

Across the Fence
University of Vermont Extension
106 High Point Center, Suite 300
Colchester, Vermont 05446-8800
802-656-5059 or 888-283-3430
www.uvm.edu/extension/atfblog/



TRANSCRIPT

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EPISODE NAME: Nancy Somers of South Burlington discusses brain health

Good afternoon ... and thanks for joining us ... I'm Judy Simpson. In this day and age we're often bombarded with messages about a happier, healthier lifestyle. My guest this afternoon goes beyond the messages – and helps people get more out of life. She is professional yoga and fitness instructor who focuses on happiness and fun – and she says we can learn to be happier with some pretty simple lifestyle changes. It's a pleasure to welcome Nancy Somers. Nancy is the Director of the South Burlington Yoga Studio, and she teaches workshops on self-esteem and stress management that can lead to a happier, healthier life. Welcome thanks for being here.

Nancy.: It's my pleasure.

Judy.: This is such timely information because everybody is under a lot of stress these days or a lot of pressures on peoples and family's so anything we can learn to help is big.

Nancy.: I agree.

Judy.: When you speak to people about health and fitness as I understand you often start talking about brain health? What does that mean?

Nancy.: I do because there's a lot of new information about how to keep our brains healthy through time. It's important information because we're living longer and when you know what to do to maintain brain health it's great and the good news is that everything that's healthy for your brain is also healthy for your body and your mind and spirit. It all works together.

Judy.: What's this I hear about rain bingo?

Nancy.: Rain bingo is when you have three components together at the same time. And the components are exercise movement socializing personal interaction and learning. When you're learning socializing and moving it's a very good thing for your brain. It stimulates it in a great way.

Judy.: Exercise healthy food all that good stuff all sounds great what about times when memory just fails us? What you do then?

Nancy.: I've read a lot of books on memory and one of the best one said when you don't remember something you tell yourself this line. I don't remember a right now and I will because I have an excellent memory in fact my memory is getting better. I have a little story that goes with that. A little while ago I was out to Sunday brunch and there was a couple sitting at a table in the gentleman I had dated briefly and the woman I had taken a few aerobics classes with. I went through the alphabet to stimulate my memory and I didn't remember their names so I said

I don't remember right now and I will and I didn't think about it again until Thursday when I was walking down the street and Kevin and Lori popped into my brain. That was their names all never forget their names now but it was fascinating to me that my brain process that for four days like a little computer and pop that the information.

Judy.: Instead of panicking over not remembering that second realize that's OK eventually because I know what their names are and it will come to me.

Nancy.: Exactly.

Judy.: There are other things you recommend which can keep our brains functioning as well?

Nancy.: Yes. Exercise exercise exercise. That's the latest research. Of course you healthy diet. The important thing about exercise is that you have lots of variety of exercise. Aerobic exercise is good walking hiking anytime you're doing it with a friend as I said a little earlier and learning at the same time. If you went on a geology expedition up the mountain and you are socializing and climbing a mountain and learning about geology that would be fabulous.

Judy.: People who say I don't like going to age in because it's so boring well yeah it is so do something else.

Nancy.: Exactly. That's what I say you have to enjoy what you're doing. If you're running and you don't like running then don't run. Do something that's fun. And I also like to emphasize that yoga if people haven't explored that opportunity for revitalizing the body mind and spirit complex that we are it's a wonderful wonderful thing and there's a lot of different styles of the yoga. There's very hard yoga if you like to run marathons you might want to have active stimulating fast yoga class. But I believe just like there's a restaurant for everybody and not everybody likes the same restaurant fortunately I think it's important you find a yoga class that you enjoy. That's a key component to your exercise that you enjoy watching doing.

Judy.: You said breathing exercises are important too.

Nancy.: Very important. Several doctors say Dr. Andrew wild Harvard graduate medical Dr. Says if he could only teach his patients one thing it would be deep breathing exercises. There's also a wonderful quote by Dr. Otto Warburg who's a noble prizewinner self physiologist. He says that deep breathing exercises bring more oxygen into our brain are the most important thing we can do to live a disease free and healthy life. That's quite a statement and in yoga classes you will get a lot of breathing exercises and learn.

