

How THE Well Are You?

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS ★ HEALTH & WELLNESS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

ARE YOU GAME?

EVER FEEL LIKE you need to unscramble a bit? Unscramble the words below and reveal the new FDNY slogan.

aemgsas

— 5 — 1 — — 9

inteoidatm

— 10 — — 2 — — — —

lyoelxfegor

8 — 7 — 4 — — — — —

sebhr

— — 3 — 6

FDNY's new slogan:
If it's...

1 2 3 4 5 6 — 7 8 9 10

it's for me!

To find out the answers, log on to the FDNY website, www.fdnynyc.gov, then click on the CSU icon.



"How The Well Are You?" is brought to you by Community Connections and the Counseling Service Unit of the Fire Department of New York.

Days off are supposed to be fun, relaxing, and stress free. If they aren't, then read on about the *Community Connections* program!

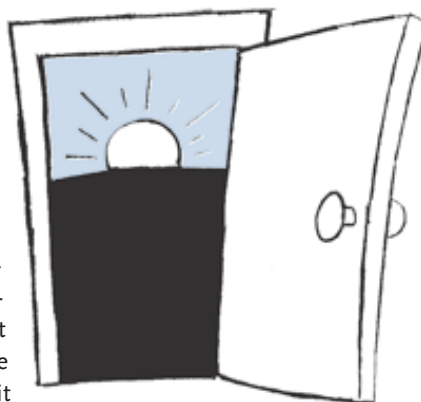
ANY OF THESE SOUND FAMILIAR?

- ★ Chronic pain or job-related injury
- ★ Having to juggle a mortgage, two jobs, and family
- ★ Sleeping too little
- ★ Smoking too much
- ★ Stress in your relationship
- ★ Tension on the job
- ★ Trouble relaxing

We know most people tend to handle these things on their own. But maybe it's time to try something new, something that might just help you—and your family—like the Community Connections Program. Developed with funding support from the Red Cross, the Counseling Service Unit

(CSU) designed Community Connections specifically for active duty FDNY/EMS members and their families. And since it began in March 2005, more than 2,000 FDNY members have tapped into this program, which offers new ways to cope with the work and life issues that can contribute to stress.

Since the CSU opened its doors over 20 years ago, it has been constantly expanding its programs to meet the changing needs of Department members. For example, did you know that the CSU offers free weekly acupuncture sessions, yoga classes, talks on stress-related issues, and wellness events for you and your family in addition to counseling? To find out more, flip the page and see what we have to offer. Don't forget to check the back page for a calendar of our upcoming wellness events! We welcome your ideas and suggestions. Please contact Lynn Walker, Program Director at (212) 570-1693 ext. 318 or walkerly@fdny.nyc.gov ★



RECIPE CONTEST

WE KNOW there are some great cooks out there. Anyone got a really great **healthy recipe**? Here's your chance to share it with the FDNY community! Send in a list of ingredients and directions by July 1, 2006. Chef Diane Raymond will judge the recipes on their nutritional value (think low-calorie, low-cholesterol dishes), taste, and ease of preparation. *Community Connections* will select the top three recipes, awarding **a dinner for two to the winner and a George Foreman grill to two runners-up**. Winners will be awarded their prizes by July 31. Look for the winning recipes in the next issue of *HOW THE WELL ARE YOU?* Send your recipe and contact info to Kristen Brown, FDNY-CSU, 251 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012 or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov

To find out the winners log on to the FDNY website, www.fdnynyc.gov, then click on the CSU icon.

"How The Well Are You?" is supported by a September 11 recovery grant from the American Red Cross Liberty Disaster Relief Fund.

STRETCH RELIEF

Yoga can improve your golf swing...though probably not your score.

WHAT DO the New York Giants, Philadelphia Eagles, Chicago Bulls, and LA Lakers have in common with the FDNY? Would you believe yoga? Since mid-2004 when yoga became available at the FDNY, some firefighters and EMS workers have been using it to get relief from neck and lower-back pain, better sleep, and improve mental focus. Retiree Charlie Wagner says, yoga will improve your golf swing, even if, "it won't improve your score!"

Athletes and firefighters profiled in John Caputo's *Real Men Do Yoga* practice yoga to prevent injuries and improve concentration. "Some guys might think of it as feminine and give you grief about it," says Cy Young winner Barry Zito. "But any athlete who laughs at yoga is essentially mocking the fact that the body needs to be loose

and physically strong."

Yoga is a system of physical exercises called *asanas*, or postures, that help align the body to optimize range of motion and strength. Breathing exercises also improve lung capacity.

Firefighters in Los Altos, Calif., also practice yoga. "We get in awkward positions, crawling inside a smashed-up vehicle, or swinging an ax and dragging a hose upstairs. A lot of guys get hurt," said Bob Hagg.

