



# Generating Momentum

*Women Supporting Each Other in the Drive for Personal and Professional Success*

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## From the Editors – What's Ahead

This issue of **Generating Momentum** reflects some of the comments made in our readership survey. First and foremost, we want to thank those who took the time to respond. Second, we want to acknowledge your constructive criticism and helpful suggestions for improving the newsletter and making it more relevant. Last, but not least, we want to tell you how reassuring it was to receive your overwhelmingly positive feedback. Hearing “great job” from several respondents turned our heads for a moment. Hearing that 75 percent of you are interested in articles about “work and career” brought us back to the drawing-board pretty quickly. We look forward to incorporating your ideas into upcoming issues of the newsletter.

The articles in this issue revolve, for the most part, around issues of health and wellness. We hope that they pique your interest and that you'll follow through on some of the excellent suggestions made for eating well, moving frequently, and staying centered.

## The Next Issue

We've already received two health and wellness related articles for the October issue: one is about the physical and mental health benefits of yoga and one is about strategies for staying well even when you're dealing with a chronic illness.



# Ask a Busy Woman

## *Spotlight on Carol Dugard*

**By Mary Handley**

Walking into Carol Dugard's office for the first time, I was struck by the efficient layout and calming aura of her work space. Carol's personality was evident in the neatly organized files, the tasteful personal accoutrements, and the large basket of assorted candies placed conveniently within a visitor's reach.

In her role as Director of Human Resources (HR) Payroll Systems, Carol analyzes data and behavior and finds solutions to even the most intractable of systems-related problems. It's hard not to be awe-struck when listening to Carol talk about her employment history at UMMS. Her extensive knowledge base and commitment to best practices underlie her comfort level with making decisions, setting priorities, and delegating work — essential attributes of a good manager.

Carol came to UMMS in 1999 after working in high tech for almost 20 years. She assumed the role of HR Systems Manager and was given responsibility for implementing the PeopleSoft HR module on the Worcester campus. In these early days, Carol sometimes questioned the wisdom of her decision to move to UMMS. She left an environment where everything was documented in excruciating detail to work at a place where documentation was rare to non-existent and policies were stored in the heads of a few long-term employees! Eleven years later, Carol now says without hesitation that her move to UMMS has been, and continues to be, a "great experience."

Carol's effectiveness in working as a member of the six-campus PeopleSoft HR roll-out team did not go unnoticed. In the years following that first assignment, Carol has been approached to head other HR systems-related initiatives. She's most proud of the staff trainings she did early on — guiding her HR colleagues in their transition from paper to electronic processes — and of her success in streamlining business operations with the help of her co-workers.

Carol's transfer from HR to Financial Services in 2003 has turned into another unexpected career growth opportunity. Her increased understanding of the PeopleSoft Financial module aligned seamlessly with her hard-earned HR expertise and has resulted in better-informed decisions. Carol is now in the unique position of serving as the project lead in a new applicant tracking system for recruiting, implementing Academic Jobs On-Line for faculty recruiting, and developing the electronic report production features in our new Summit software.

Carol says that she loves a challenge and thrives on the hard work that's associated with accomplishing her goals. She's prepared to do whatever it takes, and to work as long as necessary, to get the job done. As productive an employee as Carol is, she believes she's achieved her greatest success at home.

Carol and her husband, Eddie, are the parents of two remarkable children: 12-year-old Jacob who's an avid baseball player, an inquisitive student and devoted brother to his sister Angela. Because of her special needs and severe disabilities, Angela requires full-time personal care. Even though she is non-verbal and non-ambulatory, Angela has taught her family to "listen, learn, and understand," and, according to Carol, to truly value what's essential in creating a happy life. Carol, in turn, has brought Angela's wisdom to the workplace, and her staff, coworkers, and the organization as a whole have benefitted in multiple ways as a result. Carol always has time to guide and encourage — she's a busy woman who's never too busy to offer a helping hand.

