



“Safety bubbles
are about risk
management and
limiting exposure”

Bob Nees Jr., p2.

Staying Connected Safely

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Staying Connected Safely in Our New Abnormal



**Bob Nees, Jr., Senior Pastor
& Chairman**

Sunny Spring greetings to our OHI community, I offer warm blessings and great optimism as we forge ahead into a constantly changing new world. As the flowers of the season begin to open, we are seeing some relief as the world begins to reopen. On the other hand, the corona virus is still a threat, and we must proceed with caution as we continue to strive for normalcy.

You may recall from our January newsletter, how I mentioned that we are striving for normalcy or, as I like to call it, our new abnormal. We looked at two ways of protecting ourselves during our current circumstances and beyond: Situational Awareness and Self-Care. In this issue I want to expand on how we can remain safe by keeping mentally and physically healthy by examining the importance of staying spiritually and socially connected; and doing so by utilizing Safety Bubbles for two or more people.

"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:20

I share this Biblical verse because it offers clarity for our confusing times. While isolating from other people may be good for combating Covid19; it is detrimental to our physical, mental, and spiritual health. Over the past year, many people have discovered a method for connecting with a small number of friends and family while limiting vulnerability. The concept is called Safety Bubbles or Pods.

The Importance of Both Spiritual and Human Connection

Some state governments, such as California, have restricted church attendance during surges of Covid19. However, we can be in safe community gatherings of two or more that allows us to stay spiritually connected.

Human connection. We live for it; we are hardwired for it; and we are highly motivated by it. We greatly desire relationships because they make us feel important; they build our confidence; and give us a sense of belonging. But, perhaps more importantly in these times, they improve our overall health.

I've written about the importance of belonging and social acceptance in a previous newsletter; both of which are matters of survival that date back to our days of living in caves. In the harsh habitat of early man, giving and receiving support from your family, clan, or tribe meant the difference between life and death. And, today we are finding that this is still true.

Social media simulates a sense of community, but it falls short. There's nothing like the one-on-one bonding with people that we enjoy in person. Video calls have enabled us to replicate this as much as possible, but we are still left wanting when it comes to seeing and reading body language - a vital part of communication which is hard wired into our systems from our pre-language days.

Human Connection is Vital Because It Prevents Disease

"Isolation is the sum total of wretchedness to a man," wrote Thomas Carlyle, a 19th Century essayist and historian. And, research bears this out. According to NBC news, measures meant to keep seniors safe are killing them. The confinement meant to protect the most vulnerable is threatening their lives. Joshua Uy, associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania, Perelman School of Medicine said, "The isolation is robbing them of whatever good days they have left - it accelerates the aging process. You see increased falls, decrease in strength and ability to ambulate. You see an acceleration of dementia, because there is no rhythm to your day." The lack of external stimulation is causing serious weight loss, cognitive decline, and depression; all of

which increases the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. And, this doesn't just affect seniors. According to Science Magazine, "A lack of human connection can be more harmful to your health than obesity, smoking and high blood pressure." And, Kipling D. Williams, with Scientific American, notes that when social connection is abruptly cut off it can cause sensory distress and social pain which affects the same portion of the brain as physical pain.

During your isolation utilize your time by maintaining current relationships and rebuilding those with whom you've fallen out of touch. You will create a much stronger sense of connectivity by talking on the phone than you will by sending a text or an email. Make a contact list of close friends and family to call and check in on daily or every few days. You will want to include friends from your OHI cohort as well. Next start expanding that circle by calling people you have not talked with in a while - former classmates, coworkers, and other long lost friends. So many people are alone with little to do these days that you will very likely brighten their day while uplifting your own.

The desire for closeness, intimacy, and human touch is a fundamental need. Even if social distancing (which ought to be called physical distancing) is good for us, it simply does not feel right. Covid19 has weaponized our innate hunger for personal contact. The good news is that there is a way around this dilemma.

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

The solution to satisfying our need for human contact is to form an exclusive gathering of people called a Safety Bubble, Pod, or QuaranTeam. This is where you select a group of people, ideally numbering ten or less, that all agree so follow strict social distancing protocols with anyone outside of the group. When you create a bubble you will be able to interact with the other members without wearing a mask and social distancing. You will be free to hug, kiss, talk, share food, and use each other's bathrooms.

