

“OHI provides a safe and
sacred place for prayer,
meditation, and reflection.”

Bob Nees Jr., p2.

Find Serenity Through Prayer

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Find Serenity in Turbulent Times through Prayer



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

"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you. I am the LORD your God."
-Leviticus 23:22

Here's a warm and wonderful fall greeting to our OHI community. I love this time of year with the cooling temperatures, the color of the autumn trees, and the promise of a bountiful harvest. I offer you this Bible verse because regardless of the size of the harvest we should feast and share with those in need, especially during turbulent times. COVID-19 has been like an unexpected hail storm that damages the farmer's crop, but rather than hoard what is left, it is better to take only what we need, and to help others as we can. At OHI, we have witnessed the generosity of so many of you in the most selfless ways and we are so grateful.

In the spring newsletter, I talked about how seasonal change can be understood as a time of transformation, and a time to rediscover your Purpose in life. You might remember from my article *Purpose* is one of our 5 "Ps" to optimum health. At the time, I didn't know just how transformational 2020 would be for everyone including OHI. We've responded by making significant improvements without changing our program that you've come to know and trust.

In the summer newsletter, I discussed three more of our 5 "Ps" to optimum health: *Patience, Persistence, and Positive Mental Attitude*. 2020 has certainly challenged us on all three. We've had to be Patient about getting back out in the world. We've had to be Persistent in keeping our goals in focus. And, we've had to maintain a Positive Mental Attitude in the face of negative news (I'll have more to say on that further down).

Fall is a Time of Preservation, Maturity, and Gratitude

We now enter fall, when nature's bounty is ripe and ready for picking. I recall from my youth how many of the neighborhood families would bring out the Mason jars, boil them for purity, load them up with fruits and vegetables from their gardens, then put them away to savor on some winter's day. In many ways autumn is all about preservation - of values, traditions, and truth.

We can find a great deal of spiritual symbology in the fall season. The changing color of the leaves reminds us that change is constant. The falling of the leaves reminds us that letting go of the past and moving forward is what life is all about. And, the ripening and maturing of crops is symbolic of our spiritual maturity.

The season of harvest is a time for work, mindfulness, and gratitude. Every effort of the farmer working the land, every furrow turned, seed planted, and weed pulled, is with the harvest in mind. His commitment is to the reward at the end. Here at OHI our commitment is to fulfilling the needs of the body, mind, and spirit. One of the ways we do that is through *Prayer*, the most powerful of OHI's 5 "Ps" to optimum health.

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

Lately I've become concerned that news stories have been spreading mixed messages that contradict each other.

News sources I've considered reliable are running stories that seem at odds with each other. Sadly this is very confusing; and finding the truth requires verifying every report from multiple sources. It seems that some media, politicians, and experts are posting messages that are not based on facts, and you have to wonder why they are not being transparent. There should be no hidden agendas. We want to trust our government officials, newscasters, scientists, experts, in short, our fellow human beings. We are all in this together, and if we can't trust the purveyors of vital information, then doubt and uncertainty will tear us apart.

"Here at OHI our commitment is to fulfilling the needs of the body, mind, and spirit."

The reason I'm bringing this up is because significant portions of the truth are being left out which distorts stories and creates fear, the most powerful of our emotions (see the article in this issue on *Difficult Emotions*). Media creates sensational stories to build an audience, and sell advertising. You may recall from the summer newsletter

how I mentioned that people have a propensity for bad news, and how it is a natural instinct that protects us. Some media companies and politicians know this and use it to manipulate us. So, when you hear a story that makes you anxious or afraid, you should verify its accuracy.

OHI Is Your Trusted Partner

The problem is what fear-based news does to people. It keeps them in a state of panic and nervousness which creates an imbalance in their body, mind, spirit, and hides the truth. And, all of this unease can turn into disease. Here at OHI, we are committed to the truth. For example, we provide both biblical and scientific sources for any medical or scientific claims we make. We are here to empower you through our classes and activities, so that you learn to understand your body, mind, and spirit and restore balance. It's good to have a community with which you can discuss concerns and focus on healing. OHI provides the community you've come to know and trust. When you start feeling anxious, we help you get back to basics with daily

practices, mindfulness, intention setting, and prayer (see the article in this issue on Daily Rhythms). Our mission statement, guiding principles, and spiritual identity are all founded in truth. OHI's tried and true program and loving supportive community remain constant in our changing world.

