



**July/August 2012**  
Volume 1 Issue 5

## Mower Refreshed Living

The idea of simplifying our lives is attractive to most folks. The difficulty often lies in considering how we might simplify and how those changes will impact our day to day living and those we love. If we're honest, we are often concerned about what we might have to give up to live with less stress and anxiety.

The marketing efforts of the 1950s and sixties promised us less stress and more free time as fast foods, frozen meals and eventually the microwave came to our doorsteps. Free time for family to relax, prepare healthy meals and simplify our calendars fell to the wayside as the pace of work intensified and extracurricular activities surged into our lives. Unfortunately, our society seemed to interpret these new conveniences as opportunity and for some, an unspoken pressure, to add more to our schedules. Rest, relationships and healthy living would need to wait till we had more time.

We can at times grow restless waiting for life to get simpler; this restlessness might be our call to be more intentional in our choices. As a nation we are seeing the outcome of "convenient living" with our waistlines and stress levels. The Mental Fitness Goal Group of Mower Refreshed is focused on building resilience to stress and anxiety in everyday living. In County Connections on page two we learn more about Take 5, a simple and practical concept that can be practiced by us all to be healthier in our responses to stress and intentionally approach daily living more *refreshed!*

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### Intention Question

"What do you want to spend less time on?"

### What is Mower Refreshed?

- A county wide movement that inspires and ignites individuals and groups to promote healthy living.
- An effort that seeks to change the culture surrounding wellness, supporting the healthy choices becoming the easier choice for every citizen.
- A connecting point for citizen-driven wellness ideas and efforts to collaborate with one another, share resources and experience opportunity to network with others in the county.



# County Connections

Adams/Austin/Brownsdale/Corning/Dexter/Elkton/Grand Meadow/Johnsburg/Lansing/LeRoy/Lyle/Mapleview/Racine/Rose Creek/Sargeant/Taopi/Waltham



Emails piling up screaming to be responded to, paying bills with limited resources, a child that is exploring their independent thinking (aka: a tantrum!) or a co-worker who provides opportunity to practice stress management are all situations that require us to respond in some way. Typically the response is what we might call reactive rather than intentional. This automatic response can often be negative and lead us and

those around us to experience increase stress and anxiety.

Research was compiled through the United Way of Mower County Community Needs Assessment that revealed important insight on the stress level of those of us who live and work in Mower County. Stress and anxiety were not only identified as high concerns for citizens but two of the major factors that negatively impact our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.

One of Mower Refreshed focuses is on Mental Fitness. As a third grader described mental fitness: "It's being fit in your head." In June, the Mental Fitness Goal Group hosted an event for county professionals to introduce **TAKE 5**, a no cost concept to intentionally respond to stress and anxiety and featured Dr. Amit Sood, MD from Mayo Clinic's Complementary and Integrative Medicine Program as keynote speaker. The group realized early on that no one can remove stress from another person's life but we can promote and support ideas that equip individuals to cope better with the stress: resulting in less negative health impacts.



**TAKE 5** was developed by a variety of professionals from throughout the county coming together with the desire to create a common language in our schools, sports, workplaces, faith communities and homes that can be adapted by the individual in ways that make sense. **TAKE 5** means paying closer attention to how you respond to stress and replacing it with a positive, intentional response. **TAKE 5** may be pausing 5 seconds before entering a meeting at work or before you enter your home after work. It could mean taking five deep breathes before speaking when experiencing conflict, making your words more kind and spoken with less intensity. Walking 5 blocks or 5 miles, meditating on scripture for 5 minutes, blessing the next five people who drive by you, thinking of 5 people you are grateful for before getting out of bed each morning. Hear a siren from police or ambulance vehicle? Take 5 seconds to pray for the professionals who are responding to a crisis or telling your child five things you appreciate about them as a person a just a few examples of how simply we can use **TAKE 5** each day.

Visit [www.MowerRefreshed.org](http://www.MowerRefreshed.org) and click on the Mental Fitness icon. You'll find a **TAKE 5** document that gives more ideas on how to **TAKE 5**. More tools will be available such as a ten minute DVD that provides relaxing music and photography to use personally or in other settings to offer a **TAKE 5** moment. The participants at the June event developed a tool on how to use **TAKE 5** in a variety of settings (home, community, work, school, individual living, and faith communities) and it will be on the web site soon. Mental Fitness group members are available to meet with your group or organization to consider how to implement **TAKE 5** and promote efforts in building resistance to stress that can improve productivity and enhance relationships.

Practicing **TAKE 5** won't remove stress or anxiety producing situations, those will certainly be a part of our lives. However, when we refocus on gratitude, calm, thankfulness or kindness a shift occurs in us. When we intentionally **TAKE 5** we can slowly transform a conversation, a classroom, a family or possibly even a community.

What's your **Take** today?

# Refreshed Focus

## **Mower Refreshed Destination at the Fair**

Stop by at the 2012 Mower County Fair and experience a new option! Tuesday, August 7th and Wednesday, August 8th from 10:00am-7:00pm Mower Refreshed is creating a destination at the fair that will be interactive and offer a location for countywide wellness efforts to be promoted and network.

“Try-It” fitness classes (Yoga, Pilates, Zumba) will be offered 1:00-7:00pm each day, fruit and veggies on a stick, give-a-ways and more! Each day from 10:00am-12:00pm we will have kid’s activities. Look for Mower Refreshed in the 4:00pm parade Tuesday and Wednesday!

