



FIT 4 WORK * FIT 4 LIFE

Stay healthy, reduce stress, be safe



Embracing The Mission of St. John of God

It is no secret that St. John of God Community Services is built on a culture of hospitality. Recently, I participated in a virtual "Mission Awareness" session for SJOG Community Services where we examined the life and values of St. John of God. We learned that St. John of God's hospitality grew out of his personal experience of meeting the needs of those who suffered by providing care and compassion with respect and dignity in a manner that was renewing and healing. Learning this was a much needed experience during these uncertain times which

made me reflect on how I live the values of St. John of God.

To me, hospitality means to open my heart, home and resources to those who would not otherwise expect it; especially those who are vulnerable. At the simplest level, I can find time in my day to check in on my elderly neighbor, help out a struggling friend with their childcare needs, or simply smile at a passing neighbor. I am always humbled by how one good deed seems to have a far reaching ripple effect. Its like pulling up to a drive through window and being told that the driver ahead of you paid for your order. You get that "woohoo! I just got a free meal" feeling and then suddenly become inspired to pay for the next person's meal. No act of kindness is ever too small nor does it go unnoticed.

There are so many ways to show hospitality to help someone else, but did you know that when we help others, we are also benefiting? Doing good deeds warms your own heart and makes you feel good. If you are unemployed or retired, it gives you something worthwhile to focus on and

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spend your time doing. It is a rewarding social activity for those who may feel isolated and alone. Did you know that in times of crisis, the people who cope best are those who help others? In other words, to help yourself, start by helping others!

Resilience is our ability to bounce back from bad situations. Having a sense of purpose, and giving support to others, has a big impact on our personal well-being. An example of this is how we experienced a major shortage on personal protective equipment, a serious concern felt around the

world. And yet, so many people with simple to elaborate tools started inventing and creating their own personal protective equipment and then donated their time and supplies for the greater good. Those who focus on helping overcome some of the problems of the pandemic, whether by making masks or passing out food to school children, not only affect the lives of others, but benefit by staving off anxiety and depression and showing their inner resilience.

In closing, I ask that you take a moment in your day to pay attention to the people around you. What can you do to make their lives a little easier? How do you think they will feel if you made a small gesture? How would you feel? With each of us looking out for one another, we can embody St. John of God's hospitality in these ever changing times.

How to Mourn Your Old Normal and Adapt to The New

(NewsUSA) - Deaths from the novel coronavirus COVID-19 have surpassed 110,000 in the United States and mourning the losses of these lives is important. In addition, we are also mourning lost habits and ways of life that are casualties of the coronavirus.

Going out with friends, hugging a grandparent, even opening a door in a public place are on hold. Some of these changes were temporary. However, even as states begin to open up, changes in how we interact with each other and the world will likely continue for far longer.

"We need to grieve the ways of life we have lost," according to William Glover, Ph.D., president of the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA).

"Mourning is hard work," Sigmund Freud once wrote in his essay, "Mourning and Melancholia." What makes mourning so hard is having to give up attachments - whether to people or to a way of life - that can't be replaced. Letting go of what we have lost helps us move on with our lives, although we will always miss the people, places, and things we have lost; in that sense



mourning can never be complete.

Mourning and grief are an important part of coping with loss and essential in managing changes and accepting new realities. Recognizing that our pre-COVID lives may never return is a loss to be mourned, and the work involved in this mourning can help us move on and into the new reality. However, some people struggle with the process more than others, and resist by responding with illusions of control, refusing to take precautions, and showing contempt for politicians and public health officials who try to explain the changing realities of daily life.

In an article post on APsaA's Psychology Today blogsite, psychotherapist Shelley Galasso Bonanno, MA, LLP, writes, "Each person processes and expresses grief in their own individual ways, yet there is comfort and power in understanding that one is not alone during this pandemic." One way to cope with grief is by finding meaning in the present situation, although how one does so may be different for everyone.

Yet finding meaning is different for everyone. For some, it may mean providing food or assistance to a homebound neighbor, making masks for members of their community, or even donating money to help beloved organizations and venues stay afloat. Others may find meaning by expressing their emotions and reflecting on them with a therapist.

Undoubtedly, there will be new ways to maintain relationships, enjoy life, and participate in activities with family and friends. Meanwhile, being able to tolerate the pain of grief and find meaning helps sustain us in difficult times.

The American Psychoanalytic Association has created a resource page for the public and mental health providers with resources to help cope with anxiety and grief during this global pandemic. For more info. visit apsa.org/coronavirus

YOU DESERVE A VACATION

Taking time away from work can help lower stress levels and risk for heart disease while providing you calm, rest and a fresh outlook on life.

Trip planning alone helps boost happiness. With this in mind, last week I asked clients where they would go if they could go on vacation. Here are the answers I was given...



Dean is all about spending time with her boyfriend in Wildwood, NJ. She enjoys the boardwalk and eating from the restaurants. Vita is a Disney fan and goes as often as she can with her brother and sister-in law. She loves the Rock 'n' Rollercoaster and Test Track which lets you travel over 60 miles in a test car. Sean is a Ventnor, NJ fan and stays at his beach house with his family throughout the summer. He takes day trips to Ocean City as well because everyone loves a boardwalk! Chris He. is a a Hershey Park fan. He especially enjoys the waterpark there. Danielle's grandparents have a home in Florida and she enjoys visiting them and spending time with two miniature horse friends that live there. Jerry travels to Delaware for his beach time. He is an arcade fan and loves to play ski ball and ride the bumper cars. You are never too old for an arcade! Danni is also a Wildwood fan like Dean. Ryan is a fishing guy. He likes to spend his time off in Ocean City as well fishing on the bay. He catches bluefish from what he tells me.

I found that our workshop friends like to get out and have fun on vacation with their families, even if their destinations are closer to home. For me, my favorite vacation is going to Greece, but not to the crowded islands. I go to my small village up in the mountains that has only one general store, outdoor plumbing, and water that comes from a stream. It is my favorite place in the world because life is simple and stress free. I am able to reconnect with the remaining village elders and learn about my heritage while breathing the fresh mountain air and soaking in the beauty of my surroundings. Thats my heaven on earth.

The bottom line is, taking time away from the stresses of work and daily life can improve our health, motivation, relationships, job performance, and perspective on life. It can give us the break we need to return to our lives and jobs refreshed and better abled to handle whatever comes at us next. So where do you like to travel?

Hello. My name is Joanne Mintzas and I am the Care Manager, RN for St. John of God. Consider me a resource if you need support in completing your annual paperwork, have a medical question, or are seeking services with a health aspect.

A little about me: I have a BS in Foods and Nutrition, a BS in Nursing, and a MS in management. I have previous experience as a dementia nurse, a mental health nurse, and I worked at ADS as a part time school nurse prior to taking on this role. I instituted the Fit 4 Work program here at SJOG where I provide weekly educational lessons regarding work place safety, ergonomics, health and nutrition, and stress management for clients in the VR program. Look for my webinars!

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St. John of God Community Services