# The Measure of Experience\*

*By Sabrina McCallum*

*Enhanced Coordination of Benefits Unit, Center for Health Care Financing*

Experience is not exclusively measured in units of time, but as an accumulation of moments with varying degrees of complexity. How a person manages those moments demonstrates the competencies and professionalism attained. Each and every moment presents a lesson to be learned, with an opportunity for growth; it is upon reflection that we find our lesson. As we progress through life, we must apply the insight from past experiences to the present moment. Similar to the concept of *perception is reality*, each moment provides the opportunity to demonstrate our capacity to exploit the past in an effort to improve ourselves.

A person capable of reflecting and applying acquired wisdom capitalizes on growth and development. Career experiences, therefore, directly contribute to competencies achieved and subsequent advancement. The idiom “practice makes perfect” teaches that repeated attempts at a particular task will eventually lead to mastering the execution of that task. We must take ownership of our failures in order to develop successes. The effort is more significant and relevant to our development than having the specific responsibility in the first place. Simply owning the responsibility of a particular task associated with your job does not inherently imply that you are proficient in that task. There is greater value in having tried and learned than assuming excellence without proof.

A great deal of emphasis is placed on years of experience pertaining to specific responsibilities. If one has never had the opportunity to hone a skill, then the aptitude for that skill is nearly impossible to assess. In contrast, however, we must acknowledge that the exact quantity of experience is irrelevant. What may take one person years to refine may, in fact, take someone else merely months; and yet another person may never excel at the task at all. To make assumptions about someone’s capacity to succeed based on a subjective estimation of how much practice is required is impractical. Doing so is akin to assuming that everyone is equally capable; essentially it implies that talent does not exist. Just as acting, cooking, and painting are talents, so are business administration, leadership, and management. Talents must be nurtured and developed to augment your innate ability; in turn, you will transcend the boundaries of common potential and merely adequate performance.

Revolutionize the measure of experience. Be attentive to the individual moments of your professional development and respect the importance of quality over quantity. Nurture your talents and appreciate your failures as equally as you appreciate your successes. In short, maximize the benefit of reflection.

***\*This is the second in a series of three articles addressing professional development and personal growth.***

# My Health Education\* – Peace Corps Letters Home

By Jena B. Adams, M.P.H.

National Children's Study, Department of Pediatrics

Since 1961, 200,000 Peace Corps volunteers have worked in 139 countries of the world, 22 percent of them in the fields of health and HIV/AIDS. Learn more about the Peace Corps at

[www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov).



## March 1988

Dear Grama,

It's final! The Peace Corps accepted me, and I leave next month for Paraguay! This must be the best decision I ever made. I expected a teaching assignment, but instead I'll be a health volunteer. I feel totally unqualified, but my recruiter said that Americans, with the basic health knowledge we absorb growing up, have plenty to offer. I'm not so sure about that. I signed up for a first aid class before I go ...

## September 1988

Mom and Dad,

I'm in my "site" now, five miles from the nearest road, no electricity or running water. I gave my first health talk last week in broken Guarani. After two weeks hauling heavy water buckets from the spring, I couldn't bring myself to tell people to boil their drinking water. The simplest things take forever here. *Campo* life is so different. When I get over my shock, I think I'll like it. Last month I got weird rashes and bad stomach pains, but I'm better now. Am living with a family of eight in a two-room house (cooking/sleeping), but will move to my own mud "casita" across the yard soon, after we kick out the pigs, re-mud the walls, and thatch the roof.

## June 1989

Mom and Dad,

I found a way to make a million bucks! I'll fill bottles with water from the local creek and market it in the U.S. as a weight-loss formula. *Instructions: Drink contents; Ignore weeks of intestinal distress; Achieve desired weight loss; Ingest three tablets Mebendazole; Repeat as necessary.* I'll call it "Sevo-i" — the Guarani word for worms. Can you believe 90 percent of the children here have roundworms? And 85 percent have hookworms too! I should know — I'm the one who tested their stool samples (one boy brought his to me in the empty half of an egg shell). One old-school microscope, jar of salt water solution, and pair of latex gloves later, I had sevo'i myself ... much to my neighbors' delight. Apparently I'm a "real Paraguaya" now. Don't get me started on the lack of dentists and vaccines ...

