

Summer 2022 | Connecting
the OHI Community

“The OHI program is designed to help women get in touch with their bodies while learning how to keep them healthier.”

Bob Nees Jr., p1.

In Celebration and Support of Women



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Celebrating, Appreciating, and Supporting Women



**Bob Nees, Jr., Senior Pastor
& Chairman**

Greetings to our OHI community; I wish you a bright and joyful summer as we fully embrace all the wonderful outdoor activities of the warmer days ahead. As we proceed on this journey out of the quagmire caused by Covid-19 this is a great time to renew our spirit and zest for life.

You may recall from our Spring newsletter, I wrote that Spring cleaning can also be a time to cleanse our minds of negative thoughts about ourselves and other people. I also wrote about and shared techniques for developing mental toughness and mental resilience. In this issue, I want to step out of my comfort zone and do something different.

She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.
Proverbs 31: 17-18

These verses (and those following) are from the beautiful prose poem from Proverbs entitled, *The Wife of Noble Character*. I love these verses because they celebrate the breadth and depth of all women. In the Jewish tradition, this is a song of praise from both men and women to all the women in their lives: wives, daughters, sisters, mothers, and friends. It celebrates women, who are

their own person, with their own unique talents and abilities.

Over the years I have had the opportunity to conduct pastoral care and counseling with many women, and I want to disclose some of virtues I have learned from them. In brief, I would like to celebrate, support, acknowledge and appreciate the amazing qualities of women.

And while my intention is to recognize and rejoice the accomplishments and unique characteristics of women, it is also to speak to the men in this audience - to share with them the beautiful differences between the sexes to cultivate and encourage better communication and understanding. Relationship researcher and therapist, John Gottman, Ph.D. stated it best, "How a man understands and responds to a woman will determine his eventual wealth, his social status, his energy and motivation for life, his resilience, his mental and physical health, how well his immune system works, how well he copes with stress, his happiness at home and at work, his self-confidence, his friendships, his connection to his children, how his children turn out, and actually how long he will live."

Men Who Understand Women Will Support Them Better

Let's start by looking at our fundamental human survival instincts. These are: perpetuate the species, preserve it, and provide for it. All people have these same instincts, but they operate differently in men and women, and they are so deeply ingrained in our core that it is useless to fight these differences. It is better to become aware of them, understand them, and to work with them.

Men have long been extolled as being the bigger, stronger, and faster gender, and yet, women are more amazing. Compared to men, they have better memory, sense

of smell, stamina, and pain tolerance. Overall, women are more robust than men.

"Women are like teabags. We don't know our true strength until we are in hot water." Eleanor Roosevelt

From Birth Onward Women Are Designed to Thrive

What makes women more robust remains a mystery to science, but I believe it has to do with the survivability of the human species. Despite these physical advantages, women still face occasional health opportunities. That's why our program here at OHI is designed to help women get in touch with their bodies while learning how to keep them healthier.

She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.
Proverbs 31: 25-26

There are many fundamental differences between men and women, but until we learn to understand those differences and celebrate each one, there is likely to be conflict between us. For example, men don't understand why women enjoy shopping as much as they do. But, like so many of the differences between men and women, it dates to our hunter-gatherer, cave dwelling days.

While the men were off quietly hunting, the women, with babies strapped to their backs, were foraging together in social groups: talking, laughing, and teaching. And, it was much more than picking nuts and berries; women collected firewood, edible and medicinal roots and leaves (while insuring with their powerful memory - the poisonous ones to avoid), items to adorn their bodies, their men's and children's bodies, and to decorate their living abodes to make all more comfortable, attractive and homelike.

The Biggest Thing Men Need to Know About Women

Author and educator, Alison Armstrong makes this observation of how men's minds function, "One of the biggest things that men don't know about women is the occurrence of being safe or unsafe for women." Men take their physical strength for granted; while women are less likely to do so. A woman's perception of a physical threat to her safety is significantly more sensitive than a man's. That awareness is something a woman cannot avoid, it's a primal instinctual fear, and they are constantly monitoring their environment to determine whether it is safe. Armstrong adds, "Women always ask two questions: 'Am I safe?' and 'Am I loved?' and we [women] can't hear the answer to the second question until the answer to the first question is, 'yes.'" In other words, a woman cannot experience love until they experience being safe.

I can't express how important it is for men to understand this one point. John Gottman reinforces this by observing that the one trait all women look for in a man is trustworthiness. That is, you are who you say you are, and you do what you say you are going to do. It's all about reliability, accountability, and showing up. Throughout history a woman's safety has depended on her partner's trustworthiness.