Our program has integrity; we've been doing this for 44 years - despite the various fads and trends on nutrition, health, and fitness - our program is still as effective as it was on the day we opened our doors. Our program, leadership, staff, missionaries, donors, and guests all contribute to holistic healing by creating a safe and sacred space. We wouldn't still be here if it wasn't true. We have guests who have returned every year for decades, and who regularly refer their loved ones to us. Our main concern is the safety of our entire community: guests, missionaries, and staff.

"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." -Matthew 21:22

The Power of Prayer

In troublesome times like we've been experiencing; the act of prayer calms you and brings peace. But, prayer does much more than soothe the soul; it enables you to awaken the love of God within you, so that you can better cope with pain, disappointment, and loss. It nourishes your body, mind, and spirit so you stay focused on what is important - like your Purpose. You can even pray for Patience, Persistence, and a Positive Mental Attitude. Prayer is the fifth of our 5 "Ps" to optimum health that I have been discussing with you this year.

Prayer is powerful in many ways. For me it is often enough to simply pray for strength every day. It brings me closer to God, and it will bring you closer to your higher source. Sharing the load reduces the burden you may feel on your journey through life's opportunities. With prayer you can express gratitude, ask for guidance, and listen for answers. You can pray for healing, and you can pray for others. As English poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, once observed, "Prayers are the very highest energy of which the mind is capable."

Prayer is portable, you can pray anywhere for any length of time. As little as 30 seconds of prayer, acknowledging God and giving thanks for all the blessings in your life, can relax and calm the nerves. Pray in the car while you're driving (but please keep your eyes open), pray in the checkout line at the store, pray in a place that is sacred to

you, or pray while you're out on a walk or communing with nature.

You can pray alone as Jesus did, or you can pray with others which helps create and maintain community.

Science Proves the Healing Power of Prayer

"Studies have shown prayer can prevent people from getting sick," says Harold G. Koenig, MD of Duke University, "and when they do get sick, prayer can help them get better faster." After analyzing 1,500 reputable medical studies, Koenig concluded that people who pray more have better mental and physical health. He adds, "They have stronger immune systems, lower blood pressure, and probably better cardiovascular functioning."

Science is also showing us why prayer makes us feel so peaceful. Herbert Benson, MD, a cardiovascular scientist at Harvard University, who has conducted studies on prayer for the past 30 years says, "All forms of prayer evoke a relaxation response that quiets stress, quiets the body, and promotes healing." He discovered what he calls the "relaxation response" which is a physiological state of the body during prayer. It shifts the body's dominant state from the fight, flight, freeze mode in which people tend to spend most of their day to the rest and digest mode. He has also observed that prayer increases the brain's release of dopamine which helps us feel more relaxed, focused, and happy.

If you've ever thought that prayer only works because you are programming your subconscious to believe that it does, then I have good news for you. Praying for another person's healing, or having others pray for yours actually works, even when the recipient doesn't know about it, and science has now proven it.

OHI - The Safest Place To Be Outside of Your Home

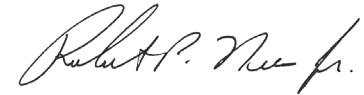
OHI provides a safe and sacred place for healing and prayer. Our campuses offer many comfortable spots that are private where you can pray. You don't have to wait for the pandemic to be over to visit us here at OHI and work on developing your positive habit of prayer. We are open now and serving guests just like you. And, keeping your safety in mind, we have taken great strides in implementing the CDC's protocols of physical distancing; limiting the number of guests in our program; we use

electrostatic spray disinfection systems, and we use only safe, non-chemical cleaners in all common areas; and we continue to test all our employees on a bi-weekly basis to ensure we maintain a healthy operation. We've also been busy developing our new *OHI for Life Wellness Rooms* - where safety meets comfort. Each guest room is outfitted with 100% certified organic cotton bed linens and a *Molekule* air purifier. OHI is your safety bubble for healing and that's why we are the safest most sacred place to be.

Inside this edition: Read further and get to know staff member Jennifer Inman; Joel Ferry, an OHI San Diego missionary; OHI San Diego recurring guest, Tamara O'Gilvie; and Chris Toussaint's story of how the OHI Scholarship helped him turn around his prognosis. We remain humble and grateful to all those who contribute and help people like Chris. 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 Fall Cleanse.

