

Religion

a member interest group of the



Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics

FOOD & FAITH CONVERSATIONS

Physical and Spiritual Health

Hate. Anger. Impatience. Annoyed. How do those words impact your body right at this moment? Tightness in the chest? Slumped shoulders? Feeling down? Now try these words: Love. Kindness. Compassion. Forgiveness. Feel any different? Happier? Maybe a bit relaxed?

Our physical health is closely related to our spiritual health, but just how much? Each of the authors for this newsletter comes at the topic from a different angle but come to the same conclusion. When the Most Holy One is first in your life you will be abundantly blest! Your outlook on life changes and that has a tremendous impact on health. Whether we are healthy, managing a chronic disease or facing an end-of-life illness, when we make a commitment to prayer and put God/Allah first, all other things fall into their proper place.

In this issue, find some inspiration from our contributors, from current research and upcoming holy days to enrich your life and those that you care for.

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Religion Member Interest Group - Purpose Statement

The Religion Member Interest Group (RMIG) is a community of members interested in networking and enhancing their religious competency skills as it relates to nutrition and the ability to communicate with diverse audiences. RMIG supports multiple religious communities who bring together culturally diverse professionals interested in increasing cross-cultural awareness, competency, networking and reducing health disparities of their communities. Membership is inclusive of those who identify with a religious community or who otherwise have an interest in increasing cultural competency skills.

RMIG Leadership

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Congratulations to RMIG

member Kelly Moltzen on the acceptance of the Food System Vision award by the Rockefeller Foundation. Her program, *Faith Institutions Leading the Way Towards Healthy & Sustainable Food Systems*, focuses on how faith communities along the northeast coast of the U.S. can be involved with supporting/creating regional food systems. Selections for 10 finalists will be taking place in August. Click [here](#) to learn more about Kelly's program and other semi-finalists.



AUGUST IS KIDS EAT RIGHT MONTH™!

Don't forget about all the amazing resources that the Academy has to make promoting Kids Eat Right Month™ easy! Resources include infographics, press releases, reprintable articles, powerpoint presentations for you to use and educational pieces for families. Visit the Kids Eat Right Month™ 2020 [Media Materials page](#).

State grant opportunities are available for faith-based and/or private non-profit organizations for COVID-19 related expenses. The **DHS Center for Faith and Opportunities Initiatives** is encouraging these organizations to apply for funds soon as deadlines have closed for some states and are still active for others. These include Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wyoming.



Academy Updates

Second Annual Nutrition and Health Equity Summit: The State of Black Health

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics will be hosting a conversation on "the important role of nutrition in promoting health equity and reducing health disparities" as part of the second annual Nutrition and Health Equity Summit with Rep. Robin L. Kelly (Ill.) and the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust. Topics will include: Health Disparities and COVID-19, Structural Racism and Systematic Inequalities and Nutrition, Disparities and Chronic Disease and will be held on **Tuesday, August 25 from 1 - 3 PM (CST)**.



Registration for **FNC@2020** is now open! Everything the conference has to offer will now be available **virtually**. These include: keynote, breakout, and poster sessions, the DPG/MIG showcase, virtual silent auction, a 5K run/walk and more! **If you've never been** to this incredible conference, it's time to see what you've been missing.

RMIG is partnering with the Cultures of Gender and Age and the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders MIGs to deliver a **unique program** around FNC@. Stay tuned for updates on our Discussion Board and e-blasts!



Learn more about the basics of **healthcare payment** and other sources of **funding** by enrolling in the [Power of Payment](#) program.

You will receive **tailored monthly emails** with information, resources and activities focused on such areas as MNT delivery via telehealth, third party reimbursement and opportunities in health care reform.

Questions? Contact the Nutrition Services Coverage team at reimburse@eatright.org

MONTHLY HEALTH OBSERVANCES

Are you looking for ways to promote upcoming monthly health observances? The Academy can help! Check out the **Academy's Social Media ToolKit** available on the Academy's website. The kit contains creative content, topics for blog posts and media interviews, sample social media posts and so much more.

Upcoming observances: **August:** Kids Eat Right Month™; National Breastfeeding Awareness Month; **September:** National Food Safety Education Month; National Sickle Cell Month; Malnutrition Awareness Week - Sept. 23 - 27; **October:** Health Literacy Month; National Breast Cancer Awareness Month; World Food Day - Oct. 16; and **November:** American Diabetes Month; National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

You're
Invited!

Religion
a member interest group of the
eat right. Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Join us for a virtual member meet-up to network and learn more about resources and opportunities available to you through the Academy's Religion MIG!