Gottman says the key to effectively communicating with a woman is through understanding, empathy, and acceptance. When a woman wants to share her feelings, men need to resist their instinct to fix things, and simply listen. Ask her what she is feeling, and what it means to her. Don't interrupt; try to feel what she is feeling, and show her that you understand and value how she feels. This doesn't mean you agree with her, it means you accept how she feels. When you do this she will feel safe and more willing to solve the problem between you.

I would like to encourage men and women to use their power and leverage at work to help accelerate a woman's professional growth by creating or supporting learning and development programs for women. As a leader you can also be a powerful influence by mentoring female co-workers, offering advice, and enabling them to

achieve their own leadership roles. When women on your team excel publicly acknowledge them, recognize and celebrate their accomplishments and success so that they are not overlooked. And when you witness discrimination, bias, or sexism use your power to intervene, call attention to it, educate, and recruit allies to help prevent future occurrences.

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women."
Maya Angelou

Women today, don't have the support of a tribe like our ancestors did, but they can help themselves by networking with other women and developing their own social and support groups. OHI is a great place to start your own tribe. Spending a week or more at one of our campuses will provide you with a cohort of fellow travelers. Most of our guests are women, and they are all very similar to you, seeking to cleanse the body, quiet the mind, and renew the spirit with our time-tested holistic program.

Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. Proverbs 31:31

Female Spiritual Leaders Influence All People

Women today are important as spiritual leaders. They have an opportunity to serve as role models and guide women (and men) to God, and help them lead more spiritual lives. Here at OHI, we welcome all religious traditions and provide a safe and sacred environment for worship, contemplation, and service. At OHI, our female (and male) staff, missionaries, and returning guests serve as shepherds to help our first-time guests navigate our campuses. Women as spiritual leaders demonstrate how people can awaken their spirit and discover what inspires them; how to cope with pain, disappointment, and loss; and nourish their spirit through reflection, prayer, and celebration.

OHI, The Safest Place to be Outside of Your Home!

We continue to make upgrades to both of our facilities. At both locations, our *OHI for Life Wellness Rooms* are outfitted with a Molekule air purifier and 100% organic cotton linens and towels (including fitted sheets). We also brought Covid-19 testing

in-house. At OHI San Diego: every guest room has wood flooring, high-speed internet, black-out shades, our guest room bathrooms have been renovated, and 80% of our food is from local organic farms. At OHI Austin, we added new wood flooring and carpet to our exercise classroom. We hope you come to experience our *OHI for Life Wellness Rooms* – designed with your safety and comfort in mind.

Inside this edition: Read further about how to mindfulness helps to manage stress and the importance of Vitamin D. Get to know our staff member, Bertha Acevedo; Olga Zabora, an OHI San Diego missionary; OHI guest, Liz Reale; and Marcella Rodriguez's story of how the OHI Scholarship helped her. We remain humbled and grateful to all those who contribute and help people like Marcella. Please also consider contributing to the OHI Scholarship Fund which helps OHI community members in need. And finally, be sure to turn to page 10 for details on your Optimum Summer Cleanse.

Here's wishing you health and wellness in this summer season.





Yours in prayer,



Robert P. Nees, Jr.,
Senior Pastor and Chairman
OHI San Diego and OHI Austin

Stay Connected with your OHI cohort, share contact info before you leave:

Join OHI Facebook pages for San Diego and Austin.

-  Start a Facebook Group Page for your cohort.
-  Share food videos.
-  Keep writing "Daily Gratitudes."
-  Pledge to support your "Buddies."

As your transformation grows arrange to return to OHI with your friends from your cohort.

Stress Less with Mindfulness



Learn to Manage Stress using Mindfulness Practice

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, stress is the brain and body's response to change, challenge, or demand. It's the body's natural defense against danger brought on by an event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. When a stressful event occurs, the body is flooded with hormones to avoid or confront danger. This is commonly referred to as the fight-or-flight response. Short-term stress symptoms can include headache, muscle tension, chest pain, fatigue, stomach upset, change in sex drive, insomnia, or decreased productivity. Chronic stress can cause chemical changes in the body that may lead to long-term physical health issues like high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, and diabetes, and to long-term emotional health issues such as depression.

How do you choose to alleviate stress?

