



CommunicAbility

A Quarterly Newsletter For Our Community Members with Disabilities

Summer 2017

Vol. 17, Ed. 2

Articles

- Advocacy Matters
- Journaling to Happiness

NHU Features

- A Story of Being Human
- NHU Flower Bulb Sale
- Word Search

**I'M GOING TO
MAKE YOU SO
PROUD.**

- note to self.

No Internet?

If you do not have access to the Internet at home, and are unable to access the websites listed in this newsletter, we would be happy to mail you a printed copy of the information that is available online.

To request a printed copy, please contact us via phone 414-299-0124.

Thank you!

"It does not take a majority to prevail...but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men."

– Samuel Adams

Advocacy Matters, and the Time is Now

At the time of this writing, the House has passed, and the Senate is considering, a bill that will significantly cut Medicaid, the program that provides the services that you or someone you care about may depend upon to live independently in our community.

Although the vote was delayed, the bill will likely come around again.

Medicaid has long been a staple of America's health care system, providing essential funding for such services as personal care attendants, occupational and physical therapy, physician visits, and much more, to people with disabilities as well as low income seniors and families.

It is widely held by many disability advocates that cuts to this program could have devastating consequences. People could see a reduction of services or lose services all together.

Understanding the Process

If the Senate Bill passes, both the house and senate bills will go to committee, made of both House and Senate members, for discussion and finalization and then sent back to the House and Senate for a vote. The President will then have 10 days to sign the bill or veto it.

So, as you can see, there is a ways to go before this becomes law.

What's an Advocate To Do?

1. **Type your story of how Medicaid helps you in your daily life.**

If you need help putting your thoughts in writing, ask a friend or family member to help you.

2. **Contact your senator's office and share your story.**

Find your U.S. Senator: senate.gov

Calls are best, but e-mails are important too.

A few tips:

- Keep your cool
- Don't raise your voice
- Be respectful but firm
- Keep it short and to the point
- Don't ramble

3. **Follow New Horizons Un-Limited on Facebook to stay up to date on the health care debate.**

facebook.com/NewHorizonsUnLimited

Even if the Senate bill does not pass, this debate will continue. Do not become complacent. Do not sit silently.

True Health Care Reform can only be achieved if we are part of the conversation. Now is the time to speak up.

New Horizons Un-Limited is a Milwaukee-based, non-profit organization that provides individuals with lifelong disabilities increased access to the information, tools and life experiences that will enable them to improve their lives.



new-horizons.org



facebook.com/NewHorizonsUnLimited



twitter.com/newhorizonsmke

Journaling: A path towards happiness?

Being grateful may seem simple to some, but to others it can seem like a chore. We might go an entire day, or week, or maybe even a month or more, focusing on all that's wrong and forget to take stock of what's right. I know as well as anyone that it's easy to fall into this mindset.

But here's the thing, being grateful can actually make you happier and healthier! And, there's plenty of evidence supporting this. Experts believe the link between improved health and gratefulness is that grateful people, through reduced stress, avoid smoking and alcohol, exercise 33 percent more and sleep a ½ hour more each night. All great things, right?!

I've recognized that being grateful means finding the best in every situation (even the difficult ones), looking for the good in life, and focusing on what you can control.

Of course, gratefulness doesn't always come automatically. You often have to work at it, particularly during stressful times.

One great way to focus on gratefulness is to write in a gratitude journal. I know it sounds hokey, and I too was a skeptic, but then I

began to write, and sure enough, I found that my perspective and attitude on life was indeed changing.

You don't have to spend a lot of time on it at first, just start small. Of course, the more you can find to be grateful for the better, but even if you can only find one thing each day, go for it.

My advice is to write every day, even if you don't feel like it. In fact, writing on your worst days is even more beneficial than writing on your best! It will force a shift in your outlook away from the negative and towards the positive. Over time, it will become that much easier to find the positives in life as your perspective begins to change. Eventually you will find yourself writing more and more in your gratitude journal and you will be well on a course to more happiness and self-contentment.