📅 Thursday, August 27th, 2020

🕒 4 p.m. PT / 7 p.m. EST

Zoom Meeting ID: 979 9493 9366

Passcode: 950489

Click [here](#) to join!



WE NEED YOU!

You don't have to be a super hero to be on our team; just have a passion for all things food, nutrition and faith related!

Benefits: Meet some amazing people from all over the globe, build skills for career advancement, plan events, showcase your tech skills, and/or live out your dream of being an accountant (future Treasurer, we're talking to you!)

Our open positions include:

- Chair-Elect
- Treasurer
- Membership Committee Chair
- Communication Committee Chair
- Website Coordinator
- Social Media Coordinator



Please consider being involved. Email rmig@eatright.org today!

How Physical Health Affects Spiritual Health

by Kristin Hagen, BSN, RN, MS, RDN, LD

"My darkest times in my spiritual journey have been when I haven't been taking care of my body." With these words, my client was realizing the deep connection between the material and immaterial aspects of our beings. How we are doing physically affects how we are doing spiritually because of the integration of body and soul. This article briefly looks at that connection, a few of the practical ramifications, and how this understanding can benefit both the dietitian and the client.

To understand the connection between body and soul, we need to know what the human body actually is. Is it a "tomb for the soul," like the ancient Greeks thought? (1) Or maybe it's a prison for the soul, as is often attributed to Plato. (2) Perhaps it's a machine, as Jean-Luc Picard, Captain of the USS Enterprise, reassures Lt. Commander Data, who happens to be an android? As a follower of Jesus, the Bible is my foundation for understanding health and wellness. The book of Genesis tells us that our bodies were created in God's image and are very good. (3) But is the material part of ourselves (body) less important than the immaterial (soul, spirit, heart)? Not at all; although as Christians, we may unknowingly overemphasize the spiritual and devalue the physical. Mathew Lee Anderson, who has done extensive research in this fascinating area, believes that evangelicals generally show an inattention to the body. (2) This leads to imbalance because of the interconnection of body and soul. One cannot exist without the other in this life, and only God can separate them. Granted, these are deep philosophical truths which few of us may have ever seriously pondered, yet the practical ramifications are huge.

Devaluing the important role that the body plays in our faith can affect not only our physical health, but also our spiritual well-being. For example, a young woman was getting up early to have morning devotions. As she began to experience fatigue and discouragement, she realized that she was prioritizing the spiritual over the physical. She learned that it is just as essential for her to get enough sleep as it is for her to spend time in prayer. Physical disciplines, such as healthy sleep, eating, and exercise habits contribute to our spiritual progress; lack of faithfulness in caring for our bodies erodes spiritual growth. I recently listened to a sermon on this topic. The pastor explained that when we are careless with our health, we are eating away our sensitivity to God. Psalm 18:25 indicates that when we diligently care for our bodies, we will understand God's faithfulness better. (3) In ancient Israel, the Jewish people were dedicated to meticulously maintaining their temple. May we be zealous to care for our bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Understanding the spiritual significance of taking care of the body can benefit both the practitioner and the client. The healthcare professionals who are the most effective are those who are living examples of a healthy lifestyle that includes consistent physical disciplines regarding rest, diet, and exercise. Would our clients be able to learn these habits by imitating us? Some of my most effective "teaching sessions" come from cooking or grocery shopping with my clients. Taking care of our clients starts with taking care of our bodies.

Learn more about Kristin, at [Peace of Health](#).

References:

1. Hoekema AA. Created in God's Image. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; 1994.
2. Anderson ML. Earthen Vessels. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House; 2011.
3. The Holy Bible, New International Version, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Bible Publishers; 1984.



How Physical Health Affects Our Spiritual Health

A Christian Perspective

by Ayesha Nurrudin, MS, RDN, LD

First some definitions to hopefully clarify use of words:

- “Our” refers to human beings made in the image of God.
- A Christian is a human being who has chosen to repent of their sin, accept Jesus Christ as payment for their sin debt, Savior, and the Lord of their life.
- A human being is a spirit who lives in a physical body and has a soul.
- The spiritual body consists of the human spirit and soul.
- The human spirit of a Christian is alive and communicates with the soul and the Holy Spirit who live in the spiritual body.
- The soul communicates with both the five senses of the physical body and with the human spirit.
- The soul consists of intellect, emotions, will, conscious, subconscious, and memory.
- The will decides what the physical body does based on information from the physical body's five senses and information from the spiritual body.
- Health for a human being has to do with the state of being whole or without illness or injury in spirit, soul, and body.

