

Brain Waves

MAY 2020



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Quote of The Month ...

"A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows."

—Francis of Assisi

Leah's Notes ...



Leah Zehel,
Director

Dear Gathering Place and Memory Matters family, first of all I want to thank you for, "sticking with us" during this crazy time. Please know that the staff misses you all very much and we cannot wait to see you again! We are praying for you that you stay safe and healthy. Our hope for our participants is that they will be able to maintain where they are at during this time away, as this abrupt change in their schedule can be extremely difficult for a lot of different reasons.

Staff at The Gathering Place has been staying busy preparing the summer calendar; Donna,



Patti and Gina have some great events and exciting outings planned for this summer! And Mark guarantees some new yummy lunch recipes. Carol and I have worked hard on preparing some new brochures for businesses and organizations. I also have been doing my best to stay in touch with all of our families and participants. It has been very touching for me to be able to face time, skype, or just talk on the phone with participants. The overwhelming response from everyone is they cannot wait to be back!

We will be doing some grant writing to replenish our funds as we are losing money every week. Please do not forget TGP in your giving as now more than ever non-profits are hurting.

As we all say, "we cannot wait to get back to normal," the truth is I think our new normal will be different. We will pray more, love harder and truly appreciate the daily abundance of blessings that were so easily overlooked just a few weeks ago!

See you all soon! ■



Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

We want to thank all of you for your prayers and reaching out to help in whatever way you can to make this time of quarantine bearable for all. Many have been sending cards to participants, bringing food or just visiting on the phone.

Usually at this time of year we would be putting together our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner for everyone in May. We hope we are all together by the middle of May, but rather than plan it and then have to cancel, we are going to look ahead

to an August or September get together and will keep you updated when we settle on a date.

Please reach out to any staff to help you as you navigate this time of social distancing. You can call or email us. En-

joy your time outdoors when possible and maybe by now you've picked up or started back into a hobby or have been busy tackling all those projects that were set aside for someday. Please stay healthy and keep in touch. ■

The Meaning of Life it to find your gift, the purpose of life is to give it away.

The Meaning of Life is to find your gift the purpose of life is to give it away, this is exactly what Wyman Drake did at The Gathering Place, he so willingly shared his gift of music with us! Wyman came almost monthly to play his accordion for us for the last four years and as most of you know he was an extremely talented. Wyman never wanted to be paid he just loved to play, in fact he told us if we ever payed him he would stop coming. Wyman would play on all days as well rotating each month, so everyone got to experience his

music. Over the years of coming Wyman really got to know our group and just fell in love with everyone, he would even come an hour early to play music while we exercised! If we would have let him, he would have played his accordion for us all day! Wyman just loved it when people would get up and danced while he played, he would always encourage dancing, clapping along and interact with the participants while he played. If people were dancing, he would adjust his songs to keep us on our feet. 😊 Wyman

will be missed, but he truly loved God and knew what it meant to share his gifts. ***"It's not the length of life but the depth of life."*** Ralph Emerson ■





Memory Minute

By Leah Zehel

The Ten Habits of Highly Effective Brains

- 1.) **Learn more about the “It” in “Use it or lose it”.** A basic understanding will serve you well to appreciate your brain's beauty as a living and constantly developing dense forest of billions of neurons and synapses.
- 2.) **Take care of your nutrition.** Did you know that the brain weighs 2% of body mass but consumes over 20% of the oxygen and nutrients we intake? As a general rule, you don't need expensive ultra-sophisticated nutritional supplements, just make sure you don't stuff yourself with the “bad stuff”.
- 3.) **Remember that the brain is part of the body.** Things that exercise your body can also help sharpen your brain: physical exercise enhances neurogenesis, at any age!
- 4.) **Proactive positive action orientated thoughts until they become your default mindset and you look forward to creating something beautiful every new day.** Too much stress and anxiety-either induced but external events or by your own thoughts-actually kills neurons and prevent creation of new ones.
- 5.) **Thrive on learning and mental challenges.** The point of having a brain is precisely to learn and to adapt to challenging new environments. Once

new neurons appear in your brain, where they migrate and how long they survive depends on how you use them. “Use it or lose it.” It means challenge your brain and often.

- 6.) **We are the only self-directed organisms in this planet.** Aim high. The brain keeps developing always, reflecting what you do with it.
- 7.) **Explore, travel.** Adapting to new locations forces you to pay attention to your environment. Make new decisions, use your brain.
- 8.) **Don't Outsource your Brain.** Not to media personalities, not to politicians, not to your smart neighbor...Make your own decisions and mistakes. That way, you are training your brain not your neighbors.
- 9.) **Develop and maintain stimulating friendships.** We are social animals, and need social interaction.
- 10.) **Laugh Often.**

Now remember that what counts is not reading this article-but practicing a bit every day until small steps turn into habits. So start improving one of these 10 habits today. Revisit the habit above that really grabbed your attention, and make a decision to try something different today and tomorrow. ■