Tuesday is Wellness Day at the fair so stop by and experience some fresh *refreshment!*

## **Wellness Calendars for Your Organizations!**

Wellness Calendars (poster like design) are now available at [www.MowerRefreshed.org](http://www.MowerRefreshed.org) under the Workforce Wellness icon. They are also available in Spanish thanks to volunteers! This is being developed to promote a common wellness focus each month in our county at work, school, your faith community and home with the option for your organization to personalize it with your logo and promotional ideas on each month’s wellness topic.

The calendar provides the option to click on the top right corner and add your organization’s logo and then insert a story, contest, coupon or article that makes sense for your environment. A teacher may use it in the classroom to focus their students each month on a wellness topic or it might be adopted school wide. A business could promote healthy living with coupons or discounts for employees or their customers, while a faith community might insert a scripture verse that could encourage folks in healthy living...ideas are limitless!

## **Wellness Wednesdays in Mower County**

One day a week set apart to intentionally focus on making the healthy choice a bit easier at home, work school and play in Mower County? That describes Wellness Wednesdays!

There is no magic recipe or rules to follow just creative thinking on how each of us might make Wednesday a day when healthy choices are easy and potentially more fun for you and your family! Hy-Vee in Austin offers 20% off all food items in the Health Market area on Wednesdays already...making the healthier choice easier on our wallets. What could you and I do? Take fruit to work for sharing with co-workers, passing up french fries at lunch on Wednesday, walking or biking to work/school, faith communities serving healthy food options at Wednesday evening programming, intentionally practicing Take 5, restaurants offering a healthy “special of the day” on Wednesday or maybe skipping the extra helping at supper (or just skipping)!

Be creative on how you celebrate Wellness Wednesdays in Mower County and drop us an email or post on our Facebook page what you’re doing to make healthy living easier on Wednesdays!

## **Focus on Four**

### **Healthier Choices:**

Developing sustainable strategies that encourage the population of Mower county to make healthier choices.

### **Mental Fitness:**

To increase resilience when dealing with stress and anxiety.

### **Workforce Wellness:**

To create a healthier and more productive workforce.

### **Community Connections:**

To connect Mower County citizens to services, events, organizations and resources that promote healthy living.

**Inspired Refreshment!**

“The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”

Stephen R. Covey

## New Co-Chairperson for Mower Refreshed Steering Committee



The Mower Refreshed Steering Committee and current co-chairperson Adam Rees, Chief Administrative Officer at Mayo Clinic Health System Austin are pleased to announce that Lisa Kocer, BSN, RN, PHN will join Adam as co-chair for the committee. The position has been vacant since Margene Gunderson took a position with Olmsted County. Margene provided valuable groundwork for the growing movement of Mower Refreshed.

Lisa is the Community Health Services Administrator at Mower County Public Health & Human Services and has been a member on the steering committee for approximately a year. "I truly believe that the health of the community starts at the grassroots level and needs to include by-in from all partners in the community. Mower Refreshed is the very vehicle to spark interest for healthy lifestyle. Mower Refreshed reaches community members, families, children, schools and businesses for the collaborative purpose of making healthy choices." Lisa shared that the partnership between Mower Refreshed and Mower County Public Health & Human Services makes sense as they have similar goals in mind as far as improving the health of our communities in Mower County.

We look forward to collaborating with Mower County Public Health & Human Services and are grateful for Lisa's commitment to making healthy choices a priority in our county!

## Refreshing Events Calendar Under Construction

Summer is that time of year for construction and here at Mower Refreshed we are constructing a county-wide calendar on our web that will feature events, and programs that promote healthy living in our communities. Soon you will be able to simply email your classes, programs and events to us at [www.MowerRefreshed.org](http://www.MowerRefreshed.org) and will post it to the calendar to let folks know what healthy living options are out there each month!

We are also building links from our web to organizations and programs in our area...let us know of links you'd like to see added!



Want to be a part of developing Refreshed Dining in Mower County? We are especially interested in hearing from restaurant, café and coffeehouse owners. Contact us as we explore ideas and options to provided fresh dining in our county that makes sense for business owners and their customers.

### **Mower County Schools:**

Austin: [www.austin.k12.mn.us](http://www.austin.k12.mn.us)

Austin: Pacelli Catholic: [www.pacellischools.org](http://www.pacellischools.org)

Grand Meadow: [www.gm.k12.mn.us](http://www.gm.k12.mn.us)

LeRoy: [www.leroy.k12.mn.us](http://www.leroy.k12.mn.us)

Lyle: [www.lyle.k12.mn.us](http://www.lyle.k12.mn.us)

Riverland Community College: [www.riverland.edu](http://www.riverland.edu)

Southland-Adams: [www.isd500.k12.mn.us](http://www.isd500.k12.mn.us)

### **Mower County's Playgrounds**

Hormel Nature Center. [www.hormelnaturecenter.org](http://www.hormelnaturecenter.org)

Lake Louise State Park [www.dnr.state.mn.us/state\\_parks/lake\\_louise/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/lake_louise/index.html)

Contact us to share your events and ideas:

[www.MowerRefreshed.org](http://www.MowerRefreshed.org)

[www.facebook.com/mowerrefreshed](https://www.facebook.com/mowerrefreshed)

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