Spiritual health refers to the health of the human spirit and soul.

- The human spirit, because of Adam's sin, is dead when the human being is physically born and cannot communicate with God except to first repent of sin and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of their life. For the Christian, the human spirit is alive, pure, and communicates with the Holy Spirit who lives in the spiritual body.
- The soul is renewed throughout life by studying the Bible or listening to a sermon, as the Holy Spirit illuminates the Bible, counsels, and guides, or by experiencing God's natural creation. As the soul gains a renewed mind, the will agrees with the Holy Spirit filled human spirit more often than the physical body.

From a Christian perspective, physical health does not affect our spiritual health. The spiritual body responds or reacts to the condition of the physical body. The physical body does not determine the health of the spiritual body. The spiritual body can become healthy with or without a healthy physical body. Once a person becomes a Christian, that person's knowledge of God continues to grow throughout life. Our spiritual health is strengthened as the soul gains a renewed mind and agrees with the human spirit and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

What we do in our physical body is a result of a decision made by the will in the soul. Sometimes God allows physical health challenges to strengthen our faith. God always gives the person a choice to live by faith in what He has said in His word, the Bible, about a matter or live by sight or emotions. That is, the soul chooses to use the information from the physical body or the spiritual body.

So, when our physical health is challenged with illness or injury, our renewed soul always has a choice, to respond with information from the five senses or human spirit.

If a Christian becomes ill or injured they have options for example to pray and ask God to heal them, help them go through the illness, or discover the purpose of the illness to learn from it and bring glory to God. It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds of the mouth of God”. Matthew 4:4.

Ayesha Nurrudin, M.S., R.D.N., L.D.
Ambassador for Jesus Christ
Founder / StewardBeyond Eating LLC



From Diet-ing to Deity-ing: Does G-d* really care how we eat?

by BJ Goldman, MS, RDN, LDN, CIFMNT

*Editors note: The author has chosen to write "G-d" in place of "God" which is a fairly recent custom in America as a sign of respect. For additional information, please refer to the reformjudaism.org website.

Relationship between the physical and the spiritual

Whether one discusses "How Physical Health Affects Spiritual Health" or, "How Spiritual Health Affects Physical health", we must acknowledge that in the Jewish religion, the two concepts are definitely intertwined. One cannot discuss one without the other---they are two sides of the same coin. We must "butter both sides of the bread". The bottom line is that there is a relationship between physicality and spirituality in Judaism. Ironically, this topic is so pertinent, because the Torah reading cycle this time of year coincides with several key messages about body and soul. In addition, the topic always comes down to food! What else could a RD want??

Our Relationship with G-d

In Judaism, there are two important goals in life:

- 1) To have a relationship with our Creator-- to grow closer to Him by working on self-growth and our soul's potential through following Torah laws/commandments; and
- 2) To always seek out G-d in everything we do—from the most mundane of actions to the most complicated commandments. We are to instill holiness in all the physical acts we do: from eating, to sleeping, eliminating, and intimacy, and more. We bring G-d into the picture by saying blessings and other prayers, and show respect for these actions.

Why?

One reason is found in Gen: 2:7: *"And He blew into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living being."* Everything has a soul; imagine that there is a pipeline connecting us to G-d; G-d gives us our physical bodies ON LOAN, to protect that soul. Technically, because our bodies are not our own, we are not allowed to do what we want with the body, such as mutilate it with piercing, tattoos, put ourselves in danger, or G-d forbid take our own life. Life itself is of utmost importance and takes priority even in ethical circumstances.

We also have a very major commandment in the Torah, (Deut.4:15, which is read August 1st this year) *"But you shall greatly beware for your souls", lest you go astray.*" This is noted to mean that we must guard the body for it guards the soul. The Rabbis interpret that to mean we must take care of our bodies and our health. Many Rabbis and many Torah sources go further into depth on how we should do that, most notably, Maimonides, the 12th century physician and Torah commentator, and the advisor to the then Sultan of Egypt, having written several treatises on health, nutrition, and health directives, which are widely used to this day. Maimonides said, "Since by keeping the body in good health, one follows the ways of G-d, for it is impossible to understand or know anything about the Creator when one is ill; it is a man's duty to shun whatever is harmful to the body and cultivate health-preserving habits". See below for some citations about eating (1).

How does food fit in?