Wishing you health and wellness in this blessed fall 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.

YOUR DAILY ROUTINE MATTERS



Restore Your Health by Following a Daily Monastic Rhythm

A famous George Gerswhin song says, "I've got rhythm... who could ask for anything more?" It's a song about a woman who is content with her life. And, there's an amazing amount of truth in those lyrics, because when you live with rhythm, you will be happier, healthier, more alert and productive.

Rhythm, not just the musical kind, exists all around us. It's a huge part of nature. Think about the sun cycle every day - rising and setting, the phases of the moon and its effect on tides, and the change of seasons, each following a rhythm. Then, think about your heart beat, breathing, and digestive cycle - there is rhythm within your own body.

According to *thefreedictionary.com* **rhythm** (rĭth'əm) *noun*; is "the movement or variation characterized by the regular recurrence or alternation of different quantities or conditions." As a regular pattern in time, a rhythm can refer to any natural cyclical event that lasts from microseconds on up to many years such as the rotation of the planets around the sun, or Halley's Comet returning every 76 years. Within our bodies, we have rhythms that regulate our immune system, hormone levels, appetite and digestion, body temperature, blood pressure, even reaction time.

You've heard of *Circadian Rhythm* which is an innate process regulating the sleep-wake cycle of all living things, and repeats approximately every 24 hours. We all have a "master clock" called the *suprachiasmatic nucleus* which is located in the hypothalamus of your brain near the optic nerves. It receives information from your eyes about the amount of light you are exposed to throughout the day; it then sends signals that regulate various systems in your body. This process can be altered over time, but ordinarily it attempts to follow its formulaic function

even when we stay up late. This was proven in the 18th century when Jean-Jacques d'Ortous de Mairan, a French scientist, discovered that Mimosa trees, which fold up their leaves at night and open them in the morning, continued to follow this pattern even when kept in total darkness.

This is how *your* Circadian Rhythm works: in the morning, after you wake up, your body temperature starts to rise, as does your blood pressure. Your melatonin secretions stop, and your testosterone secretions increase. It's time to turn up the lights, open the curtains and let the sunshine in. By mid-morning, your gastro-intestinal system prepares for elimination, and you reach peak awareness. By mid-afternoon, your coordination

reaches its peak, and your reaction time is at its fastest. Throughout the daylight hours, your body is absorbing nutrients, so this is the time for your largest meals. In the late afternoon and early evening, your muscle strength, blood pressure, and body temperatures reach their highest levels. As the sun sets and the dark of night takes over, things begin to slow down, and your body begins to assimilate the nutrients you've consumed. It's time to dim the lights, and allow your body to start winding down. Use lower wattage bulbs, and avoid the

blue-light of television, phone, and computer screens. Mid-way through the evening, your melatonin secretions start back up. If you go to bed by 11:00pm, you will reach your deepest sleep by 2:00am, this is when healing takes place; and your body releases *human growth hormone* which triggers tissue repair and cell growth. By 4:00am your body temperature and blood pressure will drop to their lowest levels. Then the sun rises and it starts all over again.

When you stay up late at night for extended periods, especially if you're losing sleep, your circadian rhythm gets out of sync

"...when you live with rhythm, you will be happier, healthier, more alert and productive."



which can increase your risk for anxiety, depression, obesity, and diabetes. It can lead to drowsiness and lethargy causing your work performance to suffer, your mental alertness to falter, and you may even become prone to accidents.

In our busy, modern, 24-hour society, schedules can be unpredictable; jobs started must be completed, impatient customers are waiting, and we're forced to be flexible. This makes it easy to throw your natural rhythms out of balance. Here at OHI we have a solution to helping you return your daily rhythms back to their regular tempo. We follow a daily and weekly rhythm, *Benedictine Monastic Rhythm*, that organizes the monastic day around periods of communal and private prayer, manual labor, spiritual reading and sleep which in modern times has been replaced with instruction.

Monastic rhythm is all about ensuring God is glorified in all things we do. According to *Strategic Monk*, Greg Richardson, a monk's day consists of "time for reflection and labor, worship and rest, learning and thinking."

The monastic way of life is centuries old; its traditions began with the solar day, and it follows our natural circadian rhythm.