Safety Bubbles Are About Managing Risk, Not Eliminating Risk

Gideon Lichfield, editor in chief, of the MIT Technology Review, who has become an expert on safety bubbles stated, "What's most important is to just be completely on the same page with the people that you're with so that there are no surprises... it's important because, all of us have friends, multiple friends, but you can only be in one of these bubbles at a time. It's really not safe to be, you know, bubbling with multiple families, for instance, where you have no idea what everybody's really doing."

The bubble you create should include everyone who lives in the home. You may bring in additional households as long as everyone agrees to abide by the same rules. Then everyone will be allowed to come and go freely from each other's homes. This works because you are only exposed to one another.

Covid19 testing allows for the elimination of the quarantine phase. If testing isn't readily available, only introduce a new member once that person has quarantined successfully without symptoms for 14 days. When members must leave the bubble to perform essential tasks such as shopping for necessary goods that cannot be delivered, they must follow strict social distancing and hygiene. If anyone within the bubble shows symptoms, fever, cough, or loss of sense of smell or taste, they must self-isolate or leave the group immediately.

In order to form a safe and cohesive group, you must begin with a number of extensive and somewhat intimate conversations about personal habits. What precautions are they taking? What are their views on social distancing? Do they meet with people from outside their home? Do they eat in restaurants? How often do they leave their home, and for what reasons? Periodically re-evaluate whether or not the bubble is working; there must be ongoing conversations, so that everyone remains in agreement. There can be no secrets in a safe bubble.

The goal is to break transmission chains from the outside world; and no one in the bubble has contact with anyone from outside of it. That way no one within the bubble can become infected. The bubble is designed to increase social interaction while limiting the hazard of exposure. Think of it as a risk management system.

Precautions Will Still be Necessary Even After Getting the Vaccine

Safety bubbles will remain important after the vaccine because the CDC is recommending that after getting both doses you must still: wear a mask over your nose and mouth; stay at least 6 feet away from others; avoid crowds; avoid poorly ventilated spaces; and wash your hands often. They say this is necessary because of the possibility that vaccinated people may continue to spread the disease and cause reinfection of someone who has recovered from Covid19.

OHI's Covid19 Safety Record

We would love to have you come and visit OHI where you can enjoy a needed break from the isolation of lockdown. We have made our campuses so safe that you can feel comfortable leaving your bubble and entering ours.

We consider it absolutely vital to maintain full precautions especially for our guests with health opportunities. Our comprehensive safety plan includes three pillars: 1) Minimizing infectious diseases from entering the OHI campus; 2) Sterilizing the campus, guest rooms, and public areas to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission; and 3) Conducting Covid-19 testing twice weekly with our on-campus community members: guests, missionaries and staff. We have implemented mandatory testing for our guests, called TestTheTeam which has been shown to be as accurate and as sensitive as the RT-PCR – the gold standard in Covid19 testing, best of all it is easy and non-invasive.

Additionally, we've been tracking our safety record since the beginning of the pandemic. Our safety record measures Covid19 virus transmissions between staff-to-staff, staff-to-guest, missionary-to-guest, and guest-to-guest. I am proud to share we have had zero on-campus transmissions at OHI Austin. We did, however, have three instances at OHI San Diego. The three instances where Covid19 was transmitted between guests was a result of guests who did not follow our mask and physical distancing protocols. I am happy to report since January, we have had zero transmissions of Covid19 on our San Diego campus. Other safety measures that keep our community safe: 1) We have smaller cohorts on campus of guests, staff and missionaries; 2) We installed special oxidizing Molekule air purifiers in all of our guest rooms and common areas; and 3) We use electrostatic spray disinfection systems, and only safe, non-chemical cleaners.

Here in your OHI bubble you can resume and reaffirm your commitment to good holistic healing habits for your body, mind,

and spirit. Restore your routine of cleansing and nourishing your body after months in quarantine; quieting and focusing your mind to re-stimulate creativity and mindfulness; and renewing and awakening your spirit to rediscover your purpose. Plus, you'll reunite with old friends and new.