Judy.: You also mentioned something about listening to your own self talk.

Nancy.: Yes very important. Sometimes people will make jokes getting back to the memory piece about oh its Alzheimer's or I'm having a senior moment I have a great sense of humor but I tell my friends that's not funny I don't like to hear that. You want to talk positive and say positive statements about your brain like the I don't remember it and I will statement. Listening to your own self talk is really important is a lot of information on the walls of attraction bringing into your life which you talk about and think about. You want to keep a positive and happy.

Judy.: How much of a role do you think food plays in brain health.?

Nancy.: I think it plays a big role. There's research out that's exciting and stimulating. They know a lot of wonderful things that you can do to keep your brain healthy. Berries are in walnuts are in. I'm going to talk a little bit about that in just a minute with the green drink.

Judy.: You're also talking about the whole concept the food pyramid is out and now it's all about the plate.

Nancy.: Right I think and I like to teach how you eat watch and he is equally as important so here's the concept here. We have a huge plate.

Judy.: A dinner plate.

Nancy.: Exactly and a smaller plate it's my grandma as old plate candles. Anytime you can make it into a ritual or ceremony it's wonderful. It puts it on to another level so I like to have fresh flowers. Also to pitch a fork down in between bites. Sometimes people shovel it in. You can teach yourself to eat slower and then you'll need less. Anybody who wants to take off a few pounds switching to a smaller plate is a wonderful thing to do. Sometimes we do this pantomime but this is a wonderful way to eat and I highly recommend smaller plates and two your food well.

Judy.: Relaxing taking time.

Nancy.: Deep breathing. It's not a race.

Judy.: Settle in. I understand you're also very fond of the green drink what's that all about?

Nancy.: Here's the green drink. Will move our plates out of the way and will bring out the green drink. The green drink I learned about years ago at a health spa that I went to. I have a granny Smith apple in here maybe you can get that out.

Judy.: It's stuck Ok I'll work on that.

Nancy.: If not that's OK too. I like granny Smith apples because they're a little less sweet. You can tear that that's just the apple juice.

Judy.: I'm getting it.

Nancy.: Apple juices in. Apple juice is great for our brains and berries the blueberries that I mentioned. My green drink is sometimes purple because I threw a lot of blueberries in. The recommendation is ½ C to a cup of berries everyday. You can be any kind of

blueberries raspberries blackberries. I have a friend who picked 40 pounds of blueberries and froze them for herself.

Judy.: So she is set.

Nancy.: Hopefully yes. And kale I actually grew this kale in my own garden. This is the key ingredient in the green drink. Then tearing up the kale and throw it in with your blueberries and some apple juice and if you want to be green you might use banana and said the blueberries that just make sure you get berries in your diet and some point. And then apple juice you cut your apple throat in with your kale and also flax seeds are full of omega three essential oils very important for our brain with the put it in your drink or throw it on your food freshly ground it's great. In Dr. Christiana north recommends the golden flax seeds from Canada. Again green drinks are in.

Judy.: The good news is a lot of these ingredients are available right in supermarkets you can buy them in bulk.

Nancy.: Right absolutely and frozen is fine when you get fresh food and freezer right away berries for main it's a wonderful thing and Dr. Oz Oprah's favorite Dr. Wrote a beautiful article in time magazine and he actually has a picture of a green drink and his drink is green. Online there's lots of recipes for the green drink.

Judy.: At the beginning of the program you emphasize when it comes to staying healthy fun is a key ingredient.

Nancy.: It's one of the key ingredients absolutely. Everything functions better when you're having a good time. I can see the you enjoy your work and you're having fun and it perks everything up. I think it's really important to step out of your envelope and do something exciting and fun it's wonderful. It also is terrific for our relationships people want to be with people that are fun and are having a good time.

Judy.: The slide says beautiful memories smiling singing appreciation.

Nancy.: And gratitude. So I want appreciate everyone here at WCAX for inviting me on Tuesday because I love to share has information are it's so important.