For stress, back pain, better sleep

"But we haven't had that since we started doing yoga." It has also helped recovery after a fire. But don't expect it to be easy, warns Paul Hewitt, men's basketball coach at Georgia Tech: "This is not some passive, sit-around-and-contemplate kind of thing," says Hewitt, noting that it stretches his guys to their lim-

its. "A lot of guys may still think it's less a workout for the body than it is for the mind and lungs," says Ralph, a 15-year FDNY member and yoga practitioner. "Nothing has kept me in as good shape and toned my entire body as yoga, without all the sore muscles and joints."

FDNY yoga classes begin with breathing exercises, followed by warm-ups, and a series of standing and seated postures. Classes end with a

cool down and rest period. What if you have limited range of motion due to an old injury or don't think you can sit on the floor, much less put a foot behind your ear? "Retired guys don't have a whole body part between us!" says Charlie, "You'll learn how to practice postures no matter what you have going on." Ultimately, yoga is a do-it-yourself technology. You get to choose your own focus: strength, flexibility, or stress relief. As Ralph says, "I'm healthier. I'm eating better, sleeping better, and making better choices." —Anne Libby

YOGA CLASSES

- *Goshen*: Mon., 7:30-8:30 p.m. through July 8; Yoga for Well-Being Studio, 5 Coates Dr., Suite 2, Eastgate Corporate Park.
- *Staten Island*: Wed., 7-8:15 p.m., through June 21; 278 Lincoln Ave (Inside the karate studio)
- *Manhattan*: Thurs., 6:30-8 p.m. through July 6, 594 Broadway, Suite 500.
- *RSVP* to Kristin Brown at 212-570-1693 ext.385 or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov



PINS IN YOUR EARS

The FDNY is using acupuncture for a variety of symptoms. It helps.

YOU'RE NOT alone if the idea of sticking pins in your ears freaks you out. In fact, Jennifer Chen, a licensed acupuncturist who works with Community Connections, says that the needles she uses makes some

new clients nervous, even skeptical. But they try acupuncture because they've heard it will help them sleep better and relax. They leave knowing both are true.

Edward Cachia, one of Jennifer's regular clients, who retired from the FDNY in 2005,

is one convert: "After 9/11, I got the cough like many other Department members. It would wake me up at night. But acupuncture treatments and Chinese herbs have given me so much relief. I know other members are suffering and could find some comfort, too."

Acupuncture, a traditional Chinese medical practice, works on the theory that energy or Chi flows along channels throughout the body. Blocked energy is believed to cause pain and illness, while free flowing energy spells optimal health. Inserting thin, sterile

needles into specific points can restore the energy flow and bring the mind and body back into balance.

There are over 200 points in the ear that correspond to vital organs and parts of the body. Dr. Michael Smith, of

Hellraiser? Not even close

Lincoln Recovery Center in the Bronx, developed a protocol of five specific ear points used in the successful treatment of chemical dependency and other conditions. Hundreds in the FDNY community have received treatments at CSU locations, FDNY company picnics, and other FDNY events for everything from cutting back on smoking to relieving anger and respiratory problems. One EMS worker in paramedic training who's been re-



ceiving treatments says: "I stopped getting nervous about taking tests and feel calmer." ★

ACUPUNCTURE SESSIONS

- **Manhattan CSU:** Wed., 3–6 p.m.
- **Brentwood CSU:** Wed., 11–1 p.m.
- **Fort Totten CSU:** Mon., 3–5 p.m.
- **Middletown CSU:** Wed., 1–3 p.m. & Thurs. 6–8 p.m.
- **Staten Island CSU:** Tues., 1–4 p.m. & Thurs., 5–7 p.m.

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?

Most members don't think about retirement until it's staring them in the face. Then what?

IF YOU ARE like most people, you probably don't like to think about retirement.

That's in the future. Far away. You'd rather be in the here and now. But think about it: Many FDNY members go on to satisfying second careers after leaving the job. So why not start training now for later on?

After asking members at the FDNY and EMS training academies, a local 2507 meeting, and around many fire-house kitchen tables what kinds of programs could be a help to them, many said career guidance counseling for those considering retirement. "After 20 years on the job, some members get out without a plan for the next phase of their lives," said one guy. "Members who are used to a very active lifestyle, end up sitting at home bored and wishing they had never retired."

Having someone knowledgeable to talk to can really help. "I wish I'd had some guidance when I was still on the job," said one retiree. "When you are young, you are caught up in being single and

running out to the Hamptons. You aren't giving much thought to retirement."

But they probably should since many FDNY members retire young. Someone who gets on the job early might even be

40 or 45 when they are eligible for retirement. While early retirement sounds like a dream to some, many people aren't ready emotionally or financially for full-time leisure retirement.