When the time to stop work arrives, a monk will put down his tools, he doesn't have a deadline which forces him to continue until the job is done. In days past most people's lives followed a circadian rhythm. Farmers rose with the sun, and worked until the sun set. Workers in factories, skilled trades, and some offices still follow a similar rigid schedule; even if it's only 9 to 5. However, in today's rapidly changing world, and the rise of the gig economy, it becomes challenging to keep the symmetry in our workday. When we lose touch with the rhythms of life, we lose valuable opportunities to rest and reflect. As author, Matthew Kelly, observed, "If you don't break from the tensions of daily living, they will break you."

An important aspect of the monastic day is that it gives you time for pauses. A pause might be a time to phone a friend, listen to music, go for a short walk, be quiet with your thoughts, take deep breaths, meditate, or take a power nap. Pauses are times for deep relaxation - times where you are not working - when you can enjoy the moment fully... and allow your brain to rest.

At OHI we follow in the monastic tradition. Each day is designed to ensure that your body's natural rhythm is restored. Our 21 day holistic program is formulated to bring harmony to your body, mind, and spirit. The first week is the most challenging because you are breaking free from your disrhythmic lifestyle. You will shed old habits and develop new ones as you learn how to cleanse your body, quiet your mind, and renew your spirit. Our classes will enable you to detox your body, your emotions, and your thoughts. You'll learn meditation techniques to manage stress, release tension, and control pain. You will enjoy the right balance between scheduled activities (classes, meals, exercise) and free-time (optional treatments, journaling, relaxation), so that by the end of week three you will feel amazing!

A typical monastic day might look like this:

6:00am - Prayer and meditation
 7:00am - Breakfast
 8:00am - Work, study, instruction, or exercise
 12:00pm - Midday Prayer (or sacred reading and reflection)
 1:00pm - Lunch
 2:00pm - Work, study, instruction, or exercise
 5:00pm - Evening Prayer (or quiet reading)
 6:00pm - Supper
 7:00pm - Recreation, reading and reflection
 9:30pm - Night Prayer
 10:00pm - Quiet time, prepare for sleep

A typical day at OHI looks like this:

6:30am - Prayer and meditation
 7:30am - Morning lymphatic exercise class
 8:30am - Circle time, prayer focused on inspiration, and breakfast
 9:30am - Morning class
 12:30pm - Circle time, prayer focused on encouragement, and lunch
 1:30pm - Afternoon class
 3:30pm - Exercise class or free time
 4:30pm - Stretch class
 6:00pm - Circle time, prayer focused on reflection, and dinner
 7:00pm - Evening class
 8:30pm - Time to retire for bed

The Complete Guide to the Science of Circadian Rhythms by Jeremy Berger, observer.com, December 29, 2017

Leading Like a Monk: Finding Our Rhythms by Greg Richardson, patheos.com, April 13, 2017

Monastic rhythm of life by Ian Adams, churchtimes.co.uk, February 22, 2011

What Are Biological Rhythms? by Amber Erickson Gabbey and Rachel Nall, healthline.com, November 4, 2016

Difficult Emotions And Their Complicated Feelings (Anger is the bugaboo we all struggle with...)

While some people use the terms “emotions” and “feelings” interchangeably, there is a distinct difference. “Emotions” are associated with bodily reactions that are activated through neurotransmitters and hormones released by the brain. “Feelings” are the conscious experience of emotional reactions.

We identified the topic for this blog well before the current pandemic, but it certainly seems timely as we deal with quarantine worries, working from home stress, distance learning challenges for our kids, and just overall sadness resulting from social isolation. So how do we go about physically coping with difficult emotions, and productively dealing with the range of feelings they can elicit?

No matter the emotion — anger, depression, confusion, sadness — EVERY emotion is valid. Anger is a tough one for women because we’re taught that anger is unbecoming a woman, and we should just “be nice”.

Stop! You are entitled to your complicated feelings about a polarizing emotion like anger. So how do you work through uncomfortable feelings, and come out the other side positive and affirmed? The key is non-reactivity and mindfulness.

There are 6 steps to mindfully deal with difficult emotions and complicated feelings...

Step 1: Turn toward the bodily reactions to emotions with ACCEPTANCE.