Some use exercise or listen to music to decompress. Some use food, alcohol, smoking, or drugs to numb themselves from stress. Many employ inactive ways to manage stress — watching television, surfing the internet, or playing video games. Those options seem relaxing, but they may increase your stress over the long term. What you should be seeking are active ways to manage stress:

Stay Organized. When you balance many roles (boss, co-worker, parent,

volunteer, caregiver, etc.) you frequently lose yourself in the mix. One easy solution — list making. Look at the big picture, and prioritize tasks and roles. When it's all down on paper, you take the pressure off yourself to react in the moment.

Marshal Resources. Don't try to do everything yourself. Ask for help. And understand that sometimes getting most of a task done is just as good as getting all of it done.

Cultivate Supportive and Healthy Social Networks. Weed out toxic friendships. Eliminate social media. Focus on the relationships that bring you joy, bring you support, and bring you clarity in times of stress.

Make Time for Self-Care. You can't take care of others if you neglect yourself. Self-care isn't about "treating" yourself once in a while. It's about regularly nurturing your body, mind, and spirit so that you are in a healthy space to make good decisions when faced with stress. Book yourself a monthly massage. Sign up for the weekly yoga class. Regularly talk with a therapist. Find the self-care practice that resonates with you, and block it out in your calendar. You are worth it!

Practice Mindfulness. Mindfulness is mind-body training that uses different

exercises and techniques to help you to live in the present. Mindfulness practices teach you to manage your feelings and thoughts, enabling intentional actions, willpower, and decisions.

How does mindfulness reduce stress?

- You become more aware of your thoughts, and can step back from them and not take them so literally.
- You don't immediately react to a situation. Instead, you take a moment to pause, and then use your "wise mind" to come up with the best solution.
- Mindfulness switches on your "being" mode of mind, which is associated with relaxation. Your "doing" mode of mind is associated with action and the stress response.
- You are more aware and sensitive to the needs of your body. You may notice pain and can take appropriate action.
- You are more aware of the emotions of others. As your emotional intelligence rises, you are less likely to get into conflict.
- Your level of care and compassion for yourself and others rises. This compassionate mind soothes you and inhibits your stress response.
- Mindfulness reduces activity in the part of your brain called the amygdala. The amygdala is central to switching on your stress response,



7 Simple Steps to Mindfulness:

1. Take a seat. Find a place to sit that feels calm and quiet to you.
2. Set a time limit. Start short, say five or ten minutes.
3. Notice your body. Choose a place where you feel stable, and in a position you can stay in for a while.
4. Feel your breath. Follow the sensation of your breath as it goes in and out.
5. Notice when your mind has wandered. Inevitably, your attention will leave your breath and wander to other places. When you notice, simply return your attention to the breath.
6. Be kind to your wandering mind. Don't judge yourself or obsess over the content of the thoughts. Just come back.
7. Close with kindness. When you're ready, gently lift your gaze (or if your eyes are closed, open them). Take a moment and notice any sounds in the environment. Notice how your body feels right now. Notice your thoughts and emotions.

Overall, managing stress should not be a stressful experience! Take each moment as it comes, and employ the many stress management techniques and mindfulness practices detailed here to manage your reaction to it. Be kind to yourself. You're doing great!

Stress Symptoms: Effects On Your Body And Behavior, Stress Management/Healthy Lifestyle, www.mayoclinic.org

Managing Stress Through Mindfulness: A Resiliency Tool, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJ2qnmoMVdo>

Mindfulness for Stress Reduction, University of Minnesota, www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu

Mindfulness Meditation: A Research-Proven Way to Reduce Stress, American Psychological Association, October 30, 2019, www.apa.org

How to Meditate, Mindful, www.mindful.org

How to Use Mindfulness to Manage Stress, www.skillsyouneed.com

How to Manage Stress With Mindfulness and Meditation, Mindful, www.mindful.org

Nine Ways Mindfulness Reduces Stress, www.mindful.org

so mindfulness mutes that response.

- You are better able to focus. Mindfulness puts you “in the zone” as it is termed in psychology by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. When you complete your work more efficiently you have a greater sense of well-being, and this reduces the stress response.
- With mindfulness, you can switch your attitude to stress. Stress doesn't always have to be negative. Increased pressure can help energize you when viewed positively.

Let's learn more about three effective mindfulness practices — present-moment awareness, breathing exercises, and meditation.

Present-Moment Awareness

Research published in the Journal of Research in Personality shows that present-moment awareness increases stress resilience and effective coping. Present-moment awareness involves monitoring and attending to the current experience rather than predicting future events or dwelling on the past. Overall, staying in the moment improves your mood and sense of well-being. Being present in the moment when stressed is directly linked to greater perceived ability to handle that stress, and more reliance on core values to navigate the situation.