OHI is the safest place you can be outside of your own home. Make OHI your home away from home safety bubble, book your reservation today.

Inside this edition: Read further about the power of resilience and how to address inflammation and join health. Get to know staff member Eryn Shropshire; Pannell Carr, an OHI San Diego missionary; OHI ambassador, Christy Silness; and Cindy Felan's story of how the OHI Scholarship helped her. We remain humble and grateful to all those who contribute and help people like Cindy. Please also consider contributing to the OHI Scholarship Fund which helps OHI community members in need. And finally, be sure to turn to page 10 for details on your Optimum Spring Cleanse.

Wishing you health and wellness in this blessed Spring season.

Yours in prayer,



Robert P. Nees, Jr.,
Senior Pastor and Chairman
Optimum Health Institute of
San Diego and Austin

Stay Connected with your OHI cohort, share contact info before you leave:

Join OHI Facebook pages for San Diego and Austin.

-  Start a Facebook Group Page for your cohort.
-  Share food videos.
-  Keep writing "Daily Gratitudes."
-  Pledge to support your "Buddies."

As your transformation grows arrange to return to OHI with your friends from your cohort.

The Power of Resilience



How to Cultivate Resilience

Resilience – the new superpower for 2021.

Let's face it, 2020 was challenging, and 2021 is starting out with more of the same. Between social distancing, job uncertainty, and child care stress, life has been dishing out lemons for months now. Mental health professionals say the key to weathering any storm is RESILIENCE.

So what is resilience, why is it so important, and what can you do to cultivate it within yourself, particularly during the pandemic?

What does it mean to be resilient?

Resilience is the ability to withstand adversity, and bounce back from difficult life events. Resilience is what gives people the emotional strength to cope with trauma and hardship, and find a way to move forward with their life.

“Quite simply, resilience is the ability to grow despite life’s downturns,” said Amit Sood, MD, the executive director of the Global Center for Resiliency and Well-Being, creator of the Resilient Option program, and former professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Why is resilience important?

People who lack resilience are more likely to feel overwhelmed or helpless, and rely on unhealthy coping strategies such as avoidance, isolation, and self-medication. Resilient people accept a situation and adapt to its parameters, and that’s what gives them the ability to move forward.

“Resilience is the core strength you use to lift the load of life,” said Dr. Sood.

What are the traits of resilience?

Dr. Brad Smith, Medical Director of Rogers Behavioral Health in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, is an expert on resilience. “I have been studying resilience in those with mental health challenges,”

said Dr. Smith. “For individuals who have experienced severe trauma, I want to understand why some suffer from severe PTSD long after an event, while others are able to move past it. I think the clear difference is their individual sense of resilience, and the coping strategies of a resilient person are directly applicable to what all of us have been dealing with during the Covid19 pandemic.”

Dr. Smith believes that resilience is created by the combination of seven unique characteristics. The resilient person is able to:

- **CHOOSE realistic optimism:** Without being naive to your circumstances, you want to look at a situation clear-eyed and try to put it into perspective.
- **EMBRACE behavior change:** Set up a schedule, and fill your days with activities and pursuits that best support positive mental well-being.
- **EXPRESS gratitude:** It’s easier to foster a strong sense of optimism with an attitude of thankfulness.
- **WELCOME social support:** Spend time engaging with supportive individuals that take an active interest in your success.
- **CONNECT to a higher power:** Spirituality takes many forms, so whether it’s via organized religion or private meditation, create a bond with something greater than yourself to help you feel less isolated.
- **CULTIVATE a sense of purpose:** Helping others, exploring new interests, and giving back to your community are all ways to tap into your value system and give your life meaning.
- **MAINTAIN physical exercise:** Exercise staves off depression, and a healthy body and mind make for a more resilient person.



How can you build and cultivate the characteristics of resilience?

The good news is, resilience and its associated characteristics aren't fixed traits. Each of these characteristics can be strengthened and deepened by changing certain thoughts and behaviors. It takes flexibility, adaptability, and perseverance, but you can become more resilient! Here are some ideas how:

Developing Optimism:

If you're a "glass half empty" person, now is the time to flip the switch on that thought pattern. Cognitive behavior therapy works to help break depressive cycles by challenging negative perceptions and thoughts. No one is suggesting you become a Pollyanna, but actively choosing to focus on the positive jumpstarts your sense of resilience.