- As Rabbi Avraham Peretz Friedman notes in his article (2), *"Eating is of primary importance in G-d's entire plan for Creation; it is not incidental to that plan. Eating is the vehicle for the inculcation of some of the most fundamental, profound lessons regarding Life, G-d, this world, and G-d's plan for humanity. Through eating, all the different elements of Creation converge."*
- G-d explains the lesson of the food in the Torah reading on August 6th this year (Deut: Chpt 8:) Basically, G-d wants to have a relationship with us THROUGH THE FOOD!—he sent us Manna in the Wilderness so that we would understand that we must see G-d as the Source of this food; that we must recognize that we are DEPENDENT on Him to provide food and everything we need. There are many others illustrations of this connection throughout the Torah.
- As we said, there are G-dly sparks in every living entity. Our goal as humans is to release the G-dly sparks, and lift up the food to a higher purpose than it could do on its own, by eating successfully, and using that energy to do the commandments and acts of kindness.

- A key component of this concept of sparks of holiness is the commandment to keep kosher dietary laws (remove blood, not eat dairy & meat together, and eat only kosher animals and fish). This is a topic for another article! It is partially discussed in the upcoming Torah portion on August 14th of this year (Deut. Ch 12 & 14. "Be strong not to eat the blood—for the blood, it is the life", and "You shall not cook a kid in its mother's milk" and a description of some of the kosher animals. Sparks of holiness in these kosher foods are capable of giving the soul energy, thereby making them accessible to the body. This is one reason that when a person is ill, it is recommended for healing to keep the Kosher dietary laws, if s/he is not already.

How can we apply these concepts?

In 2004, with government funding and other grants, I founded a health program for the Jewish community in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis, St. Paul), called The DERECH Program. "Derech" is a Hebrew word for path or way; DERECH is an acronym for ***Diet and Exercise to Reach and Enrich the Care of Your Health: A mindful, behavioral, and spiritual approach for making lasting lifestyle change.*** Events ranged from health fairs, healthy weekly food buffets after religious services, classes such as "Cooking Kosher Healthy Ways" (6-week series), Derech-tions Weight Control Program, Yoga and other exercise classes, Monthly Jewish Holiday programs, and a teen girls' afterschool fitness program, called FITT (Fitness Initiative for Teens through Torah), which included self-esteem, nutrition, cooking, exercise, and spiritual components. The purpose of the program was to inculcate in the congregations and participants some of the basic biblical/Torah concepts that demonstrate the relationship between physical health and spiritual health.

The DERECH Program is currently active and I have organized a weekly Zoom speaker series (May through August) called: ***Health & Wellness During These Challenging Times: Integrative Strategies for Improving Health and Making Successful Lifestyle Changes***, featuring integrative medical professionals on a wide variety of topics and healthy food demos. "The DERECH Program was awarded a Gold level Wellness by Design Award through the Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department in 2007 (Minneapolis, MN) "

For more information about The D.E.R.E.C.H. Program contact the author at 952-922-8865 or bjkgoldmaneatwell@gmail.com

Citations about eating:

a) From the Oral Law of the Old Testament: "Refrain from eating too much, rather only eat the amount of food to give support & health to serve G-d"

b) Maimonides Hilchot Deos, Chpt 4: "Eat when hungry, drink when thirsty." "Overeating is the primary cause of all illness"

c) Maimonides: Hilchot Deos, Chpt 4: "HOW we eat is more important than WHAT we eat. Eat with respect, enjoyment. One will achieve more health by eating less of even UNHEALTHY food than more of ONLY health food."

d) Maimonides: Hilchot Deos, Chpt 4: Three principles of Health: "Eat less, exercise, loose stools"

(2) "A Torah Approach to Eating", by Rabbi Avraham Peretz Friedman published in To Fill the Sky With Stars, edited by Miriam Liebermann, Menucha Publishers, 2014.



How Physical Health Affects Spiritual Health ~ *Islam*

by Amna Kashif, RD (Pakistan); IAAND – Pakistan, Member RMIG

A racecourse. Crowd cheers echoing throughout the ground. Horses trotting towards the start line, their riders right along with them.

The starter presses the button, rings a loud bell, sends a signal and the horses are off! Within the first quarter of the race, team 312 has already been dismissed. While the horse seems physically strong, the rider does not look skilled enough to keep up with it and it is not long before the rider is being thrown off. The jockey in the next team is primed and knows how to use the knowledge to his advantage. His horse, unfortunately lacks the stamina and is exhausted by the half-mark. The last pair is handling the racecourse best. Both the rider and the horse have joined their strengths, the years of training on both their parts have paid off. They fly through the race with utmost fluidity, becoming one and reaching the finish line to be declared champions.

