

Brittany Bell/The Clackamas Print

Janie Carsley shops for produce at the Oregon City Haggen Food & Pharmacy. She is trying to find the best quality basil and asparagus. "It's just awful trying to find some good basil today," she says.

Balance mind and body with food

Brittany Bell
News Editor

Could the food you eat really affect your mood and have the power to determine whether you are happy or sad? Is there a link between nutrition and mental health or emotional well being?

Kevin Arizo is a CCC athletic trainer here on campus and while sports medicine is his field of expertise, he thinks that proper nutrition is important as well.

"I think there's a connection. There are a lot of studies and it's a chemical imbalance. Nutrition can help that," said Arizo.

Although the research is not conclusive as to whether a link between mental or emotional health and nutrition exists, this topic does not seem to carry much controversy. The general consensus is saying that there is a connection, and eating healthy is a good idea for an overall well being of the body.

"We try to look at people holistically, not just from a medical standpoint or diagnosis," said Casey Sims, counseling department chair. "Poor diet will affect you in many ways and it's not easy to eat health-

ier, it's harder and often more expensive, but I think there's a consequence [if you don't]."

An informational packet called "Nutrition for Mental Health and Emotional Wellness" is a great starting resource if you would like to learn more about how food can change your mood or would like to know what foods you should be eating. You can attain a copy of this by stopping by the Centerstone Crisis Center in Happy Valley.

The packet states that "Having a minimum of five portions, daily, of fresh fruit and vegetables provides the nutrients needed to nourish mind and body. By choosing foods that provide good energy and nutritional value, you can help nourish your body and mind."

Susan Baker is a community health nurse who works for Centerstone and put the "Nutrition for Mental Health and Emotional Wellness" packet together. She did this because the crisis center wanted something of this nature available to their clients.

"It's along the lines of physical activity and alternative ways to manage stress and emotional well being," Baker said.

This resource lists essential vitamins, minerals and general nutrition that your body needs.

In addition, there is information on links between the deficiencies of certain nutrients and problems such as depression, anxiety, fatigue, irritability and insomnia.

The rest of the packet contains nutrition information about specific fruits, vegetables, fungi, seeds and meats as well as eight tasty recipes. While this is one helpful resource, there are many ways to educate yourself on nutrition and even its link to emotional wellness such as speaking to your doctor, doing research online or at a library or consulting a nutritionist.

You may also visit a store that focuses on nutritious foods and overall health, some even provide trained employees to help educate their customers and community. New Seasons Market stores provide wellness persons like Alex Gunderson to answer questions you may have while shopping.

"I think being exposed to nutritious foods and supplements keeps your mind, body and spirit well," said Gunderson.

She has received a good amount of training to qualify for her job at New Seasons, but is still not an expert and most people aren't experts when it comes to food and nutrition.

"You have to be proactive

and seek out information on your own," she said.

New Seasons also offers free health and wellness classes to promote health and well being in the community. Some of the classes include alternative treatments for depression and anxiety; balanced hormones, balanced life; freedom from chronic pain, naturally; how to get a good nights sleep and nutrition 101.

You can view the full schedule of free classes at newseasonsmarket.com or stop by one of their locations for more information.

While it is not proven that food can cure depression or give you perfect emotional health, it seems to be working for people and at least worth a try. Please remember that this should not take the place of any medications prescribed by your doctor.

"Studies about the 'food-mood connection' have been limited and have shown mixed results. Because so many questions remain, dietary changes are not recommended as a substitute for professional treatment of mental health problems like depression," states the Nutrition for Mental Health and Emotional Wellness packet.

We raise awareness by covering tragedy



WTF
Brittany Bell
News Editor

As a society, we have stared at the television, computer or radio, jaws dropped in horrified disbelief at the surreal tragedies that seem to be affecting us globally and locally without much of a break. Many of us have even spent time anxiously waiting, fingers crossed in hopes that our loved ones were safe.

Problems including gun violence, gun control, mental health and suicide prevention have been talked about and reported on by journalists at The Clackamas Print. As you may have noticed already, we are doing this through a series called "Why The Fight."

As a journalist, I have become more aware of the events going on in my community, whether good or bad. The good things make me happy and grateful for those opportunities. But to be quite honest, the bad things are a mix of scary and infuriating.

Why are these things happening? What can I or 'we' do to prevent them from happening again? How do we ensure that the future world we live in is one that we feel safe in and proud of?

I believe that these topics are important to address and talk about because that is the first step towards finding a solution. Our goal is to not only inform the community about what is going on, but to also present tools, resources or solutions to people if possible. But most importantly, our mission is to inform and educate.

In today's society, some of these topics are not easy to discuss and uncomfortable to think about or deal with. I have learned that this is true, and when approaching anyone from a professional to a local community member about these topics you must use caution and sensitivity.

While sometimes we feel ignorance is best, problems in our society, be it local or global, should be addressed. We should take strides toward solutions and a better tomorrow.

As a community we should be aware of our surroundings and others in order to be perceptive of a potentially dangerous change or obscure behavior in other individuals. We should also work towards fostering a positive atmosphere, showing compassion and caring towards others and encouraging each other.

Potential ideas for future discussion may include animal abuse or unemployment, homelessness and hunger. Digging deeper, there are problems such as sex trafficking in Portland and unjust food production.


We are open to suggestions for topics to cover in the series as well. If you have any questions or comments feel free to email newsed@clackamas.edu or chiefed@clackamas.edu. You may also visit our website at theclackamasprint.com where you can see the WTF series articles or participate in forum conversations.

Pick Your Produce

Spicer Brothers Produce
508 14th St., Oregon City
9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Monday thru Saturday

Green Grocer
891 Molalla Ave., Oregon City
11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday thru Friday

Oregon City Farmers Market (Winter)
March 2nd & 16th, April 6th and 20th
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.



Free Rapid HIV Testing

800.777.2437

cascadeaids.org/hiv-testing-resources

Oregon City

CASAP

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