Continued on page 5

# Peace Corps Letters Home

*Continued from page 4*

## April 1990

Dear Grama,

Thanks for your card. I loved it! Yes, the food here probably *is* like yours as a girl. No fast food and very basic (fresh cow's milk, ground corn and peanuts, rice, soup). Healthy, but too much starch (yucca is the staple) and too few vegetables. Also, there are lots of goiters here from not enough salt in land-locked Paraguay's soil. I heard that a foreign aid agency once donated a salt iodizing machine to Paraguay, but then it broke and no one knew how to fix it. "*Pues, asi es la vida.*" I don't know if it's true, but I'm going to buy some Brazilian salt.

## August 1990

Mom and Dad,

The rainy season is over! I spent today cleaning up; burned my garbage in the ground outside, sprinkled my dirt floors with water and swept, washed my four dishes in water heated on my two-burner, and scrubbed out my bed pot (yuck). Later I washed my clothes and bathed in the creek with the Godoy girls. They were horrified at my tan lines and said I'm too skinny so I must be sick or depressed. I told them people back home *try* to get skinny and tanned, but they didn't believe me. And *I'm* supposed to be the health expert!

## June 1991

Dear Grama,

I'm coming home soon! I'll be going back to school to study public health, though if I learn as much about health in grad school as my neighbors here have taught me, I'll be a lucky gal. Can't wait to see you soon ...



**\*Look for another installment of Jena Adams's professional development series in the October issue of *Generating Momentum*. In her next article, she'll describe the evolution of her thinking about health and wellness then/there (1988-91/Paraguay) and here/now. This will be a cross-cultural look at how individuals view health and wellness through their own lens of culture and experience.**



# Short Bouts of Physical Activity During the Workday

By Robin Taft Klar, D.N.Sc., RN  
Graduate School of Nursing

Technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has allowed businesses to be more effective, efficient, and present 24/7. Such technology, including computers, email communication, the internet, and desktop printers, have all contributed to minimizing the time previously needed to visit another cubicle, walk down the corridor, or take the stairs to another floor in order to get our work done. While this contributes greatly to productivity, the outcome is not without backlash. This backlash contributes to the public health crisis of obesity and stress.

Many workers know that **a lack of physical activity can lead to obesity, which can then lead to the development or exacerbation of diseases that affect the cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and respiratory systems**. Many of these same workers have developed personal programs of physical activity to promote or maintain a healthy weight. This dedication and persistence is to be commended. Physical activity programs are often implemented before, during, or after work and consist of a minimum of 30 minutes of focused activity. But, notwithstanding these specific programs of activity, the workday remains one of a very sedentary nature.

Health care providers, business leaders, and individual workers are also experiencing an increase in the stresses symptomatic of our fast-paced, knowledge-based economy. Many of these additional stressors can lead to obesity and other health issues. While work breaks have been allowed by employers to address such issues as lack of physical activity and neck, shoulder, and back tension, it is how workers use the break time that matters to their health. A growing body of research (Barr-Anderson, AuYoung, Whitt-Glover, Glenn, & Yancey, 2011) supports the integration of frequent but short bouts of physical activity into the workday. Positive outcomes at the organizational level highlight overall increased physical activity and social support, while at the individual level short bouts of physical activity significantly decreased blood pressure and waist circumference. Studies also showed that, in many cases, worker productivity improved, to the benefit of the employer. (Barr-Anderson et al, 2011; Pronk & Kottke, 2009).

The 'how' of incorporating short periods of physical activity into the workday can be as creative and innovative as the imagination allows. Some documented strategies include:

- Taking the stairs instead of the elevator
- Getting up and talking with the person instead of emailing them with a question
- Drinking water throughout the day necessitating more frequent trips to the rest room
- Taking two or three 10-minute short walks on a route on your campus — see <http://www.umassmed.edu/Content.aspx?id=87560&linkidentifier=id&itemid=87560> for possibilities on our campuses
- Using your email as a reminder tool to take physical activity breaks (<http://exercisereminders.com/>)
- Develop a physical activity plan that you can complete at your desk (<http://exercisereminders.com/>)

As with most health promotion recommendations, you should go slowly — but go all the way to incorporate these small bouts of physical activity into your workday. You may be pleased with the improved sense of vigor and vitality you experience, both at work and at home.

## References

Barr-Anderson, D. J., AuYoung, M., Whitt-Glover, M.C., Glenn, B. A., & Yancey, A. K. (2011). Integration of short bouts of physical activity into organizational routine: A systematic review of the literature. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 40(1), 76-93.