Scholars have often used the metaphor of a horse and jockey to help explain the relationship between the physical self (horse) and the spiritual (the rider). If either one is weak, then we as humans lose the potential to perform our best. The physical body needs to be healthy enough to carry out the acts of worship which in turn strengthens us spiritually. On the other hand, a spiritually weak person is at risk of being over thrown by giving into his physical desires without any checks, like team 312 above.

Islam provides its followers a holistic code of conduct for each aspect of their life. This includes treating our bodies with respect and nourishing them with not only faith, but also with lawful, nutritious food and required exercise. A healthy and fit person has opportunities to perform more good deeds than a person who is unhealthy. The famous saying of Prophet Muhammad (May Allah honour him and grant him peace) highlights this important connection when he said: Allah Almighty likes the strong believer over a weak believer.

Pillars of Islam:

An insight into the many facets of Islamic code of conduct can clearly help us to understand how physical health affects our spiritual health and vice versa. However, for the purpose of this article I have restricted the discussion to the Five Pillars of Islam.

Declaration of Faith the fundamental pillar of Islam is to declare obedience to Allah Almighty[i]. On the outside, it is a verbal commitment and a purely spiritual matter of belief; however, the true manifestation of this declaration is seen in the acts of goodness carried out physically by the believer including, but not limited to the prescribed forms of worship or the remaining four pillars.

Prayer (Salah) is an obligatory act of worship on all Muslims, five times a day[ii]. It is performed in a specified way. There are allowances for different situations in one's life on the posture and number of units to be offered but the obligation is not nullified as long as one is breathing and sane.

It is considered as a meeting between the believer and his Lord. It holds the power to stop a believer from committing sins[iii] and is the Key to Paradise[iv]. As we look closely at the actual performance of the units of Prayer we see an involvement of all body muscles from the beginning to the end. One's Muscular and bone strength play an important role in the ability to stand in Qayam, bending in Rukou and prostrating with the forehead touching the ground. Kamran reports that "the prayer movements would enhance flexibility and general muscular fitness. This results in moderate physical exercise particularly to the large muscle group and encourage health and wellbeing"[v].



Fasting (Saum) Fasting is a common practice in different religious disciplines, including Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may ward off evil. (Al Baqrah 2:183.)

In Islam, the practice entails abstinence from eating and drinking between dawn and sunset. The blessed month of Ramadan is often referred to as a training course for the believer in both the spiritual sense and the physical. Duration of the Ramadan fast varies anywhere between 11 to 20[i] hrs. during Summers. It is the consciousness of the presence of Allah Almighty that enables a believer to overcome his thirst and hunger and not eat and drink even in solitude. The reward of every good deed is increased multifold[ii], but to truly benefit from this opportunity the successful believer is one who takes care of his/her fitness by managing nutrition, sleep and exercise in the non-fasting hours.

Obligatory Charity (Zakah) is obligatory on sane, financially sound[iii],[iv],[v],[vi] believers. The importance of this pillar is evident from the fact that not only is it mentioned at over 70 places in the Holy Quran but the command for it was given to all the earlier Prophets including Prophet Ibrahim[vii], Ismail[viii], Israeel[ix] and Isa[x] (may Allah honour them). It is a spiritual cleansing which replaces selfishness with selflessness, love of wealth with the love of humanity and promotes peace in the society. Although Zakah is a financial form of worship, physical fitness too plays its part in the ability to earn a living or maintain the financial strength, to fulfill this obligation.

Pilgrimage (Hajj) requires one to be sane, mature, financially stable and physically fit[xi]. It is a spiritual journey like no other and is obligatory only once in a lifetime of the believer. At every step of the pilgrimage one is promised complete forgiveness from sins and increase in rewards. The five days of Hajj spent in the desert plains of Mina, Arafat and Muzdalifa are a test of one's endurance and patience. A well-nourished, physically and emotionally fit believer is more attuned to benefit from the opportunity described by the eminent scholar Shaykh Muhammad Manzoor Naumani in the following words: "If a bondsman is blessed with a correct and sincere Hajj which is called Huj Mubroor in the special terminology of the Shari'ah, and even if a particle of association with the Prophet Ibrahim and Muhammad (May Allah honour and grant them peace) is granted to him it will mean that he has, as one would say, attained the highest degree of felicity and obtained a boon than which there can be no greater gift or favour in this world." [xii]

In conclusion, for us as Muslims to achieve true success[xiii] and contribute to the vision[xiv] of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (May Allah honour him and grant him peace) it is imperative that we focus on both our spiritual and physical development.

