



# Generating Momentum

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

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## A Note from the Editors

We suppose it would be disingenuous if we told you that this issue of **Generating Momentum** took us by surprise. While we did experience production and fact-finding setbacks, the real surprise was of our own making! We were lulled by a summer season that turned into fall so lethargically that we didn't realize that our October publication deadline had come and gone.

Despite our slow start, we think this issue is truly inspiring. Both Sabrina McCallum, one of our most talented and prodigious writers, and Eloise Porterfield, profiled in our "Ask a Busy Woman" column, describe how a meaningful career depends on staying focused on organizational and personal goals. Their advice is applicable to those just starting out or attempting to jump-start a stalled career.

This month's articles about meeting our personal needs are equally timely and point to the advantages of physical (yoga) and mental health (decision-making) interventions. At the same time, don't miss the list of upcoming Professional Development workshops being sponsored by the Professional Women's Committee partially in response to your readership survey feedback of last spring. Last but not least, walk down memory lane with some of us as we recall poignant holiday occasions. We hope that our recollections will trigger your own happy memories and possibly provide some moments of stress-free levity with family and friends.

Finally, consider yourselves warned! We want you to be on the lookout for "the travel bug" in our Spring issue when we'll be highlighting women and science.

Mary H., Mary I., Sue

# Promoting Progress

By Sabrina McCallum, Benefits Coordinator

Enhanced Coordination of Benefits, Center for Health Care Finance

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

“If you do what you’ve always done, you’ll get what you’ve always gotten.” You may recognize this renowned and familiar quote by [Anthony Robbins](#). The concept that change begets change is not new, yet it provides insightful perspective when applied to individual and organizational development. Outcome is predictable when action is monotonous. Recall “Perception Is Reality” and “Measure of Experience”; we must reflect and change our behavior when we want or need a different outcome.

Leaders responsible for organizational development and strategic planning encourage and guide the infrastructure modifications necessary for successful accomplishment of institutional goals and objectives. It is the employees, however, who will inevitably cause the attainment of those goals and objectives. We are each individually responsible for promoting progress; and that is precisely why individual development and organizational development go hand-in-hand.

Managers have the unique role of intermediary between institutional leadership and personnel; they are responsible for producing improvements by both motivating and doing. They must recognize efforts, acknowledge successes, and continue to encourage innovation, all while simultaneously improving work products. Staff members are responsible for producing quality work relating to their primary responsibilities but should also contribute to organizational development by generating business initiatives to improve their individual work-product. The concept of promoting progress relies heavily on descending administration of institutional goals and objectives.

Consider this: If we are only ever allowed to do that which we have already done, when would we progress? Just as my previous article, “Measure of Experience,” challenged the notion of quantity of years over quality of performance, the concept of promoting progress confronts the standard that if something has never been done before, it cannot be done. We need to challenge ourselves and allow for the opportunity to exceed the typical boundaries of what has already been done. It is important to support each other and acknowledge when improvements have been made. Without our collective approach to improve, progress, and evolve, it would be difficult, and nearly impossible, to achieve institutional goals and objectives.

Familiarize yourself with the organization’s mission\* and be cognizant of how your job furthers the achievement of that mission. Be innovative and think of ways that you can enhance your productivity, and make it happen. Encourage and support the efforts of others, because their success will lead to your own. When you witness progress, promote it; make it known; and acknowledge it.

**\*UMass Medical School’s mission:** *To advance the health and well-being of the people of the commonwealth and the world through pioneering advances in education, research and health care delivery.*



# Ask a Busy Woman

## *Introducing Eloise Porterfield*

*By Mary Handley*

I am happy to report that meeting Eloise Porterfield, Director of Utilization Management and Contracts for Commonwealth Medicine's Office of Clinical Affairs (OCA), more than offset the sheer terror I experienced driving from the Mass Pike onto the Southeast Expressway to get to her office at 100 Hancock Street in Quincy!