First, identify where you sense tension in your body. You may feel it as a stomach ache, a tightening of your throat, or the pounding of your heart. Next, try to name the emotion you are feeling that is connected with this tension. Don’t push the emotion away. Stuffing it down will only cause it to bubble up and explode in different ways later. Listen to your body, and the difficult emotion it is trying to make you aware of. It is trying to help you wake up to what is going on before a major crisis occurs.

Step 2: IDENTIFY AND LABEL the emotion.

Try to acknowledge the presence of the emotion, but remain detached from it. Calmly say to yourself, “This is anger” or “This is anxiety”. Try to “just be” present with that emotion. Don’t let your feelings connected to your body’s physical emotional response catapult you into worrying about the future or the past. There’s no need to blame yourself for choices you made that brought you to this moment. Just identify the emotion for what it is.

Step 3: ACCEPT your emotions.

Acknowledge and accept that an emotion is there, and your body’s reaction to it. If a friend or loved one was having a hard time, you wouldn’t shame them about it. You need to show that same kindness to yourself, and say “I did the best I could.” This difficult emotional response will not last forever. Once you accept the emotion and treat yourself with compassion, you should feel some of the tension leave your body as you calm and soothe yourself.

Step 4: Realize the IMPERMANENCE of your emotions.

Even if your body’s response to the emotion feels overwhelming, remember that it will pass. Opening yourself up to your body’s response grants your mind and spirit permission to work through your feelings toward that emotion, and makes the whole event more fleeting/less permanent. The reality is that every emotion and your feelings about it are impermanent, but that’s easy to forget when you’re in the midst of a crisis.

Step 5: Inquire and INVESTIGATE.

After you have soothed yourself from the physical impact of your emotion, take a moment to explore your feelings about it. Perhaps you had a hard day at work or difficulty dealing with your family. Maybe you feel unappreciated, lonely, or disconnected. Investigating the root cause of your difficult emotions and the associated feelings will help you gain



insight into what you are experiencing. To begin the investigation, ask yourself these questions:

- What triggered me?
- Why do I feel this way?
- Was this event a result of my critical mind, or is it in reaction to something external?
- What were your expectations surrounding the situation?
- Is this a pattern that keeps repeating itself?

Step 6: LET GO of the need to control.

The key to mindfully dealing with your difficult emotions and their ensuing feelings is to let go of your need to control them. Step outside yourself, and really listen to what your heart has to say about the situation.

Mindfully dealing with your emotions and their connected feelings takes time. Be patient with yourself. OHI shares many transformative classes and tools with guests to help them manage and process difficult emotions.

In these uncertain times, look to OHI as your safe haven. As we celebrate 44 years of holistic healing, we can teach you how to process difficult emotions and complicated feelings just as we can teach you how to achieve your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual goals for optimal health. **Stay safe, and be well. Above all, embrace positivity!**

Meet Tamara Magiera-O'Gilvie, OHI's spotlighted guest!



Tamara Magiera-O'Gilvie

"My dear friend, Julia Brown, had been a frequent guest at OHI, and raved about it," said Tamara. "She looked so vibrant, fresh, and young when I saw her after a stay at OHI, that I knew I just had to experience that renewal for myself!"

Tamara Magiera-O'Gilvie was born and raised in Northern Manitoba Canada, and moved to Florida in 1998 with her husband, Eric, and their three children. They started a watersports company, and later expanded the company to three locations on Fort Myers Beach. They also opened two restaurants. In 2018, they sold the watersports company and in 2020 they sold one restaurant.

"I first came to OHI because I was burned out," said Tamara. "I was working 14 hour days, feeling stressed and frustrated at not spending enough time with loved ones. For Christmas one year, my husband offered me a trip anywhere I wanted to go, and I said I wanted to go to OHI. My entire family thought I was crazy, but I knew it was the right choice for me."

Tamara's resolve to get the most out of her Christmas gift paid dramatic dividends. "My first visit was both challenging and rewarding," said Tamara. "In spite of constant fatigue, I attended every class, booked multiple massages and colonics, drank my wheatgrass and my Rejuvalac, and lost 11 pounds in a week. My skin was glowing, and my clothes fit better. I made lasting friendships, and felt energized and ready to focus on my body, mind, and spirit."