Breathing Exercises

Breathing exercises allow you to activate your parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) — the calming response in your body — reducing your heart rate and blood pressure. One of the most calming breathing exercises you can do is to breathe in (e.g., to a count of four), hold, and then breathe out for up to twice as long (e.g., to a count of six or eight). You can gently constrict your throat, making a sound like the ocean, which is used in deep relaxation breathing. Breathing exercises take the focus off the momentary stress, and forces your body and mind to pause. That pause makes all the difference, and brings you clarity.

Alpha Practice and Meditation

A simple way of to think of meditation is training your attention to achieve a mental state of calm concentration and positive emotions. In mindfulness meditation, you're learning how to pay attention to the breath as it goes in and out, notice when the mind wanders from this task, return to the breath, and anchor yourself in the here and now on purpose and without judgment. The key is to commit to sit every day, even if it's only for five minutes. Meditation teacher Sharon Salzberg says: “The most important moment in your meditation practice is the moment you sit down to do it. Because right then you're saying to yourself that you believe in change, you believe in caring for yourself, and you're making it real.”

Here's the Skinny on vitamin D!

What is Vitamin D?

Here's something you may not know — vitamin D is both a nutrient we eat AND a hormone our bodies make. It is a fat-soluble vitamin that has long been known to help the body absorb and retain calcium and phosphorus — both are critical for building bone.

Benefits of Vitamin D

Getting enough vitamin D is important for typical growth and development of bones and teeth, as well as improved resistance to certain diseases. Studies show vitamin D can reduce cancer cell growth, help control infections, and reduce inflammation. In addition to its primary benefits, research suggests that vitamin D may also play a role in:

Reducing the risk of multiple sclerosis (MS). A 2018 review of population-based studies found that low levels of vitamin D are linked with an increased risk of MS.

Decreasing the chance of heart disease. Low vitamin D levels have been linked to increased risk of heart diseases such as hypertension, heart failure, and stroke.

Reducing the likelihood of severe illness. Although studies are mixed, vitamin D may make severe flu and Covid-19 infections less likely. A recent review found that low vitamin D levels contribute to acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Supporting immune health. People who do not have adequate vitamin D levels might be at increased risk of infections and autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, and inflammatory bowel disease.

Regulating mood and reduce depression. A review of 7,534 people found that those experiencing negative emotions and who received vitamin D supplements noticed an improvement in symptoms. Another study identified low vitamin D levels as a risk factor for more severe fibromyalgia symptoms, anxiety, and depression.



Supporting weight loss. In one study, people taking daily calcium and vitamin D supplements lost more weight than subjects taking a placebo supplement. Current research is still looking at the relationship between vitamin D and weight.

How Do You Get Vitamin D?

Regular sun exposure is the most natural way to get enough vitamin D. Your body produces vitamin D naturally when it is directly exposed to sunlight. It is estimated that we should get more than 90% of our vitamin D through daily sun exposure. According to the National Institutes of Health, 5-30 minutes of midday sun exposure to your unprotected face, arms, legs, or back several times per week is enough for your body to produce all the D3 it needs. Your exposure time should depend on how sensitive your skin is to sunlight.

A secondary way to get vitamin D is from certain foods and supplements. Some foods contain vitamin D naturally, and others are fortified with it. Although there are a variety of food sources for vitamin D, most include dairy, fatty fish, and some nightshades, which are problematic due to their inflammatory properties. For those following a vegan diet, the most viable option is to get vitamin D through fortified organic nut milks.

There are several reasons why you may be less likely to absorb enough vitamin D from the sun. These factors can increase your risk of vitamin D deficiency:

- Live in an area with high pollution
- Use sunscreen
- Spend most of your time indoors
- Live in a big city where buildings block sunlight
- Have darker skin (the higher the levels of melanin, the less vitamin D your skin can absorb)

Diagnosing vitamin D deficiency can be done via a simple blood test. If you have a vitamin D deficiency, you can check the strength of your bones via x-ray. Some people worry that they'll get too much vitamin D. That is unlikely to happen through diet or sun exposure because your body regulates the amount of vitamin D produced through sun exposure.

OHI advocates for getting vitamins in natural ways via food and nature. However, as we age, absorption is more challenging, so we don't want to discount the benefits of high-quality supplements. The recommended dietary allowance for vitamin D is 15mcg (600 IU) for adults 18-70, and 20mcg (800 IU) for adults 70+.