Just minutes into our conversation, I knew that I was in the presence of a true professional and life-long learner. As we talked, I became increasingly impressed by the breadth of Eloise's education and experience. Her many accomplishments, which she shared only after persistent prodding from me, are quite remarkable.

Eloise's professional career began at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York. After graduating from Niagara University, Eloise worked as a registered nurse in progressively challenging areas. Like many young graduates, she began working on a medical/surgical floor but then quickly moved on to a neurosurgery unit and finally to a cardiovascular-thoracic surgery floor. Always challenging herself to learn more and do more are recurring themes in Eloise's personal and professional development.

While working as a nurse, Eloise earned a master's degree in education from the University of Rochester. Shortly thereafter, she joined the military and spent four years on active duty with the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. Eloise later served 16 years as a Judge Advocate in the Army Reserves, having earned a law degree from William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul, Minnesota, after her discharge from active duty. She is justifiably proud of the fact that some of the friendships she made during this period of her life continue to this day.

Eventually Eloise and her family moved to Massachusetts. In March 2002, Eloise was hired by Dr. Annette Hanson, then OCA Medical Director, to be the Director of Prior Authorization. This position called for attributes that almost perfectly matched Eloise's clinical experience and legal training.

In the last nine and a half years, Eloise has taken on many responsibilities at OCA including, most recently, contracts management. For a time, she was the Director of both Prior Authorization (PA) and Utilization Management (UM). Her early years at OCA were quite challenging for Eloise who was not only new to her job but also new to the State. She credits three very talented, dedicated managers – Tania Gray, formerly in PA, and Tina McCormack and Lorraine Helms in UM – for generously sharing their knowledge and helping her understand the OCA/MassHealth intersection. Eloise said that, in retrospect, the experiences of these early OCA years taught her that success comes from facing challenges directly, searching for answers even when you don't fully understand the question, and simply "putting in the time and doing the work."

During our conversation, Eloise cited the increased level of interaction between employees at all levels of the OCA organization as one of the advantages of being co-located with her departmental colleagues in Quincy. This benefit is grounded in Eloise's obvious respect for each person as an individual regardless of his or her job title, duties, and/or reporting relationships. She seeks and values good ideas and recommendations from anyone who is willing to provide input. She noted that a work team is only as strong as the individuals who actively participate on it. In addition to strengthening collegial relationships, Eloise loves working in Quincy because her office is only a 15-minute drive from home. The parking is easy, and there's a cafeteria and exercise room in her building.

Eloise told me that her faith and her family – especially her son and daughter who are both "amazing in their own ways" – are what sustain her. She said that art in any form has always been one of her primary passions outside of work. In fact, a stunning replica of a small, marble sculpture of the "Veiled Lady" by Raffaello Monti was one of the first things I noticed when entering Eloise's well appointed office. (The original is in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and can be viewed in greater detail on the museum's website at: [www.artsmia.org](http://www.artsmia.org).)

In closing, Eloise said that it's important for employees to periodically take stock of their hopes and expectations and to be willing to move out of their comfort zone. This is something that Eloise has done and continues to do. Her success in creating a challenging, satisfying career should be a model for each of us as we, like Eloise, examine what else we can do, what more we can contribute, or what might be of further benefit to the patients/clients we serve.

# UMatter

## Yoga for Professional Women



By Valerie Wedge and Lucy Cimini  
with Mary Ingamells

As women we tend to prioritize taking care of others, and, if there is time left over, we might think about taking care of ourselves. The daily grind, routines, commitments, and stress can leave us feeling exhausted, impatient, and unbalanced. If we're not careful, we could end up with physical and/or emotional consequences.

How do we take care of ourselves in this busy world? With intention, discipline, and understanding that we, as women, are worth the effort it takes to care for ourselves. Women all over the country are turning to the evidenced-based practice of yoga. It can take three minutes or three hours. Yoga is accessible wherever you are because all you need is you. Doing yoga regularly creates a calmer, energized, balanced, and happier woman and the people around you will benefit, too.