Tamara felt so rejuvenated by her first visit to OHI that she has become a frequent guest. She has visited the San Diego campus three times, and the Austin campus once. So what keeps her coming back? "The main thing that appeals to me is that OHI is a judgment-free community," said Tamara. "It's a place to connect with like-minded individuals working on health, spirituality, and awareness. I find it fulfilling and supportive. Every time I am a guest at OHI, I learn something new about myself."

"For Christmas one year, my husband offered me a trip anywhere I wanted to go, and I said I wanted to go to OHI."

Tamara makes it a priority to attend every class she can during her visits. "The Focus class has had a big impact on me," Tamara said. "And what I have gotten out of it has changed each time I take it. The first time I took it I was stunned at how much time I was spending on social media, television, and texting. I curbed that, and was happy to have more time to spend doing things I loved. The last time I took it I realized the importance of being protective of my time, and scheduling what is important to me. I bought a planner, and scheduled my preferred activities, yoga, and time with friends and family. It is helpful for me to see it in a time slot in my planner."

Tamara has noticed changes, both big and small, in herself since she started coming to OHI. "I have become more present," said Tamara, "living in the now instead of constantly living in the past or the future. I am more aware of what I put in my body, as well as who I spend my time with. The health of my body and the use of my time are both precious to me, and I want to make the most of them. I listen to my body now, and respect how I feel about things."

Tamara's biggest breakthrough was very personal. "I chose to let go of criticizing myself, and trying to have everything 'perfect.' I always had this mental chatter that was unhealthy, and when I let that go (it's a work in progress), I replaced it with living in the moment. This helped me to stay in the present. I put energy into being happy in the present rather than ashamed of the past or worried about the future. It's a breakthrough that has brought me peace."

Tamara has also made a breakthrough where food and spirituality intersect in her life. "I like to eat a high-quality organic diet. The cleaner and closer to the earth that my diet is, the more open I am to powerful meditations. These meditations allow for clarity, patience, kindness, and compassion. I find that my yoga practice becomes meditative. It all becomes a circle of health beginning with the food then connecting to the spirit/mind, and coming full circle with the body. It flows freely and easily, and I am grateful to OHI for all of the tools to experience this connection."

Tamara has found that her healing journey often takes her outside. "I love to be out in nature, hiking and kayaking. And spending time with my dog is also healing for me. She is pure joy."

We hope you'll come stay with us again soon, Tamara!

Get to Know OHI Missionary, Joel Ferry



Joel Ferry

Joel Ferry first learned about OHI San Diego when his mother was a guest in 2009. “My mom has had a long-standing connection with the Transcendental Meditation Center in Fairfield, Iowa. She heard about OHI from other guests at the TM Information Center. After her stay there, she couldn’t say enough great things about OHI, and I was interested in experiencing that type of healing for myself.”

Joel is a career bartender, and at the time he was working long hours as a gaming bartender in Las Vegas. His intense schedule left him little time off so it took 5 years before he was able to make his first trip to OHI. “My first visit was July 2014 for 1 week,” said Joel. “I loved it! I went to every class I could, and took a whole binder of notes. I couldn’t get enough! I came back in March 2016 for 1 week, returned again in September 2017 for 2 weeks, and then again in September 2018 for another 2 weeks. Each visit revealed something new to me. I knew I absolutely needed more time at OHI to work on myself, so I applied for their missionary program. It has completely changed my life!”

Joel was diagnosed with diabetes in 2011, and used medication to maintain his blood sugar levels. His late-night work hours as a bartender really played havoc with his sleep schedule, and he found himself exercising less and less. He also suffered from diabetic neuropathy in his feet, and couldn’t imagine putting on a pair of sneakers to go for a run after work. It was just too painful.

“I needed a restart/refresh to my life,” said Joel. “Between my poor sleep patterns, my stressful work environment, my poor diet, and the difficulty managing my diabetes, I was overwhelmed. Depression runs in my family, and I really just wanted to quiet the thoughts in my head. That first week at OHI made such a difference. Not only did the raw diet help with my

diabetes so that I was off all of my medication by mid-week, but the diabetic neuropathy in my feet subsided. My feet felt so good, I was able to take off my shoes and run on the beach. BAREFOOT! It was utterly transformational!”

Joel started as an OHI missionary in September 2019. His first three-month term was so successful, that he extended his missionary position for another 6 months.