Developing Behavior Change:

When your day is structured, it helps prevent you from slipping into isolation, anxiety, or depression. Establish a new routine that makes it easy for you to engage in activities you find enjoyable, and bring purpose and meaning to your life. When faced with bad times, resilient people stick to their productive routine. The OHI Focus Class directly speaks to this topic.

Developing Gratitude:

Gratitude reduces stress, so taking an active approach to gratitude can be an effective stress reliever. Write in a gratitude journal, or reach out to thank individuals that have had a positive impact on your life. The point is to make the connection between your life and all the good that already exists within it, so your attitude of gratitude will buoy your sense of resilience when faced with adversity.

Developing Social Support:

Without social support, it's easy to slip into isolation and depression. Intentionally seek out those who will speak truth to you, and you will feel yourself becoming more resilient with every conversation. Whether you text, call, or video chat, now, more than ever, you need to feel you are part of a community of friends, and that mutual social support builds a sense of resilience in everyone.

Developing Connection to a Higher Power:

No matter how you practice spirituality, it is the simple act of taking time for prayer or mindfulness meditation that gives you perspective on your place in the universe. Strong spirituality validates your value system, which feeds your sense of resilience in the face of challenges.

Developing a Sense of Purpose:

Focusing on yourself often leaves you feeling like a victim. When you focus on helping someone else, it leaves you feeling useful and important. Helping others solidifies your own sense of resilience. There's no better time than in the middle of a pandemic to find a cause, and make a meaningful contribution to it.

Developing a Physical Exercise Routine:

Exercise strengthens the body and quiets the mind, both of which are absolutely essential to resilience. Any exercise will do. It's the routine that is most important. With a strong body, a calm mind, and an optimistic attitude, you'll feel resilient enough to face any adversity.

The 7 Characteristics of Resilience Mirror OHI's 5P's to Optimum Health

Dr. Smith's 7 characteristics of resilience map directly to OHI's 5 P's to Optimum Health — Purpose, Positive mental attitude, Persistence, Patience, and Prayer. OHI has been contributing to your sense of resilience all along!

You are RESILIENT! What now?

There are three things to remember in the face of adversity:

- 1. Keep your POWER:** Yes, there are many elements of this pandemic in which we are powerless. Do not let that sense of powerlessness generalize to all of life. Focus on what you do have control over rather than what you do not, and commit yourself to a reasonable course of action to deal with the stressor.
- 2. Resilience is ACTIVE:** Action is a powerful stress-reducer. Research shows that the body lowers its production of epinephrine, a powerful stress hormone, when a person shifts into action. Don't avoid taking action because you fear you'll make the wrong decision.
- 3. Ask for HELP:** Sometimes your support group of friends and family aren't enough. Don't be embarrassed to reach out to professional resources to ask for help. They are experienced in guiding individuals to positive outcomes, and can help you build resilience to weather a lifetime of ups and downs.

"The Power of Resilience" by Dr. Brad Smith, Rogers Behavioral Health, youtube.com

"Resilience is a Super Power" by Sule Kutlay Gandur, TedxBerlin, youtube.com

"Resilience Strategies During a Pandemic," by Bob VandePol, MSW, pinnerest.org

"What is Resilience? Your Guide to Facing Life's Challenges, Adversities, and Crises", by Katie Hurley, LCSW, everydayhealth.com

Inflammation & Joint Health



Inflammation is a normal response triggered by the immune system to protect the body against injury and infection. However, chronic inflammation — characterized by redness, swelling, heat, pain, and loss of function — is believed to contribute to conditions like arthritis, cancer, heart disease, and more. Inflammation can occur in response to trauma, illness, and stress. It can also be caused by unhealthy foods, including:

- 1. Sugar:** Research shows that when we eat sugar, it triggers the release of “inflammatory messengers” known as cytokines.
- 2. Saturated fat:** Research studies have proven that saturated fats trigger inflammation in fat cells called adipose tissue, which increases the inflammation associated with arthritis.
- 3. Refined carbohydrates:** Refined carbohydrates have been linked to higher levels of inflammatory markers in the blood.