Pronk, N. P. & Kottke, T. E. (2009). Physical activity promotion as a strategic corporate priority to improve worker health and business performance. *Preventive Medicine*, 49, 316-321.



# UMatter

## Professional Women Can Be Successful at Healthy Eating Too!

By Jessica Carpenter, M.S., RD, LDN  
Community Case Management

What helps you get through your long work days or those stressful meetings? Perhaps it's a jolt of caffeine or a trip to the vending machine for a chocolate bar? Or maybe you are one of many professionals who skip eating during the day altogether.

**But did you know that you are most productive when you are well nourished?** For busy professionals, packing a lunch and snacks for the day is an economical and healthy way to keep you going ... but it is often overlooked as we juggle work and home, children (and spouses!) and their endless extra-curricular activities. Fortunately, packing food for the day takes less time than you think, and you may actually save time (and catch up on the 50 emails that you received in the last hour) because you won't be waiting in long lines to buy your lunch every day.

### The Basics

In order to keep lunches and snacks well-balanced, healthy, and quick to eat, let's review the food pyramid groups (think back to your grade school health education class):

- **Grains:** Whole and refined grains, such as bread, rice, oats, pasta, and tortillas, as well as some lesser known grains like quinoa, barley, and wheat berries.
- **Fruits:** Fresh, canned, and dried fruits, as well as 100 percent fruit juice. Look for canned fruits packed in their own juice, rather than those in syrup.
- **Vegetables:** Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried/dehydrated vegetables, as well as 100 percent vegetable juice. Be mindful of the sodium content in canned vegetables.
- **Proteins:** Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, dried beans or peas, nuts, and seeds.
- **Dairy:** Milk, cheese, yogurt, and soy milk.

### Be Creative

Making your lunch and preparing snacks at home need not result in boring sandwiches and pre-packaged granola bars. Choosing a variety of foods throughout the week will make your diet healthier and more appealing.

- Try a sandwich of grilled chicken breast with roasted red peppers, black beans, and salsa, wrapped in a low-fat flour tortilla. Serve it with a seasonal fresh fruit salad, with low-fat yogurt, and you've got a meal that will keep you going for hours.
- Do you have any leftover pasta from dinner? Why not transform it into a delicious lunch by tossing cold whole grain pasta with grilled vegetables, feta cheese, pine nuts, and low-fat vinaigrette dressing.
- Take a trip to the French Riviera from your office (but save the red wine for the evening at home). Prepare a Salad Nicoise with mixed greens, canned tuna in water, garbanzo beans, olives, fresh tomatoes, green beans, onions, and a hardboiled egg. Toss with lemon juice and olive oil, and add your favorite spices and herbs (salt, pepper, basil, oregano). Bon Appétit!
- Play with color (think fruits and vegetables!) and protein to keep your snacks balanced and keep you full until your next meal. Try hummus and baby carrots, apple slices with peanut butter, grapes and cheddar cheese, or roasted almonds and dried cranberries. The combinations are endless. Tailor them to your taste or even to your schedule for the week, as some snacks travel better than others!

### Plan Ahead

You may have the best of intentions, but if your kitchen isn't stocked with the foods you need to prepare your lunch, you will certainly be setting yourself up for failure. An efficient method of stocking your kitchen is to plan a week's worth of menus and shop accordingly or utilize internet-based grocery stores in which you can create an online list and have your groceries delivered to your home for a small fee (now there's an efficient task!).

With these tips, eating healthy doesn't have to be difficult or a task too hard to overcome. Stop neglecting yourself and support your most important employee, at home and in the office: you!

# Caregiving Is My Second Job. Or Is It My First?

By Debra DeAngelo, LICSW  
Intensive Residential Treatment Program



For many of us, the workday does not begin at 9 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. In increasing numbers, women are serving as the primary caregivers to aging parents. In a national study conducted by the Family and Work Institute in 2008, 42 percent of employed persons provided elder care during the previous five years. The study found that both men and women provide care. However, women are more likely to provide direct care on a daily basis. If you are a caregiver, you are familiar with the responsibilities and demands that are involved.