“I wanted to be an OHI missionary so that I could be part of a supportive environment that would help me grow into the person I’m meant to be,” said Joel. “I love the camaraderie here. Everyone who chooses OHI is serious about their health. I have met people from all across the country, and while we’re all different, we all want to be the best version of ourselves that we can be. The OHI curriculum and the detox diet put you on the path to improvement starting Day 1.”

While Joel was busy working as a missionary, COVID hit. “I feel so blessed to have been at OHI during COVID,” said Joel. “The stars aligned, and I was here at the right time for me. Living here in the ‘bubble’ has been a beautiful experience. OHI never closed its doors, so I just continued working to make guests feel welcome, safe, and happy. When OHI offered me

“I wanted to be an OHI missionary so that I could be part of a supportive environment that would help me grow into the person I’m meant to be.”

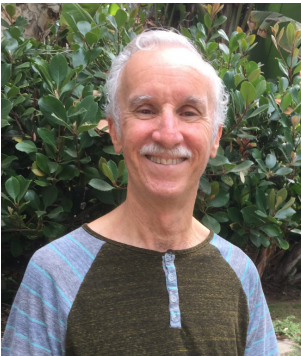
the chance to stay on as a Missionary Coordinator, I jumped at it! I love welcoming the new guests every Sunday. I always tell them they are in for the best 3 weeks of their lives. During the week, teaching lymphatic exercise is a blast. And my favorite thing to do is host the Friday Night Live variety show. I also really love hearing the testimonials on Fridays. It’s so rewarding to hear the success stories of people releasing what they are ashamed of. When the people around you are so supportive, you know you’ll never feel alone again.”

What are Joel’s goals moving forward? “The longer I am at OHI, the more it’s about mental health. Growing as a human being is a slow and deep process, like peeling back layers of an onion. I’m learning why I make certain choices, and am more aware of their consequences.”

And Joel’s advice for others considering a stay at OHI? “Don’t pigeon hole your life. You can make a change any time! Over the last year I became certified to be an ESL teacher, and I’m hoping to teach overseas in the future. Right now I’m just so happy to be a missionary at OHI, but I also know I have really positive things to move on to in the future. I have taken responsibility for my own happiness, and I’m really proud of the choices I’m making. Thank you OHI!”

Christopher Toussaint's Journey to Wellness

Scholarship Recipient Recovers From Cancer Diagnosis



Christopher Toussaint

Christopher Toussaint has been an independent filmmaker for over 40 years, creating dozens of documentaries over his career. Some of those documentaries covered non-conventional health therapies. When he was diagnosed with 3rd stage Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, he immediately knew that he didn't want to pursue chemo.

"I saw first-hand through documentaries how devastating chemo can be," said Christopher. "Chemo was going to turn my entire body into a battleground. I just felt there had to be another way."

In 2007, Christopher had worked on the film "Raw For Life," and he understood the benefits a raw diet could have for a body in crisis.

"OHI's program sounded perfect," said Christopher. "They look at your current condition as a healing opportunity, not a crisis. It's that positivity that really spoke to me. I'm semi-

retired, so a scholarship was the only way to make OHI a reality for me. When they called to say I had been awarded the scholarship, I could feel my stress starting to drain away."

Christopher arrived at OHI San Diego in January 2020 for his 3-week stay. "The first thing I saw in the Optimum Health Store was a DVD of the film 'The Cure Is — The Power of Belief in Healing.' I was the editor and associate producer on that film. I knew right away that this was going to be a productive 3 weeks for me."

Christopher dove right in, and found the wheat grass juice and raw food energizing. "So much of what we eat and learn about at OHI resonates with me," said Christopher. "The raw diet makes total sense to me. The daily word, the journaling, and the dinner blessing all really spoke to me on a spiritual level. The colonics were so powerful in cleaning out impacted toxins that were probably residing in me for 40 years. OHI has completely turned my prognosis around. I feel my lymphoma is in remission. I have no night sweats, no itching. I've lost 30 pounds. The size of my lymph nodes is way down. I am truly grateful to the staff and missionaries at OHI for this experience, and will do everything in my power to maintain the body/mind/spirit improvements they have guided me to."

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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.

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Staff Spotlight

Meet Jennifer Inman, Facilitator at OHI San Diego



Jennifer Inman

Today we are so proud to put the staff spotlight on Jennifer Inman, Facilitator at OHI San Diego.

Q: Give us a little background on yourself, including your work experience prior to joining OHI.