Your first entries do not have to be long. They can just be a sentence, or even just a few words. I guarantee that the more you do it, the easier it will become, and the more you will find to be thankful for in life. Even little things like the warmth of the sun, or that the sun came up this morning, will work to start the process off. If it's a cloudy day...the smell of

freshly washed laundry, or the sight of something beautiful. Really, anything at all that makes you feel happy. These little things will allow you to see how important life is and how many different things someone actually has to be happy about.

Eventually, you can go a step further, dig deeper, and write why you are thankful for that particular person, thing or action. Doing this will keep you from only having a journal of nice thoughts, and turn it into a full-fledged gratitude journal.

When you write in the journal don't sweat the details of grammar and punctuation, go for the thoughts and actions that made you grateful in your life. No one will see the journal unless you want them to.

Remember, you are in this for the long run. The more you write or record your thoughts, the more you focus on them. Soon you will no longer be a glass half empty person, but a glass half full kind of person.

Hopefully, you have seen the benefit of a gratitude journal and have decided that it's worth a shot. It's never too late to better yourself and I only hope you decide to start sooner rather than later.

NHU's Annual Flower Bulb Fundraiser

Add a little beauty to your spring garden while supporting our family, friends and neighbors with disabilities.

New Horizons Un-Limited is once again hosting our annual Flower Bulb Sale where 50% of your purchase will go directly to NHU. Check out the selection and order online through October 15th:

<http://ow.ly/kULS30dhy4E>



A Story of Being Human



We know that there is more to a person than his/her disability... disability doesn't have to be, and shouldn't be, the definitive narrative on one's life.

New Horizons Un-Limited has recently launched a new storytelling project aimed at creating a narrative on life with a disability. We simply tell stories that capture our subjects' unique personalities, their hopes, their frustrations...their everyday lives. Sometimes disability may be a significant portion of a story, other times it won't.

Ultimately, through both honest photos and conversations, we hope to build a narrative that will speak to the similarities that we all share in our humanity.

We believe that storytelling can be the most powerful change agent and through these stories we tell, we want to change the way society views and interacts with people with disabilities. We want people with and without disabilities to find a connection with one another and peel away the layers of misunderstanding.

In the coming months, we here at NHU will be documenting and sharing the unique stories of both individuals and families whose lives have been touched by disability.

Be sure to connect with us on our Facebook page to follow this exciting and eye opening series: [facebook.com/ASOBHmke](https://www.facebook.com/ASOBHmke)

If you have a disability and would like to be a part of this project, please contact Lori, the project coordinator, via e-mail: potrykus@new-horizons.org

Return Service Requested

Gratefulness: A Single Step Towards Happiness

What's that old adage? "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." That's what this word search is about. It's about trying to find the good in rotten situations. It's about focusing on what you can control and letting go of what you can't. It's about living your best life possible...

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| BE GRATEFUL | LIVE FULLY |
| BE PRESENT | LOVE |
| CREATE HAPPINESS | MEDITATE |
| ENCOURAGE | MOVE FORWARD |
| FEEL THE SUN | SAY THANK YOU |
| FEEL JOY | SMELL THE ROSES |
| FIND THE GOOD | SMILE |
| LAUGH | STAY ACTIVE |
| LET GO | WRITE |

O L I O N O T O M D A S U U K N S P Y
Q E I T Q R E A U J J U Y W A E E X N
A Y U X T F O E P O W E A L D R G A B
N X G L I V E F U L L Y R L B O O N S
E S M Q F E E L T H E S U N O J Q U W
I N X D I S D U S M G H S X N V F D R
M S A Y T H A N K Y O U Q M L N E L I
O F I N D T H E G O O D L A I E A C T
V E S T A Y A C T I V E S C U L O B E
E T S O D E R K R C I V F T C S E E U
F A E U T I G E A T U O D Y C L Y G S
O E S Y L A U G H M E D I T A T E R A
R B E P R E S E N T P W X D S A I A E
W P F E N C O U R A G E L E T G O T R
A O C R E A T E H A P P I N E S S E U
R Z S R K Y P O E F E E L J O Y P F I
D S M E L L T H E R O S E S T T O U G
C O U E W U N Y V E S A G G Q C J L L



"Like" Us On Facebook
facebook.com/NewHorizonsUnLimited



Visit Us On The Web
new-horizons.org



E-mail Us
horizons@new-horizons.org