When you eat these foods, the resulting inflammation attacks joint tissues and can cause joint swelling, increased joint fluid, cartilage and bone damage, and muscle loss. Nerves in the joints are also activated, causing pain. The inflammatory chemicals may directly activate other nerves of the body, and lead to pain as well.

What can you do about inflammation?

There are the four simple things you can do to help reduce inflammation overall, and improve your long-term joint health, and OHI’s program touches on each one to give inflammation the knock-out punch!

1. Eat anti-inflammatory foods: Spring is a great time for a deep cleanse with OHI’s all-raw, organic, plant-based diet, allowing you to get a baseline for better health. Our program eliminates the top three inflammation trigger foods of sugar, saturated fat, and refined carbohydrates, and focuses on nutritional superstars that rid the body of inflammation:

- **Wheatgrass juice:** Wheatgrass is a major anti-inflammatory food. Studies have found that chlorophyll, a compound found in wheatgrass, decreases inflammation.

- **Sprouts:** Few foods can rival sprouts for their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and detoxifying qualities. Broccoli, mung bean, chia seed, red clover, lentil, and radish sprouts are integral to an inflammation-busting diet.
- **Healthy oils:** While the OHI plan avoids fats overall, certain fats like omega-3 fatty acids are an excellent choice to help fight vascular inflammation. Omega-3 fatty acids can be found in flaxseeds.
- **Water/hydration:** Hydration helps our bodies fight inflammation by flushing out toxins. Most of the water in our bodies is stored in joints and connective tissue (tendons, ligaments), where water acts as a lubricant. When we get dehydrated, our bodies look for water in other areas, including our joints, and redistribute it where it’s needed. Taking water from your joints enables toxins to remain, which fuels pain and inflammation. So DRINK! DRINK! DRINK!

2. Take part in regular exercise: At OHI, our program places a huge emphasis on lymphatic exercise and stretching. The lymphatic system needs your help to move the fluid through the body because it doesn’t have an automatic pump like the heart. The lymphatic system is stimulated by gravity and muscle contraction, so moving your body is the key to moving fluid through the lymphatic system. OHI guests take advantage of our daily Gentle Lymphatic Exercise class and Stretch class to beat back inflammation.

3. Get daily sleep: Sleep is the foundation for good health, and giving yourself complete rest every night is one of the best things that you can do to improve your wellbeing. OHI teaches guests how to quiet and focus the mind so they can get the most rejuvenative rest possible.

4. Actively engage in stress management: OHI’s Guided Meditation Classes, Mental Detox class, Vision Board class, Rock Painting class, and the Pray, Eat, Live class are all great de-stressors. Our practice of gratitude journaling is also a great choice to eliminate stress, and keep positive.

Make 2021 the year that inflammation becomes a thing of the past for you!

“Sprouting is the healthiest (and least expensive) thing you can do for your brain health,” by Ilene Ruhoy, MD, PhD, www.mindbodygreen.com

“Fats and Oils,” Arthritis Foundation, www.arthritis.org

“Fight Inflammation by Staying Hydrated,” by Leslie LaPlace, Goodwin House, www.goodwinhouse.org

“Arthritis Overview,” Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.org

“Causes of Inflammatory Joint Pain,” Arthritis Foundation, www.arthritis.org

“5 Classic Signs of Inflammation,” The Journal of Inflammation, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

“Foods for Fighting Inflammation, Arthritis and Joint Pain,” by Lisha Andrew, MS, RD, LDN, March 27, 2019, Lifespan Living, www.lifespan.org

Meet Christy Silness, OHI's Unofficial Guest Ambassador!



Christy Silness

As a hospice nurse, Christy Silness knows she has to take care of herself so she can better care for others. “While hospice nursing is difficult, it has been the honor of my life to help guide and support patients and families through the transition of death. Of course, the intensity of nursing takes its toll. It’s challenging to keep myself healthy, strong, and open while supporting others on their journey. Back in 2006, I knew I needed to get back into balance, so I gave the OHI program a try. It has become a sacred refuge, and a place where I can reset my health and priorities. Retreating to OHI has helped me feel more in tune with what I really need for nourishment.”