[i] Al Baqarah 2:163

[ii] "Allah has prescribed five prayers, whoever performs wudu properly for them and offers them up at the right time and carries out ruku and sujood as they ought to be and offers them with the feeling of deep reverence. For him it is the firm promise of Allah that He will forgive him (his sins), and whoever does not do so, for him there is no promise of Allah. He will forgive or punish him as He likes." (Musnad Ahmad and Abu Dawood)

[iii] Al-Ankabut 29:45[1] Masnad Imam Ahmed: "The Key to Paradise is Prayer..."

[iv] (Kamran G. Physical benefits of (Salah) prayer - Strengthen the faith & fitness. J Nov Physiother Rehabil. 2018; 2: 043-053. DOI: 10.29328/journal.jnpr.1001020 accessed online: 4th August 2020)

[v] Ramadan 2020: Fasting hours around the world - A round-up of daily fasting durations around the world as Muslims observe the holy month of Ramadan. Published online 11 May 2020 17:24 GMT. Accessed online 7th August 2020

[vii] Baihiqi (Shob ul Imaan) 887/4; [viii] Bukhari and Muslim (828/5); [ix] Tirimizi and Abu Dawood (828/6); [x] Abu Dawood (830/7);

[xi] Abu Dawood (832/9); [xii] (Al-Anbiya, 21:73); [xiii] (Al-Maryam 19:55); [xiv] Al Ma'idah 5:12; [xv] Al-Maryam 19:30-3;

[xvi] Pilgrimage to the House of Allah is a duty men owe to God those who can afford the journey. (Aal-Imran 3:97); [xvii] Maariful Hadith English Volume 2, Shaykh Muhammad Manzoor Naumani (R.A.) Chapter: Book of Hajj; pg 478; [xviii] Success is surely achieved by him who purifies himself... (Al A'la 87:14); [xix] You enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah." [Aal-e-Imran, 3:110]



RESEARCH

As a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, you not only have access to the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* but also to publications from the Academy's publisher Elsevier. These include journals such as the *Journal of Integrative Medicine*, *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, and *Nutrition*. Also, if you are in the research field consider submitting articles to these and other publications.

Chirico F, Sharma M, Zaffina S, Magnavita N. ***Spirituality and Prayer on Teacher Stress and Burnout in an Italian Cohort: A Pilot, Before-After Controlled Study***. *Front Psychol*. 2020;10:2933. Published 2020 Jan 21. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02933 This paper looks at how prayer could be effective in countering the negative effects of occupational stress and preventing burnout.

Al Eid NA, Alqahtani MM, Marwa K, Arnout BA, Alswailem HS, Al Toaimi AA. ***Religiosity, Psychological Resilience, and Mental Health Among Breast Cancer Patients in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia***. *Breast Cancer (Auckl)*. 2020;14:1178223420903054. Published 2020 Mar 17. Results show the importance of increased religiosity and psychological resilience among cancer patients.

Osama M, Malik RJ. ***Salat (Muslim prayer) as a therapeutic exercise***. *J Pak Med Assoc*. 2019;69(3):399-404. Looking at this form of prayer and the activation of certain muscle groups, improvement of balance, and benefits in chronic disease management and prevention.

Idler E, Oman D, Kiser M, Hogue C. ***Courses in Religion and Public Health***. *Am J Public Health*. 2017;107(6):e1. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2017.303758 This research suggests that religious participation and attendance of religious service is a beneficial health resource affecting certain health outcomes. The authors discuss the importance of religion in public health and as a part of the social determinants of health.

Aboul-Enein BH. ***Health-Promoting Verses as mentioned in the Holy Quran***. *J Relig Health*. 2016;55(3):821-829. doi:10.1007/s10943-014-9857-8. This paper serves to identify the chapters, verses and keywords with a focus on nutrition, well-being, and importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Rasinski KA, Kalad YG, Yoon JD, Curlin FA. ***An assessment of US physicians' training in religion, spirituality, and medicine***. *Med Teach*. 2011;33(11):944-945. doi:10.3109/0142159X.2011.588976 This study looked at US physicians' training in religion and medicine, the discussion of religion or spirituality with patients and training, including CME and via Grand Rounds.

Inclusion in the above resource listing is not intended to be considered an endorsement by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics or the Religion Member Interest Group.

Watch for more details coming soon for the **RMIG Outstanding Research Award!** The purpose of the RMIG Outstanding Research Award is to showcase research conducted by a member of the Religion MIG (RMIG). This award is available to RMIG members who would like to provide nutrition research related webinars, workshops or other food and nutrition related research/activities to faith-based communities. Visit [RMIGs website](#) for additional information.