Judy.: But let's talk about sharing because that's really interesting. Somebody said to me one time I'm really out of touch with my grandchildren because I don't get the information shared a lot with me. Good news and bad. People want to hear what's going on in your life.

Nancy.: That's true. I think that sharing is very important. They've done research and found that the healthiest people have the strongest human bonds. The more intimate relationships and the more time we spend with family and loved ones the better. In fact getting back to the food French people eat late and they eat very rich food but there not fat. I believe one of the reasons it is because their dining is a ritual and they share it with family and friends and they don't overheat because of that.

Judy.: You also teach that it's a good idea to prioritize pleasure what does that mean?

Nancy.: Research has shown that one of the things they keeps our bodies and minds really ingratiated is pleasure and enjoyed. We need a plan for that in our lives and an example

would be cultural enrichment. We want to every few months do something stimulating. To go to a museum see a beautiful piece of art or go to a concert and here beautiful music or go to nature and be inspired by the beauty of nature. It's very healthy for us is right up there with eating well and chewing your food and having good relationships.

Judy.: You should prioritize that and plan that into your schedule that you go out and do something. Something different that doesn't take all day.

Nancy.: Absolutely not. The planning for the good times is really important it keeps our lives juicy and you need a plan for because we have so many 'I can't wait to...'s in our life. I mean so many I have to's. We have to work we have to take care the kids we have to clean things like that but it's the I can't wait to's to keep life really juicy and it doesn't have to be huge. I have a big I can't wait two coming up. I'm going to *Kapolei*. Am a certified *Kapolei* yoga teacher and I can't wait every day I'm excited about it and I'm going in the middle of October. So the I can't wait to's are important and make them happen as you said it doesn't have to be big. It could be I can't wait to go to dinner with my honey or I can't wait to talk to someone on the phone that I haven't spoken to or it can be big if you plan that way.

Judy.: We've a few minutes left I just want to talk a little bit about what you call the Shoulds and coulds.

Nancy.: We have a lot of shoulds in our lives. When you change the word should to could he is an example last Thursday night I was I decided I was going to do laundry I had a lot of laundry to do and I should've done my laundry. However I chose to go to the movies with my friends instead because I love to have fun I love to be with my friends so it was a conscious choice. Now if I said to myself I should've done my laundry and did not its wrong in bed and putting myself down. If I said I could've done my laundry but instead I chose to go to the movies of my friends that I have a choice home. I like to say not to Should on yourself and don't let anybody should on you.

Judy.: That's actually good because you can get yourself into that whole ball of wax by saying I didn't do this I didn't do this but if you stop and think why didn't you do it well it's because I was doing something else.

Nancy.: Exactly and hopefully something fun.

Judy.: A lot of this is great information. What you think is the most important first step for people to take start down this path?

Nancy.: I think incorporating something positive and nice into your life. Doing something for you that's very stimulating for our brains intellectually. Focusing on any kind of exercise that's fun that you enjoy and coming up with a plan. Some people it's very hard to change their eating what they like but if you just do a little thing like a smaller plate or pitcher fork down in between bites. Little things you can incorporate into your life if taking things out is too stressful because we do not want to incorporate stress we want to bring in good times and feeling good.

Judy.: Then there's the whole ball of wax you can get wrapped up into is I'm going on a diet. Which for me is the death of it just sinks a right there but if I say OK I'm just going to use a smaller plate and take time eating my meal so eat less naturally that successful.

Nancy.: Exactly. New research says if you eat an apple 15 minutes before a meal it starts the digestive process and you will eat less or a small handful of nuts.

Judy.: So if you knowing that you're going out to a big dinner instead of starting yourself all day because you're having a big dinner have something to eat before you go.

Nancy.: Great perfect yes.

Judy.: How can people contact you?

Nancy.: I have a beautiful new web site. You can go to Nancy Somers.com that summers with one o and one m. And they can call me at my studio I'd be happy to answer questions and talk to anyone about health fitness and having fun.

Judy.: That sounds terrific thanks for joining us today.

Nancy.: It's my pleasure thank you for having me.

Judy.: It's all good advice. Thanks Nancy. That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we will see you again next time on across the fence.

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