So get out in the sunshine today, and kick start your body to make more vitamin D. Your bones will thank you!

Meet Liz Reale, an OHI guest for almost 35 years!



Liz Reale

While OHI welcomes guests of all ages, we rarely are lucky enough to host teenagers. It takes a great deal of maturity to work through a detox at such a young age, but those that are truly engaged in the process experience a health transformation very few teens ever undergo. Liz Reale was one of those lucky teens.

“I first heard about OHI 33 years ago when a friend from school invited me to go with her for a week to the San Diego campus,” said Liz. “As a teenager, the cleanse I experienced was amazing. I had never felt so good! I always told myself I would go back to OHI as an adult.”

Fast-forward 27 years, native California girl Liz was residing in Orange County, California. A retired hairstylist and now a busy stay-at-home mom, Liz found herself facing a health opportunity from living in a house that had toxic mold. “I had skin issues, joint pain in my back and knees, memory loss, and brain fog,” said Liz. “I also had chronic fatigue. I was at the end of my rope, and knew I needed some serious help. Out of desperation, I booked a 4-week stay at OHI. I walked in not sure what to expect of my body, and over the course of that month, all of my symptoms disappeared. I can’t tell you what a relief it was to feel like myself again. Truthfully, I felt better than my old self. I learned how to eat clean, and why. I learned how to quiet my mind, and just be. The mental stress I had been experiencing from my every day life just melted away.”

Liz continues her healing health journey by visiting OHI twice a year for two weeks each stay. “Whenever I need to get away, I head to OHI. It’s truly a magical place. All of the classes are great, and I hear something different each time I take them. The Emotional Detox classes are my favorite. I always have some emotional burden I’ve been unconsciously carrying around, and as soon as I sit down in the Emotional Detox class I realize how freeing it is to let things go. I also enjoy going to the Conscious Breath class. It serves as a reminder to me how to quiet my mind, whether I’m at OHI or back at home.”

Liz works diligently to continue the OHI program when she’s at home, and makes her spiritual healing a priority. “Meditation has become an important tool for me to connect to God, to heal anything needing to be healed. It helps me stay centered in my daily life. I continue to walk, journal, and meditate daily to nurture my mind and body to be the best they can be, and that enhances my spiritual life. Of course, stress can still impact me. To counter that, I’ve become very aware of my breath when I start to feel stressed at home. I literally stop and ask myself, ‘How am I breathing?’ It forces me to become fully present in the moment. When I stop to clear my mind and alter my breath, I find it helps me take control of the situation, and the stress has less power over me. Overall, when I look at how my life has completely changed since becoming part of the OHI community—a clean diet combined with mental clarity and spiritual growth—I gain excitement for life and a sort of euphoric state that is indescribable. It makes me realize that this is how life is really supposed to be lived.”

Liz makes the most of every visit to OHI by fully embracing the community itself as well as the program. “I go by myself to OHI to get the full experience,” said Liz. “I meet so many amazing people every time I visit, and continue to maintain friendships with them. I can’t describe how much the relationships I forge there mean to me. They are so much deeper and more meaningful than I ever thought possible.”

As Liz reflects back on her 33-year relationship with OHI, her connection to the experience is sincere. “When I look back on my life, I can see it all clearly now,” said Liz. “There was a reason I didn’t feel good. I was completely toxic, and my body was overwhelmed. The OHI diet can jump-start the healing for anyone, no matter what health opportunity you are facing, but I personally needed support from the OHI community to truly heal and get well. I am so grateful to each and every person who has reached out a helping hand to me along the way. I am a happier, healthier, more complete person for all the love I have received. Thank you OHI!”

“Whenever I need to get away, I head to OHI. It’s truly a magical place.”

Get to Know OHI Missionary, Dr. Olga Zabora



Dr. Olga Zabora

Dr. Olga Zabora's life moved toward a vegan lifestyle after she first came to OHI. "My friend spoke so highly of OHI," said Olga, "so I decided to check out their detox program. I had gone through five different detox programs prior to finding OHI — water fasting, keto, herbal, Ayurvedic, and microcellular detox.

The OHI detox program is amazing. I fell in love with the the plant-based lifestyle, and went on to write a book to inspire others to embrace a raw vegan diet. Eating vegan can be tasty, juicy, and full of life. I would never have predicted this journey for myself, and I love it!"