I have been providing care for my elderly mother, who moved into my home a few years ago. For those of us who have parents still living in their own homes, attending to their needs and providing support is no less of a commitment in terms of time and energy. I am fortunate to have support from family and have been able to arrange for in-home support a few days a week. I must admit that there are times, after long days at work, when I would like to go home and relax a bit but cannot, since the responsibility of being a primary caregiver brings another set of demands.

**Balancing work and the demands of caring for an elderly parent is an ongoing challenge.** It takes skill, organization, and flexibility to meet the expectations of both roles. Finding help is an important first step. This includes identifying friends, family, and neighbors who can lend a hand. Even something as small as having a friend or family member stop by to provide a brief period of respite is invaluable. Exploring services offered by local elder care agencies — such as in-home support, meals on wheels, and friendly visiting — can bring much needed help and support. Respite services, available through a number of eldercare programs, can provide “time off” for caregivers for both vacations and special occasions. An increasing number of companies and organizations are offering flextime opportunities and time off for elder care, which can be a valuable benefit in times of illness and crisis. Another important resource is the UMass Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides support, information, and referral services for employees caring for elderly parents, whether in their own homes or not, and provides assistance in finding support services.

**Self-care is essential to maintaining our own health and well-being.** Support groups can be a great resource. Often there are informal supports in the workplace with co-workers who may also be balancing the demands of work and caregiving. I have two co-workers who share these experiences, and we offer words of encouragement and validation to each other — leaving us feeling less alone.

Here are what I call ‘Strategies to Live’ by for those going through similar experiences:

- **Organize and prioritize your time** at home and at work. Keeping a calendar of activities helps to identify priorities. You can’t do it all.
- **Learn to delegate.** Share your responsibilities with others. Do not be afraid to ask for help. It is not a sign of weakness.
- **Keep communication channels open** with your supervisor or your Human Resources department.
- **Utilize your company’s available resources.** Meet with an EAP counselor for support and to identify community resources.
- **Use your vacation** time and make sure the time is spent nurturing you.
- **Make time for you.** Do what works for you. Spend time with friends and family members, or participate in a group. Spend time alone. Plant a garden, go for long walks, read, take a hot aroma therapy bath. Do whatever it takes to nurture yourself. Always include doing things that are important to you.

**Resources for Caregivers**  
[www.seniorconnection.org/caregiverssupport.htm](http://www.seniorconnection.org/caregiverssupport.htm)  
[www.familiesandwork.org](http://www.familiesandwork.org)  
[www.eswa.org](http://www.eswa.org) (Elder Services of Worcester Area)

# The Gathering Place

## Walking a Great Form of Exercise

[“Walking: a safe and easy exercise, but don't take your safety for granted”](#) is an interesting article to read before taking your first step.

**Take a stroll through UMMS during your lunch break.**

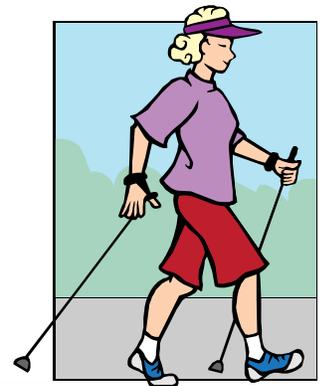
Use the link below to select either an indoor or outdoor path:

<http://www.umassmed.edu/Content.aspx?id=87560&linkidentifier=id&itemid=87560>

Here are some resources for finding New England walking trails:

- [9 New England Walking Trails to Exercise the Heart and Soul](#)
- [Massachusetts Trail Resources](#)
- [Best Trails of New Hampshire](#)

*Compiled by Mary Ingamells*



### PWC Bookshelf

The Professional Women's Committee has purchased a number of books available for borrowing from the Lamar Soutter Library. For a complete list of publications, visit [Professional Women's Committee website](#) or contact one of the Editors.

**Suggestions? Comments? Email us!**

[PWCNewsletter@umassmed.edu](mailto:PWCNewsletter@umassmed.edu)

**Generating Momentum** is published in February, June, and October. Your ideas, opinions, and concerns are always welcome, so let us hear from you. To view copies of previous newsletters, please visit the [Professional Women's Committee website](#) or contact one of the Editors.

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