How does one achieve this state of calmness? The root word "yoga" in Sanskrit means to yoke together, to unite. Yoga is an ancient Indian practice dating back to 400 B.C. It is a philosophy with an aim to create union between mind, body, and spirit. Practicing yoga you learn to focus on your breath while performing physical postures, concentrating, and freeing your mind of its daily chatter. In yoga, you are taught to breathe better and to be aware of your breath. Having your lungs working at full capacity helps relieve stress and increases your energy level. Downward-facing dog, cat pose, and child pose are some of the interesting names given to yoga postures. These postures consist of stretches, bends, lunges, and twists with the intent of improving your balance and flexibility as well as relieving muscle tension. Learning yoga, you can apply these mind/body techniques to stressful situations at work or home. In a stressful meeting, use yoga breathing to help you concentrate while relieving the tension in your body and thereby reducing your stress. Performing yoga stretches can help relieve muscle tension after a long day sitting at the computer.

You see, yoga is for everyone. It is based on universal morality, personal observation, postures, breathing, meditation, kindness, and compassion toward self and others. Ongoing yoga research shows the positive effects of the mind/body connection including releasing toxins from our hips, joints, shoulders, neck, and abdomen, which then creates space for fresh vital energy to flow throughout the body. Yoga has been positively associated with improving blood pressure, sleep, PMS, menopause, depression, memory, concentration, and self-confidence.

Lucy Cimini, R.Y.T. 500 hours, has conducted yoga classes at UMMS. She founded Central Mass Yoga and Wellness, Inc. Visit her website to find out more about her yoga studio at: [www.centralmassyoga.com](http://www.centralmassyoga.com). Valerie Wedge, R.Y.T. 200 hours, is a yoga instructor at Central Mass Yoga and Senior Consultant at UMMS EAP.



## Decision-Making Even When You're Ill

By Elana Rosenbaum, M.S., LICSW, with Mary Ingamells

*Elana Rosenbaum is a cancer survivor who integrates her many years of experience as a psychotherapist with her practice of insight meditation. She shares her wisdom in making conscious decisions whether related to health, work, family, or daily life.*

### Decisions

"Sir, what is the secret of your success?" a reporter asked a bank president. "Two words."

"And, sir, what are they?" "Good decisions."

"And how do you make good decisions?" "One word."

"And sir, what is that?" "Experience."

"And how do you get experience?" "Two words."

"And, sir, what are they?" "Bad decisions."

- Anonymous

During every moment of our lives, whether we realize it or not, where we place our attention makes a difference. We are always making choices; some are conscious, while others seem to happen by circumstance or neglect and catch us by surprise. A series of decisions led to this moment. Practicing mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), which I have taught at the Medical School since the early 1980's, helps us connect to our heart, our head, and our body moment by moment. Being aware of the workings of our heart/mind as they unfold empowers us to make wise decisions. We get to notice our patterns of thought and the effect they have on our well being. By observing with acceptance we learn what contributes to our health and what compromises it.

As a mindfulness teacher and a psychotherapist, I receive requests from many people who come to me for assistance in decision-making or to reconcile themselves with decisions that have resulted in negative consequences. I also see people who want to cope better with a serious illness, which also requires decision-making. It's hard to predict the consequences of such decisions in advance. I find regret, self-blame, and recriminations need to be dropped to clearly assess priorities and evaluate how we want to act now. This requires an intention and a willingness to face the truth of the moment. The more at rest our mind is the greater our ability to sift through information and know what to do.

I live with cancer and see many people with serious medical conditions. When one is ill there are many decisions. The first is deciding to take control of what is possible, which is our attitude. In MBSR we believe that no matter how sick we are there is more right with us than wrong. Of course, discovering this requires the intention to let go of how we think our life should be and be open to it as it is. We must be willing to pay attention to our bodies and our minds with acceptance.