Olga holds a Doctorate Degree in Clinical Psychology, and is a Certified Master NLP Coach and NLP Trainer. "My passion lies in helping women to become aware of their own resources by bringing up the best parts of themselves to guide them gently through their conscious transformation into the best and happiest versions of themselves," said Olga. "It is possible to change with genuine desire, commitment, and courage. I came to OHI, and it changed me for the better!"

When Olga first came to OHI, she had joint pain and inflammation. "After just one week, my joint pain was gone, and I was seven pounds lighter. I realized that I needed to learn how to prepare foods properly to bring the OHI program home with me. I gave my kitchen a makeover, setting up a juicer, blender, dehydrator, etc. I came back to OHI for a week to focus on learning how to sprout and ferment foods. I have so much more energy after eating clean. I never had to turn to coffee, which previously was a MUST for me. I came back to OHI for a third week to expand my experience with the art of dehydrating foods. That's when I decided that I needed to apply to become a missionary. The more time I spent at OHI, the more I learned. Plus, the energy here made me feel safe, supported, and welcomed. This campus is like the hidden gem of San Diego!"

So what made Olga choose to participate in the OHI Missionary Program? "The missionary program gives you the time and space to serve the community as well as yourself," said Olga. "As a missionary you are there to guide other guests, share your wisdom and experience, and help them on their healing

journey. It creates this beautiful interconnected family at OHI. But serving as a missionary also gives you time to really dig into the vegan lifestyle, creating a deeper connection to yourself, your body, and your mind. Living at OHI for three months as a missionary also allows your body to regularly experience healing modalities like energy healing sessions, massage, organic food, and anti-inflammatory food for an extended period of time. I had such a great experience as a missionary, that the next year I applied to come back again. In my opinion, OHI is the best place to de-stress, connect with likeminded individuals, and meet your tribe. It's truly a blessing to be a missionary here."

Many who have been a part of the OHI Missionary Program say it has forever changed them. "The missionary program gave me the opportunity to heal deeply inside," said Olga. "Being part of this tribe, and witnessing other guests' healing miracles every Friday during testimonials is so inspiring. I hope my testimonials have inspired others, as well. Being a missionary allowed me to connect to my true self, and in return I've helped others learn to accept and love themselves. It's a magical experience."

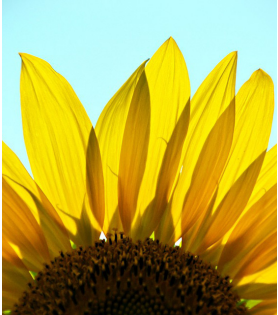
Olga really loves the fact that OHI's classes are always being updated and expanded with new information and new recipes. "All of the classes are great, but the class that truly changed my life is Pray, Eat, Live. It inspired me to continue this lifestyle, and share my love for raw vegan healthy food with others."

Olga's two placements in the OHI Missionary Program have given her the space needed for personal growth as well. "The biggest challenge that I overcame was to stop trying to control and start trusting the process of life. When you truly trust, the life flow takes you to the right place, at the right time, with the right people. In psychotherapy we say, 'You can't lead your client further than where you have not been yourself.' So the further I travel in my personal growth and development, the more I'm present for my clients to help create positive changes and transformation. I think the best advice I have for others is to eat healthy, pray every day, and look deep inside through contemplative practices like meditation, prayer, and reflection. And of course, come to OHI to connect to your authentic self. Wishing everyone deep healing on your life journey!"

"As a missionary you are there to guide other guests, share your wisdom and experience, and help them on their healing journey. It creates this beautiful interconnected family at OHI."

Marcella Rodriguez's Journey to Wellness

Scholarship Recipient Faces a Health Challenge with Positivity



Marcella Rodriguez had always been relatively healthy, and rarely went to the doctor. "I never got sick," said Marcella. "I was an actress and model, and always took care of my body through exercise and good nutrition."

In November 2019, Marcella found a small hemorrhoid, but ignored it. Eventually, she started bleeding from her rectum. In August 2021 she went in for an endoscopy and colonoscopy, and they found a 4-inch tumor on her rectum. "It was the same anal cancer that Farrah Fawcett had," said Marcella. "It was the shock of my life."

Marcella endured four chemo treatments, and saw her white blood cell counts drop from 6.8 to 1.6. Her doctors lowered her chemo dose by 25%, and she managed to tolerate four more chemo treatments and 30 days of radiation. She slowly recovered over the winter, but by spring her cancer had returned. "I met with six specialists trying to find a doctor that

would give me options, not just the same toxic chemo," said Marcella. In December 2021 she went in for more surgery, and found the cancer had spread from her rectum to her vagina.