A: I have a Bachelor's degree in Allied Health, and a Master's degree in Complementary & Integrated Medicine.

Before coming to OHI, I was a Holistic Health & Nutrition coach for 14 years, as well as a Nutritional Microscopist for 12 years. I am also a registered yoga teacher, and have had my own studio for 6 years.

Q: What made you decide to join the staff at OHI?

A: I had wanted to work at OHI San Diego for 7 years. Their philosophies really aligned with my own, and it just seemed like the ideal place to work and learn. I stayed as a guest in April 2019, and I recognized the CEO walking across campus from his photo on the OHI website. I'm not going to lie, I shamelessly ran after him just to have a personal chat. I told him how OHI's curriculum resonated with my own background as a nutritional coach and yoga instructor, and he generously offered to hire me on trial to teach stretch classes. I joined OHI full-time in December 2019, and I'm now certified to teach 18 different classes including Mind/Body Connection, Digestion, Elimination, Lymphatic Exercise, Stretch, and more.

Q: Describe your current role at OHI.

A: As a facilitator, not only do I teach the OHI curriculum, but I also counsel guests. I meet with them 1-on-1 for a 30-minute coaching session. I answer any questions they may have, we talk about nutrition, how a detox diet impacts the body, and how eating living raw foods can fundamentally change their health, their immune system, and more. Frequently, the conversation turns to emotional detox, so we talk about the benefits of various meditation techniques, journaling, etc. I really love the 1-on-1 coaching sessions because I feel like I have the opportunity to make a personal connection with each guest. It's an honor for me to provide a safe space to hear their concerns, and to be able to start them off on the path to better health.

Q: What do you look forward to experiencing most each time a new cohort of guests arrives?

A: I love watching people heal and transform. Every time I teach a class, I look forward to the experience of watching people "get it." You can see individuals that put in the hard work to plug back into themselves and peel away the layers of comfort connect with their own growing spirituality. It's an "a-ha" moment that is just amazing to witness. I always emphasize the science of how the body and nutrition works, and seeing how the body/mind/spirit connection all comes together in a single moment of realization really helps solidify my own faith.

Q: What is the biggest change you've noticed in yourself since you started working at OHI?

A: Before I came to OHI, I was diagnosed with degenerative disc disease, panic attacks, and heart arrhythmias. I always ate a healthy diet and did lots of exercise, but inside I was cynical and unhappy. Now that I've worked through the OHI curriculum, I truly understand the mind/body connection, and can see how negative thoughts and beliefs directly contribute to poor health. Now that I've learned to let go of the attitude, looked for the lesson, and found gratitude in every situation, I feel I can live my best life.

Q: Do you find there is a connection between food and spirituality for you?

A: Absolutely! Food is a gift! It's what makes the body work at its best, and the better the food we put in our bodies, the more we get out of life. When I grow my own food, I feel like it's watching a baby being born. There is something miraculous about planting a seed, and watching that seed grow into a plant that will go on to nourish our bodies. To pick lettuce right out of the garden, feel it still warm from the sun, and be able to turn that into a beautiful salad for dinner is heaven.

Q: For those seeking spiritual evolution, do you have any advice that might help pivot their journey in a more productive direction?

A: Some people grow through journaling, others through meditation, and others through exercise. Spiritual evolution is a very personal journey, and you should find the means that is most meaningful to you. For me, yoga is how I heal. It brings me joy. It brings me strength. It brings me closer to God. I hope everyone keeps looking for the means that best speaks to them, because the healing they will find on the other side is wonderful.

"Now that I've worked through the OHI curriculum, I truly understand the mind/body connection, and can see how negative thoughts and beliefs directly contribute to poor health."

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**Come to OHI for your
Optimum Fall Cleanse**

Balance. Strengthen. Reset.

**We are open
and offering full
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It's been no easy feat to keep our doors open during a pandemic. OHI San Diego and OHI Austin are offering full services in colonic, chiropractic and massage. 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
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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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Fall2020

VISIT WITH US: SUNDAY OPEN HOUSE

Visit our weekly Open House every Sunday starting at 4:00 p.m. in San Diego and Austin. The OHI Program offers visitors, guests and adherents a personal tour of the facility, lecture, prayer circle and an all raw vegan meal. A \$3 donation is appreciated, but not required.

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.