When an injury forces someone off the job, the adjustment can be tougher, as one 36-year-old retiree says, "Most members have second jobs they can retire to. I worked in construction and landscaping. You break your back, putting a roof on. It's hard work; fire-fighting is hard work. When you reach your 40s or 50s, do you really want to bang nails? Members should find out about other options; like going back to school or getting a broker's license."

But since working for the FDNY is the dream job for many of its members, the idea of retiring can be bittersweet, even depressing. So it may be hard to think about what *could* be next. But here's the good news: With all the skills and talents you possess, there definitely is life after the FDNY, and you owe it to yourself to plan ahead and make it a great one. ★

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

KNOWING WHO you are and what excites you are crucial steps in planning a second career. In February, Community Connections and Stay Connected (FDNY-CSU's program for retired members) sponsored a workshop to help FDNY members and their spouses explore those questions. With help from Career Breakthroughs, a program run by the Family Service League in New Jersey, participants began a path to finding meaningful work. Gene Gitelson, an executive coach and management consultant involved participants in exercises to help identify interests and skills they could bring to any job and to develop a self-marketing plan. One exercise asks people to look back on their lives and list 30 successes—things they did well and really enjoyed. Participants analyze those successes to uncover true passions and abilities—like handling crises or planning events. The program is ideal for younger members with years left on the job, because they have more time to complete training or higher education, giving them more options down the road.

The next two-part workshop will be held July 13 and 20, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., at the Instructional Unit at Fort Totten, Bldg 401B. Contact Kristen Brown at (212) 570-1693, ext. 385, or email her at brownk@fdny.nyc.gov.

CALENDAR

ALL FDNY MEMBERS

★ **WALK STRONG:** Walking club led by a personal fitness trainer. Call for dates and time.

Where: Fort Totten CSU Building 413B, Bayside N.Y. (718) 352-2140

★ WELLNESS FRIDAYS IN

BROOKLYN: Free Massage and Acupuncture Services.

Where: St. Boniface Church, 111 Willoughby Street (at Duffield), Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

When: Fridays, 11 a.m.–2 p.m.

*Ring the buzzer and let them know you are with the FDNY.

★ **SUMMER WELLNESS SERIES:** A series of talks and bodywork.

Where: Staten Island CSU

When: June 8, Intro to Meditation, 4–5 p.m. June 29, Staten Island bodywork, 4–7 p.m. July 13, Eating Well, 4–5 p.m. July 27, Bodywork, 4–7 p.m. August 10, A Good Night's Sleep,

4–5 p.m.

Where: Fort Totten CSU

When: June 12, Intro to Meditation, 5–6 p.m. June 26, Bodywork, 4–7 p.m. July 10, Eating Well, 5–6 p.m. July 24, Bodywork, 4–7 p.m. August 14, A Good Night's Sleep, 5–6 p.m.

★ FAMILY FUN AND WELLNESS

EVENTS: Learn new ways to relax as a family with such activities as parent-child tai chi, gardening, arts and crafts, and acupuncture. Plus: lunch provided and free chair massages will be raffled off.

Where: West Point's 49er Lodge. Call for directions.

When: June 17, noon–4 p.m.

Where: Fort Totten, Bldg. 413B

When: July 15, noon–4 p.m.,

RSVP to Kristen Brown at (212) 570-1693, ext.385, or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov.

★ HOW TO TALK TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT DRUGS & ALCOHOL:

Where: Fort Totten CSU

When: June 28, 5:30–8 p.m.

RSVP to Kristen at

(212) 570-1693, ext.385, or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov.

★ **WELLNESS WORKSHOPS – MIDDLETOWN:** Monthly support group for spouses/partners on a variety of stress reduction & wellness topics.

Where: Middletown CSU

When: 3rd Tues. of the month

RSVP to Kristin Brown at (212) 570-1693, ext.385, or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov.

EMS PERSONNEL

★ EMS WELLNESS OPEN

HOUSES: Massage, acupuncture, acupressure, reflexology, and talks on health and wellness while enjoying healthy snacks.

Where: Fort Totten CSU

When: June 14, July 12, and August 23, 4–7 p.m.

RSVP to Kristen Brown at (212) 570-1693, ext.385, or brownk@fdny.nyc.gov ★

THE CSU

• Manhattan

251 Lafayette St., 3rd Floor
(212) 570-1693

• Staten Island

1688 Victory Boulevard
(718) 815-4111

• Queens Ft. Totten

Building 413B
Bayside, (718) 352-2140

• Suffolk County

Center Cottage
Suffolk Community College
Crooked Hill Road
Brentwood, (631) 851-6888

• Orange County

2279 Goshen Turnpike
Middletown, (845) 695-1029

To find out about Community Connections support groups for FDNY members, those on long-term light duty, and EMS personnel or ongoing CSU-sponsored groups, contact Laura Garvey at (212) 570-1693, ext. 380, or garveyl@fdny.nyc.gov

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS *of the* CSU-FDNY

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