"My friend, Lourdes, faced Stage 4 Lymphoma," said Marcella, "and she battled back by going to OHI. I thought to myself, 'How can fruits and vegetables help me fight cancer?', but I knew I couldn't endure more of these toxic cancer treatments. So I reached out to them. They reviewed my medical situation, and offered me a scholarship. I arrived on Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022."

Marcella found the first two weeks empowering. "My energy was great, and my mental clarity returned," said Marcella. "The third week of detox was hard, but I used the time for rest and reflection. I feel like my health journey is just beginning here!"

Marcella is so grateful to the amazing OHI staff. "Everyone here is so loving and supportive," said Marcella. "Whether you want to recharge your body, mind, and spirit, or whether you're facing an overwhelming health opportunity like me, OHI will completely change your life. This scholarship has truly saved me."

Share the Gift
of Healing



Three Ways to Give

- 1** MAIL newsletter
donation envelope
- 2** ONLINE
www.OptimumHealth.org
- 3** PHONE
(800) 993-4325

Share the Love, Share the Feeling, Share the Gift of Healing

Please consider contributing to the OHI Scholarship Fund to help those in need experience the benefits of the OHI program. Over the course of our 45 years, OHI has provided scholarships to individuals who could not afford to otherwise attend. In most years, we have been able to fulfill all requests for assistance through the generosity of our community. OHI invites you to join with us in celebrating our healing mission with a tax-deductible gift. Your contribution will help to make our community stronger, healthier, and more vibrant. Thank you so much for your generosity!

Provide the Gift of Healing today by supporting the OHI Scholarship Fund with a tax-deductible:

- One-Time Donation, or
- Sustainable Monthly Contribution

Thank you for your generosity!

Optimum Health Institute is a non-profit, religious organization. Your donation is tax deductible.

Call (800) 993-4325 to make your tax-deductible donation today!

Staff Spotlight

From Missionary to Staff Member

OHI Employees are the Heart of Our Healing Organization



Bertha Acevedo

Bertha Acevedo has worked at OHI for more than half of her adult life. WOW! A 17-year veteran of OHI, Bertha first joined the staff on June 2005. Prior to joining OHI, she worked in the hospitality field in a 600-room hotel. “I liked helping people,” said Bertha, “but I felt like there was something missing. When an opening became available at OHI, I jumped at it. I wanted to learn more about holistic healing.”

Bertha has filled many roles at OHI, and is currently a Community Care Manager. “I work in various departments, such as the front desk, the Optimum Health Store, and the contact center,” said Bertha. “After 17 years here, I’m a bit of a jack of all trades. The one thing that hasn’t changed over the years is what I learned on the first day — EAT CLEAN. I quickly introduced 80% fruits and vegetables into my diet, and I have felt better ever since. I am grateful for the self-healing my body is now capable of.”

Bertha seamlessly fit in with the guest service aspect of her position at OHI. “I strive to accommodate every guest’s needs,” said Bertha. “It is my honor to witness their wonderful transformations by the end of their stay. I attend the circles and the release ceremony, where everyone really allows themselves to be open and vulnerable. It is a beautiful, emotional moment that is unique to each person, but also surprisingly universal. I have seen time and again that humans are all just trying their best, and if we validate them and support their efforts, it magnifies the growth they are able to achieve. It’s so life-affirming.”

Over the last 17 years, Bertha has attended every class on the OHI roster, but she does have her favorites. “The two classes that have had the most impact on me are Emotional Detox and Self-Esteem,” said Bertha. “The emotional-detox class teaches you how to feel, process, and understand the important role your emotions play in creating and maintaining health and well-being. It all boils down to the healing power of forgiveness.

And the self-esteem class really digs into how self-esteem is formed, how low self-esteem can impact health, and how to build self-esteem for personal growth. Both of those classes are so powerful for me. It really helped build my confidence.”

Working as part of the staff at OHI is a gift that comes with responsibility. “I have discovered that my purpose in life is to help people heal,” said Bertha. “Of course, I’m always helpful as part of the team working at the front desk and store. But I have also been included in private moments where I prayed with guests. Some have come back to share how they felt calm and peaceful after praying with me. That is so meaningful for me. I really do try to incorporate prayer, positive mental attitude, patience, and purpose into everything I do here. It’s rewarding to know it’s been helpful for someone.”