RMIG Member Spotlight

Magon M. Saunders, DHSc, MS, RDN, LD



Dr. Magon Saunders, holds many titles: diabetes care and education specialist, registered and licensed dietitian, author, and forgiveness advocate. She is also the Founder and Executive Director of Forgive for Health Ministries in Stone Mountain, Georgia (GA).

In 2013, Magon's doctoral research assessed the influence of Christian divorce support groups on forgiveness and health outcomes in Black Christian divorcees. Since that time, Magon has continued to build on this work and has developed courses, conferences, posters, and other products on the issue of forgiveness and health while championing the need to include forgiveness in practice across the health systems, locally, nationally, and internationally. In her role as a Forgiveness Researcher, she is particularly interested in how forgiveness affects the health of minorities, especially African Americans.

In 2015, after being repeatedly prompted by the Lord, Magon started a forgiveness ministry. She now travels across the state of GA, the nation, and the world to facilitate forgiveness workshops, present at meetings and conferences, and to offer one to one and group support and counseling for those struggling with unforgiveness. Whether in a church, mosques, temples, family reunions, or worksites, including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention, Magon's team have brought the message of forgiveness and health to wherever God has opened a door.

Dr. Saunders has embedded forgiveness assessment and social determinants of health (SDOH) reviews in her practice and is passionate about the elimination of health disparities so that all Americans can live the best life possible. As a part of the effort to educate the public and health care providers about forgiveness, health equity, and the SDOH, Magon and her team publish a monthly blog and a quarterly newsletter. These resources, as well as other materials, can be accessed at www.forgive4health.org When not working at the ministry, Magon serves as a Public Health Program Specialist at the CDC, where she has worked for 13 years. At the CDC, Magon provides technical assistance and support to funded state and national grantees, community-based, and national organizations, to scale and sustain the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) and enhance the management of Type 2 diabetes.

Magon holds a doctoral degree in Health Sciences with a major in Global Health from A.T. Still University in Mesa, AZ. She is a graduate of Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia, where she received a master's degree in Nutrition Education and a bachelor's degree in Community Nutrition. She completed her dietetic internship at Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in New Orleans, Louisiana, and holds a degree in Institutional Management from the College of Arts, Science, and Technology in Kingston, Jamaica. Magon has extensive experience working with diverse clients to improve their nutritional status and to manage their medical conditions. For more than 40 years, she has worked at all levels of public health, and understands completely the connection between unforgiveness and health. Magon is a member of NOBIDAN, the Diabetes Dietetic Practice Group, Religion MIG, Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (ADCES), and currently serves on the American Diabetes Association (ADA's) African American Disparities Action Council.

Magon has received numerous awards and commendations for her work in Georgia and across our nation, including the 2019 Humbert Humphrey Award for Service to America, the 2018 CDC/ATSDR Award for Public Health Impact for her work on the National Diabetes Prevention Program team, the 2006 Community Services Award from former Georgia Governor, Sonny Perdue, and the 2006 Georgia Department of Public Health's Community Services Award. Before moving to the USA in 1993, Magon worked in the fields of nutrition and diabetes in both Jamaica and Grand Cayman. Magon is passionate about making a difference and believes that volunteerism is the best way to "pay it forward." She is a mother and doting grandmother and resides with her family in Stone Mountain, GA.

Let other RMIG members know about your background. Contact Mary Angela Niester (mniester@umich.edu) to be in the Winter 2020 "Food, Faith & Conversations" newsletter.



Religious Observances and Holy Days - August to November

August

Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian) – August 15. The Assumption is the oldest feast day of Our Lady and a holy day of obligation for Catholics in the United States. This day celebrates the assumption of the Immaculate Mother completing her earthly life and assumed body and soul into heavenly glory (Ps. 44:10-14; Ps. 131:8).

Ashura (Muslim) – August 28 - 29. Ashura is the tenth day of Muharram which is the first month of the Islamic calendar. This day marks the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of the Islamic prophet Muhammad (May Allah honour and grant them peace). Ashura, the “Day of Atonement”, is a major holiday with a recommended, but non-obligatory, day of fasting (Sunni Islam).

September

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) – September 19 – 20. Rosh Hashanah is a fall holiday, taking place at the beginning of the month of Tisheir, the seventh month of the Jewish year. It is a time of rejoicing and introspection, a time to celebrate the conclusion of another year and taking stock of one’s life. The day serves as the anniversary of the day on which the world was created, or on which humanity was created. Challah dipped in honey and apples symbolizes hope for a “sweet” New Year.