Christy’s first visit was to OHI Austin. “I absolutely LOVED my first visit!” enthused Christy. “The staff are some of the most truly love-centered people I have ever met. The program was like nothing I had done before, but I felt thoroughly guided and supported in the process. I had originally signed

up for a two-week visit, but by the end of the first week I felt called to stay and complete the entire 3-week program. I attended every class, stayed true to the program, and the results paid off. I felt lighter both mentally and physically in a way that I hadn’t felt in years. The veils were lifted. OHI really gets it right. The classes, food, and fellowship with staff and guests have created a synergistic trinity of healing, a holy space where miracles happen. I’ve continued to see those miracles happen over and over again in the last 15 years. I’ve stayed at both the San Diego and Austin campuses of OHI more times than I can count. I also took time off from my nursing job to be an OHI missionary TWICE. That’s how life-changing I think this program is. That’s why I consider myself OHI’s unofficial Guest Ambassador!”

What does Christy look forward to experiencing most each time she returns to OHI? “Everyone who arrives at OHI is looking for some aspect of healing,” said Christy. “We stand before each other without our armor, ready to let go and move forward. It’s a beautiful thing, and I’m amazed with each and every visit how powerful the experience is. The love we have for each other is what I think brings about the true healing. I experience this miracle of fellowship with every visit. OHI really is my church. It’s a holy place.”

Christy has taken every class OHI offers multiple times, but there are a few that have truly changed her. “The meditation, breathing, and toning classes are always so powerful,” said Christy. “But my favorite is the Friday morning testimonials. I am always moved and uplifted by the intimate and honest stories people share about the profound ways their OHI stay has changed their lives. These stories are testimonials to the power of the OHI program, and a beautiful reminder of why we all keep coming back.”

From OHI, Christy has learned to practice gratitude by being present in the moment. “Being in the moment through music, meditation, and prayer helps me to heal and evolve in the right direction,” said Christy. “It’s such a beautiful and challenging thing, this life. As a hospice nurse, I am reminded of its duality of light and dark every day. If there’s any advice I can give others is that it’s never too late to make a change. Come to OHI. And remember to love and let go with all of your heart.”

“I’ve continued to see those miracles happen over and over again in the last 15 years.”

Get to Know OHI Missionary, Dr. Pannell Carr



Dr. Pannell Carr

Dr. Pannell Carr is a frequent guest at OHI, having stayed at the San Diego campus more than five times. “I come to OHI every time I am ready to make a major life transition,” laughed Pannell. “When I first visited in 2000, I was looking to transition from practicing internal medicine to incorporating psychotherapy into my practice. I now have a Jungian-oriented, spiritual centered, mind-body psychological counseling and coaching practice, where I guide and coach others to heal to their spiritual core, master themselves, express their full potential, and manifest their greatest and highest good. Presently I am transitioning into becoming an author of self-help books. My intention was to do a very deep and thorough cleanse to support my body’s ability to remain healthy and happy in this next phase of life. Taking an extended stay at OHI as a missionary seemed like the perfect choice to accomplish that.”

Pannell’s devotion to the OHI program is evident. “My first visit to OHI was nothing short of miraculous,” said Pannell. “At the age of 40, I started waking up to a body full of aches and joint pain. I knew if I didn’t do something deeply healing, my future would be filled with worsening physical pain and probably disease. After my first week at OHI, all my pain was gone. I also got rid of brain fog, allergies, and eczema, and my energy level was off the charts. I felt so alive, clear, energized, pain-free, and motivated to pursue my vision, it was astounding. 20 years later, I have maintained a healthy diet — I became a vegetarian/70% raw foodist, and took wheat, sugar, and meat out of my diet. Because of that, my body aches, allergies, and eczema have never returned. At the age of 60, I don’t experience my body aging or limiting me in any way.”

OHI didn’t just inspire Pannell to change her diet. The program also taught her to let go of ego as well. “I have learned that my ego is a heavy, untrustworthy burden to carry,” she said. “When I put down my ego, it allows room for a greater good to show up. When I let go of fear, it leaves room for the spirit’s loving presence to come into my life. I have learned to recognize that the spirit is behind all change.”