It is not always easy to confront what is true, but fear can be more harmful than what we fear. There is a cornucopia of symptoms people worry about, some may be normal, others need attention. It takes discernment to know the difference and maintain perspective. I usually recommend checking it out. After doing so and especially when learning all is fine, let the worry go without judging oneself for a "false alarm." We may need to do this many times before we can truly be reassured that we are well.

Anxiety can be a signal that something is wrong, but if it is overwhelming, it will cloud judgment and create suffering. As soon as you notice yourself getting upset, it is helpful to S.T.O.P. This is an acronym to:

**Stop**

**Take a breath, tune in**

**Open and observe this moment and then**

**Proceed**

When you do this with compassion rather than critical judgment, you are giving yourself space and time to become calm and gain a new perspective. Then your decisions can be made with wisdom and without regret.

Elana Rosenbaum, MS, LICSW is Senior Teacher at UMMS Center for Mindfulness

(<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/home/index.aspx>), founder of *Mindfuliving* and author of *Here for Now: Living Well with Cancer through Mindfulness* and the forthcoming book *Being Well (Even When You're Really Sick)* available at her website (<http://www.mindfuliving.com/index.html>).

# Memory Lane

## The Fall Holidays Recalled



**Jean Foran, Administrative Coordinator, Center for Health Policy and Research, remembers a special Christmas gift from her sons....**

Every Christmas, for years, I had my boys' picture taken with Santa. I always cherished looking back through the pictures to see how much the boys had grown from year to year. When they were in college, they got together and had their picture taken on Santa's lap. (Santa didn't really let them sit on his lap but allowed them to sit on the arm rests of his big chair.) They framed the picture and gave it to me for Christmas. As college students, it was an economical way for them to give me a Christmas present, but to me it was a priceless gift that I will always have and cherish!

**And Jean's story gets even better....**

I still get tears in my eyes when I tell the rest of the story! Some women in Santa's line asked the boys what they were doing. When the women heard, one mother was so impressed that she said to her little kid, "I hope you do that for me someday."

**Sabrina McCallum, Benefits Coordinator, Enhanced Coordination of Benefits, Center for Health Care Finance, told us about the best Christmas gift she ever gave to her parents....**

I was in college with limited financial means and decided to use my creativity for a gift. I listed out, in paragraph form, an entire page of memories. I titled the piece "Precious Moments" and concluded it with "It's a Wonderful Life," a reference to my favorite movie. I put it in a matted frame and watched in anticipation as my parents opened their gift Christmas morning. "Precious Moments" has hung in the hallway of their home for years, and visitors always remarked about how special it was. It's still displayed to this day, and I'm proud that it holds as much meaning to them as the memories themselves have held for me.

**Sabrina also recalls one "precious moment" with a Halloween connection....**

One of the memories that comes to mind is the time my parents took my sister and me to a pumpkin patch that offered "all you can carry" for a flat price. I don't remember the cost, but I do remember my Dad struggling to carry five pumpkins (or was it six?) just to please us. We weren't quick with picking out our pumpkins either, and we of course were picking out the largest ones we could find. I remember Dad struggling to walk through the field to the check-out. In reflecting on that memory now, I realize that it is just one example of my Dad's devotion to our happiness; he would do everything he could to make me and my sister happy, from the smallest thing, to the stuff that really matters.