Yom Kippur (Jewish) – September 28. Yom Kippur is the most solemn day of the Jewish calendar. The culmination of the Days of Awe is the fast day of The Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. At the conclusion of this day, God seals the Books of Life and Death for the coming year. The day is devoted to communal repentance of sins committed over the course of the previous year.

October

Sukkot (Jewish) – October 3-9. Sukkot begins five days after Yom Kippur. It is named for the temporary shelters or huts that represent the huts in where Israelites dwelt during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after their escape from slavery in Egypt. This festival, associated with Sukkot, is considered one of the three great pilgrimage festivals of the Jewish year. In fact, it is often referred to as “The Harvest Festival”.

All Souls Day (Christian) – November 2. All Souls’ Day is celebrated every year on November 2nd. The Latin Church and the western Catholic Church often refer to this day as the “Commemoration of All the Faithfull Departed”, while the Anglican church considers All Soul’s Day as an optional celebration. The tradition to offer pray for the dead can be traced in the practice of Judaism and the beginning of Christianity and includes either ringing of a bell or lighting candles to honor those who have died.

November

All Saints Day (Christian) – November 1. All Saints Day is a solemn holy day of obligation of the Catholic church and a recognized day by members of the Eastern Orthodox as well as some Lutheran and Anglican churches. This day is dedicated to the heavenly saints of the church. Saints are regularly called to pray for and intercede for us, bringing one closer to Christ and our Heavenly Father.

Thanksgiving – November 26 (Interfaith). Thanksgiving is a national holiday in some countries, marked by religious observances and expressions of gratitude for all the blessings bestowed upon us by our Creator. We are reminded at this time to share and give as many who celebrate do so with family, friends or being with those less fortunate.



Shakshuka



Spicy tomato and poached egg with onions, garlic, cumin and coriander, olive oil and topped with parsley or cilantro (Your choice)

BY YAQUTULLAH IBRAHEEM MUHAMMAD MS, RDN, LD

Ingredients:

3-6 eggs
1 medium onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium bell pepper
2 cans tomatoes
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon paprika or chili powder
black pepper to taste
salt to taste
Cilantro (Coriander leaves)

Serves 3 - 6

Directions:

1) Prep the ingredients. Thinly slice the bell pepper. Finely chop the onions, prep the tomatoes, and garlic. 2) Heat some olive oil in a pan, then add chopped onion and garlic; reduce to medium and continue cooking until the onions turn translucent. 3) Add the sliced bell pepper. Stir well and continue cooking for a couple more minutes. 4) Add the tomatoes and cook till they turn tender. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water, salt, and mix well. 5) Now add salt, black pepper, paprika/chili powder, cumin and mix well. Let simmer 10 to 15 minutes. 6) Make three wells in the sauce for the eggs. 7) Break each egg, and carefully place it into a well. Repeat for each egg. 8) Let the eggs poach in the sauce on a low flame. Wait for the egg whites to be set and turn off the flame. 9) Garnish with cilantro or parsley leaves and serve with your choice of toasted bread.

Note: For a spicier Shakshuka, use cayenne pepper or any other hot chilies instead of paprika, for a real kick.

For more delicious recipes like this, visit the '[Nutrition Prescriptions](#)' website!



Crockpot Beef Stew with Korean Stir Fry Simmer Sauce



BY YAQUTULLAH IBRAHEEM MUHAMMAD MS, RDN, LD

Ingredients:

2 pounds halal lean beef, cut into cubes
2 tablespoons olive oil
7 ounce Korean stir fry simmer sauce
1 Vidalia onion, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
3 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 cinnamon stick (for flavor)
1 cup halal chicken or vegetable stock
1 cup chopped tomatoes
1/2 teaspoon coriander
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1 bay leaf
1 cup lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
Salt to taste

Directions:

- 1) Place beef cubes into crock pot.
- 2) Season beef with salt and pepper.
- 3) Add onion, garlic, stock, tomatoes, celery, coriander, cumin, tomato paste, bay leaf, and olive oil to the crock pot and stir to combine.
- 4) Add Korean stir fry simmer sauce and the lemon juice to crock pot, cover, and cook on high for 6 hours until very tender.
- 5) Transfer the beef to a large serving dish. Serve with mashed sweet potato or brown rice or your grain of choice to soak up the sauce.

Do you have a **recipe you created** and would like to share in our Winter RMIG Newsletter and/or RMIG website? If so, email the recipe to RMIG@eatright.org