wallpaper for your computer, to display to your friends, family and colleagues your nursing pride. Download wallpaper, available in various sizes, at [www.nursingsociety.org/Membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Membership) by clicking on "Campaigns" and then "Nurses Week 2010." This page also has several opportunities for chapters to become involved in Nurses Week activities, including press release templates and gift ideas for members

Happy Nurses Week!



## Changing the face of retirement communities

Builder Del Webb started one of the first retirement communities in Sun City, Ariz, USA, some 50 years ago. More than 100,000 people participated in the grand opening, where 1,300 homes were sold. At that time, homes were 840-square foot bungalows that were wheelchair accessible and sold for \$8,500. The community included recreational centers, arts and crafts, activity clubs and multiple golf courses; all this geared to retired married couples. In his article for National Public Radio (NPR), "Community Helped Change How We See Retirement," Tim Robbins visits one of the first established retirement communities in the Sun Belt.

Fast forward to 2009-2010, and retirement communities are evolving to meet the needs of the more "active senior." Residents in the community tend to be more affluent and able to afford the more spacious resort-style homes priced at US \$180,000. Most homes are still one-level bungalows, but in some cases the square footage has nearly doubled or tripled: Homes now boast 1,099 to 5,000-square feet.

Amenities can include internet cafes, continuing education classes, water parks and playgrounds, which may appeal more to the large number of baby boomers who may be looking into this lifestyle. Residents who live in the communities may be continuing to work in order to maintain their active lifestyle, or homes may include additional family members to assist with needs.

Overall communities are changing to meet the needs of the times and to entice people who may not be so interested in moving away from their longtime homes or their families. But either way, life after "retirement" is a new phase to be enjoyed wherever you are.

Story and photos provided by NPR:  
*Community Helped Change How We See Retirement*,  
 Tim Robbins, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122218966>



*On the left, people visited Sun City, Ariz., when the community opened 50 years ago. On the right, A clubhouse in Sun City's newest community reflects the evolution retirement communities have undergone.*

always a nurse always a nurse always a nurse always a nurse



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