**Continued on page 7...**

# Memory Lane

*Continued from page 6*

**Mary Handley, Director of CWM Contracts, Credentialing, and Support Services, remembers a special stocking stuffer that she tracked down for her brother....**

For years, after Thanksgiving dinner, the adults in my family drew names – not to buy gifts but to fill Christmas stockings. The competition was fierce. Who would find the best stocking stuffer? I remember the year I won. When my brother Brian was growing up, Don Buddin, a shortstop for the Red Sox, was his hero. In his imagination, Brian would go on road trips with Don, he and Don would play catch at Fenway when the team was at home, he would sit beside Don in the dugout, etc. I decided that Brian's stocking stuffer had to have a Don Buddin connection. In the early '90s, I simply called the Red Sox front office, and in record time found myself in possession of Don Buddin's home address in South Carolina. I sent Don a note about Brian – who by then was a newspaper sports editor – enclosed a blank Christmas card for him to sign along with a return envelope addressed to me. Within days, I had a Christmas card addressed to Brian with a personal note from Don Buddin! With no sense of propriety or shame, I'm proud to say that was the "best" stocking stuffer ever.

**Mary Ingamells, Human Resources Consultant, has some thoughtful recommendations for transitioning during the fall holidays....**

**Thanksgiving re-imagined....**

In the past it was "mission impossible" to connect with my college friends during the holiday season – until two years ago, when we enjoyed an early Thanksgiving Dinner together. It happened by accident when we decided to reconnect with Allie's parents, who live in Connecticut. It was early November, so we decided on a Thanksgiving Dinner theme with all of us preparing our favorite dishes for the festivities. It was wonderful to reconnect, laugh about our days at Babson, but most importantly be thankful for our friendship and extended family. This year the chain of emails began in September as we picked the date and selected the menu for our third annual Thanksgiving Dinner together!

**A Christmas tradition created....**

The holidays were an emotional challenge the year my Mom died. My good friends provided me with excellent advice to "start a new tradition" with your Dad, which we did. Now every December 24<sup>th</sup> my Dad and I attend the Boston Pops Holiday concert in beautifully decorated Symphony Hall. Our leisurely drive home includes enjoying the festive lights of the city adding to the magic. It is now a holiday tradition, which my Dad looks forward to inquiring "Have you bought our tickets yet?" when the Pops flyer arrives in August!

**Sue Young, Academic Administrator, Graduate School of Nursing, began a family tradition with Breakfast Pizza when her children were young....**

Christmas is a magical time of year, especially when there are small children in the family. My children never wanted to leave the festivities of Christmas morning to have breakfast. Knowing that our holiday dinner would be much later in the day, I set out to find something that would appeal to the kids. What else but pizza? I found a recipe for Breakfast Pizza made of eggs, cheese, and veggies that could be made ahead and frozen. On Christmas morning I brought my Breakfast Pizza into the living room, and it was eaten in record time. From that year forward, we have had Breakfast Pizza each year as part of our holiday festivities. Now that my children are grown and have children of their own, they too are making Breakfast Pizza on the years they are not celebrating with us.



# The Gathering Place

## Professional Development Seminar Series

This series of programs has been put together in collaboration with the PWC and in response to feedback from previous readership surveys. If you're interested in attending any or all of the following sessions, please email [Nellie Toney](mailto:Nellie.Toney).

### Graceful Self-Promotion

Luanne Thorndyke, MD, FACP, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs  
February 1, 8:30 – 10 a.m., Greece Room, South Street Campus

### Communicating Up

Deborah L. Plummer, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Diversity, and Inclusion  
March 13, 9 – 10:30 a.m., Goff S1-607, Lazare Auditorium, University Campus  
April 24, noon – 1:30 p.m., Greece Room, South Street Campus

### Resume Building, Social Media

Cynthia Ring, MBA, Executive Director, Commonwealth Medicine Human Resources  
May 10, noon – 1:30 p.m., Amphitheater, South Street Campus  
June 6, 8:30 – 10 a.m., Goff S1-607, Lazare Auditorium, University Campus

### 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](http://ProfessionalWomen'sCommittee.com) or contact one of the Editors.

**Suggestions? Comments? Email us!**

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

*Generating Momentum* is published in the Winter, Spring, and Fall. 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](http://ProfessionalWomen'sCommittee.com) or contact one of the Editors.

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