At OHI, guests are encouraged to practice a daily celebration to keep growing as a human being and make themselves more present. “My daily celebration of choice is listening to motivational speakers,” said Bertha. “Some speakers help me learn life skills. And other speakers motivate me to become more connected to God. Over the years I have learned to trust Him more, and I have come to use prayer to help me heal or unwind if I’m feeling stressed. I also find great peace listening to guided meditations. Just as healthy food nourishes my body, prayer and meditation help me to stay grounded and present. I had a really wonderful spiritual upbringing that carries through my life to this day, and I can thank my mother for that.”

“I have discovered that my purpose in life is to help people heal.”

Bertha has been indispensable to OHI over the last 17 years, and after all this time she has some really beautiful advice for guests. “Read *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom* by Don Miguel Ruiz,” said Bertha. “The book reveals the source of self-limiting beliefs that rob us of joy and create needless suffering. Based on ancient Toltec wisdom, *The Four Agreements* offers a powerful code of conduct that can transform your life, so you are open to embracing freedom, happiness, and love. The four agreements are so simple, yet so powerful: 1) Be impeccable with your word. 2) Don’t take anything personally. 3) Don’t make assumptions. 4) Always do your best. It all boils down to being honest, forgiving, non-judgmental, and hardworking. You think you are already doing those things, but until you really examine your life, you might be falling short. When you come to OHI, you’ll get the time and the space to really examine your life. Come to OHI. The journey to a better you is so rewarding.”



Come to OHI for your Summer Cleanse

Stay Safe, Healthy & Connected

We are open and offering full services.

It's been no easy feat to keep our doors open during a pandemic. Our third-party service providers continue to offer full services in colonic, chiropractic and massage on our campuses. Our staff members are ready, willing and healthy! **If you're considering a stay with us, give us a call and we'll talk you through it.**

A more intimate guest experience with limited program space.

We have smaller cohorts on campus of guests, staff and missionaries. OHI San Diego is limited to 60 program attendees on our 2-acre campus; OHI Austin is limited to 20 program attendees on our 14-acre campus. **To ensure you get a space in our program and your preferred *OHI for Life Wellness* room, we suggest booking three weeks in advance.**

OHI is the safest place to be outside of your home.

We follow the CDC's protocols of physical distancing and increased sanitation. We use electrostatic spray disinfection systems, and non-chemical cleaners in all common areas. We perform daily Covid-19 tests with our guests, missionaries and employees to ensure we maintain a safe environment. **OHI is your safety bubble for healing.**

Call to book your stay: (800) 993-4325

Ask about our new *OHI for Life Wellness Rooms* – designed with your safety and comfort in mind!

Come to OHI and reconnect in a safe and sacred environment ♥

*Some restrictions may apply

Call (800) 993-4325 to book your stay with us!



A Mission of
The Free Sacred Trinity Church

The Free Sacred Trinity Church and its subordinate religious missions, OHI San Diego and OHI Austin, are not-for-profit organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Support the OHI Scholarship Fund

We are a non-profit religious organization and your donation is tax deductible. On behalf of all those who benefit from the OHI Scholarship Fund, we offer our gratitude!

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Summer2022

OHI - THE SAFEST PLACE TO BE OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

We continue to take precautions to provide a safe and sacred environment. We follow a comprehensive safety plan that involves three major pillars: minimizing infectious diseases from entering the OHI campus; sterilizing the campus, guest rooms, and public areas to reduce the likelihood of disease transmission; and conducting daily Covid-19 testing with our on-campus community members: guests, missionaries and staff.

CONTACT US: (800) 993-4325

We'd love to hear from you. To receive special offers and updates, email us at newsletter@optimumhealth.org or call us at (800) 993-4325. For more information about the OHI Program, please visit our website at www.optimumhealth.org

OPTIMUM HEALTH INSTITUTE

PO Box 23878, San Diego, CA 92193-3878

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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(512) 303-4817 or (800) 993-4325



OHI - San Diego

6970 Central Avenue, Lemon Grove, CA 91945
(619) 464-3346 or (800) 993-4325

**Ready to Reconnect in a
Safe & Sacred Environment?**

Come to OHI for your Summer Cleanse

See inside on Page 10 for details
Or call (800) 993-4325

Our Mission

We serve as a change agent for holistic healing by creating a safe and sacred space.

Core Values

Holism, Generosity, Relationship, Life-Long Learning, Stewardship and Service.

Guiding Principles

Trustworthiness, Respect, Empowerment and Alignment.