So when did OHI’s missionary program factor into Pannell’s life plan? “Being a healer at heart,” said Pannell. “I receive great joy supporting others on their healing journeys. I like being of service, and taking on the role of missionary has helped me to align and center my entire nature in support of the worthy goal of mind, body, spirit healing of self and others.”

Pannell was seeking a spiritual evolution for herself, and found a way to pivot her journey in a more productive direction. “I found that I use food to run away from the negative thought patterns and feelings that keep me from my spiritual realizations,” said Pannell. “So I came to OHI to do the reverse, and use food to cleanse and support my efforts to become more attuned to my spiritual nature, helping me to move through what is blocking my conscious connection with the spirit.”

What is Pannell’s advice for others considering a stay at OHI? “Whether we realize it or not, most of our lives we are making a mess of things,” said Pannell. “Coming to OHI gives you a jumpstart on cleansing and clearing up that unconscious mess on all levels, and begin to consciously co-create a life of health and well-being in harmony with the highest good for self and others.”

“My first visit to OHI was nothing short of miraculous”

Cindy Felan's Journey to Wellness

Scholarship Recipient Finds Hope in *Radical Remission*

Living with cancer is not for the faint of heart. Cindy Felan was diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer in 2014, and it had metastasized to other parts of her body. After six years, she had exhausted all conventional treatment options.

“A friend sent me a link to the OHI website which outlined the 3-week program,” said Cindy. “I instantly knew I needed this drastic diet change in order to move to healing, but how would I pay for a 3-week stay? I feel very blessed to have received a scholarship, and I thank OHI for making this amazing program available to people like me.”

Why was Cindy so determined to come to OHI? Six years of cancer treatments had left her physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted. “I honestly did not believe I would be on this earth much longer,” said Cindy. “But now that I’ve gone through OHI’s program, I feel like I finally have a roadmap to follow. I know how to navigate food. I know how to work around nagging doubt. I know how to be inspired by people who have gone through the same

healing opportunity as me, and have come out the other side. By the middle of my stay, I had a spring in my step, and more energy than I had had in years. By the end of my stay I even learned to love this cancer inside me. To see these cells as a sick child that needs my help to get better was transformative. Quite simply, my big takeaway from the OHI program has been HOPE.”

“Six years of cancer treatments had left her physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted.”

For Cindy, hope and courage came to her in the most unexpected way. “During my OHI stay, I was given a book by a lovely lady who intuitively knew that I need to hear a specific message. The book was *Radical Remission*, and reading it has given me the courage to face my healing opportunity with an open heart.”

Now that she is home, Cindy is determined to stay on track with the OHI program. “The OHI program is very simple, but it is not easy. You have to take command of your thoughts, emotions, and deeds. If I could give anyone advice, it would be to set fear aside, and be what you are supposed to be. Each of us has an internal compass to guide us through life. All you have to do is pay attention.”



Share the Gift
of Healing

Three Ways to Give

- 1 MAIL newsletter donation envelope
- 2 ONLINE www.OptimumHealth.org
- 3 PHONE (800) 993-4325

Share the Love, Share the Feeling, Share the Gift of Healing

Please consider contributing to the OHI Scholarship Fund to help those in need experience the benefits of the OHI program. Over the course of our 44 years, OHI has provided scholarships to individuals who could not afford to otherwise attend. In most years, we have been able to fulfill all requests for assistance through the generosity of our community. OHI invites you to join with us in celebrating our healing mission with a tax-deductible gift. Your contribution will help to make our community stronger, healthier, and more vibrant. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Provide the Gift of Healing today by supporting the OHI Scholarship Fund with a tax-deductible:

- One-Time Donation, or
- Sustainable Monthly Contribution

Thank you for your generosity!

Optimum Health Institute is a non-profit, religious organization. Your donation is tax deductible.

Call (800) 993-4325 to make your tax-deductible donation today!

Introducing Eryn Shropshire, Assistant Kitchen Manager at OHI San Diego!



Eryn Shropshire

Even as a little girl, Eryn always knew she wanted to help others. “I feel so lucky to be working at OHI” she said. “I am able to help people every day through the power of food. I just find that so inspiring!”

Eryn pursued her interest in food right from the start. She worked for two years at a large restaurant in SeaWorld, catering to guests with special dietary needs looking for custom vegetarian and vegan meals. She then spent two years working in a Taiwanese bakery, creating gorgeous breads from around the world. “The recipes were all so complex and interesting,” said Eryn. “It was challenging, and really appealed to my creative side.”

Eryn graduated from San Diego Mesa College in 2016 with a degree in Culinary Arts Management. When applying for culinary positions, she kept repeatedly seeing a post for a job opening in the kitchen at OHI. “I decided God was trying to tell me something,” laughed Eryn, “so I submitted an application. As I learned more about the mission and values of OHI, I just knew I had to work here.”

Eryn started in the entry level food prep position, and has worked her way up to the assistant kitchen manager position. She also works a bit in the greenhouse, at the front desk, and in the store. “I love being involved in the guest experience on

so many levels,” said Eryn. “When guests come to me with questions, I want to empower them with knowledge and tools so that they continue this program on their own when they go home. I share my knowledge on everything from how to grow your own wheatgrass to recipes for fermenting foods to understanding how cabbage detoxes the liver. I hope the information shared with them is something they will pass on to friends and family, and even more people will feel empowered to heal.”

When Eryn first interviewed at OHI, the benefits of the raw, organic, vegan diet really resonated with her. “There is a video we show new guests that details our founder’s passion for helping people with health opportunities,” said Eryn. “At the time, my mother had just been diagnosed with cancer, and I felt that I was meant to be at OHI so I could better help her. The more I learn about the benefits of raw food, the more I’m able to share that with my mom to help her heal. Now that I eat all organic myself, I have no more headaches, no inflammation, and much more energy. I get so much out of working here, and in return I’m able to give so much back to other people in my life.”

So what is the one thing Eryn looks forward to each week as a new cohort of guests arrives? “I love establishing a connection with individual guests,” smiled Eryn. “Guests come here for different reasons, many of them are in crisis, and I want to hold space for their healing to occur. It’s a very humbling experience when people share their personal stories with me. It makes me want to redouble my efforts to ensure every guest walks away from OHI feeling truly transformed.”

Eryn says no two days are ever the same at OHI. “You never know what you’ll get here,” said Eryn. “It’s such a supportive, non-judgmental space, and when guests embrace the truths we share with them about food, about their body, and about the power of positivity, all things suddenly become possible. I truly love it here at OHI. Coming to work doesn’t feel like work. It feels like coming home to friends.”

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It's been no easy feat to keep our doors open during a pandemic. Our third-party service providers continue to offer full services in colonic, chiropractic and massage on our campuses. Our staff members are ready, willing and healthy! **If you're considering a stay with us, give us a call and we'll talk you through it.**

A more intimate guest experience with limited program space.

We have smaller cohorts on campus of guests, staff and missionaries. OHI San Diego is limited to 60 program attendees on our 2-acre campus; OHI Austin is limited to 20 program attendees on our 14-acre campus. **To ensure you get a space in our program and your preferred OHI for Life Wellness room, we suggest booking three weeks in advance.**

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We are a non-profit religious organization and your donation is tax deductible. On behalf of all those who benefit from the OHI Scholarship Fund, we offer our gratitude!

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Spring2021

OHI IS YOUR SAFETY BUBBLE FOR HEALING

We have taken precautions to provide a safe and sacred environment. We follow a comprehensive safety plan that involves three major pillars: minimizing infectious diseases from entering the OHI campus; sterilizing the campus, guest rooms, and public areas to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission; and conducting Covid19 testing twice weekly with our on-campus community members: guests, missionaries and staff. **OHI is the safest place to be outside your home.**

CONTACT US: (800) 993-4325

We'd love to hear from you. To receive special offers and updates, email us at newsletter@optimumhealth.org or call us at (800) 993-4325. For more information about the OHI Program, please visit our website at www.optimumhealth.org

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Our Mission

We serve as a change agent for holistic healing by creating a safe and sacred space.

Core Values

Holism, Generosity, Relationship, Life-Long Learning, Stewardship and Service.

Guiding Principles

Trustworthiness, Respect, Empowerment and Alignment.