



Retirement communities have evolved drastically over the last 50 years. Turn to page 7 to read how.

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## Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of *Always a Nurse* in 2010! This issue shares exciting new initiatives from the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), as well as articles focusing on laughter, retirement communities and much more!

To view issues of *Always a Nurse*, visit STTI's "Membership" Web site, [www.nursingsociety.org/Membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Membership),

and click on "Always a Nurse." As always, we would love your feedback or article ideas for future issues. Please e-mail suggestions to [alwaysanurse@stti.org](mailto:alwaysanurse@stti.org).

If you have any questions regarding *Always a Nurse*, contact Janell Jackson via e-mail at [janell@stti.org](mailto:janell@stti.org) or call 888.634.7575 (U.S./Canada) or +1.317.634.8171 (International).

## Inside the Society

2010 is the centennial year of the death of the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale (1820-1910).

To celebrate this historic milestone, the 2010 International Year of the Nurse (IYNurse) was established to actively involve the world's nurses, estimated to be more than 15 million, in a celebration of commitment to bring health to their communities, locally and worldwide.

The founders of this initiative, STTI, the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH) and the Florence Nightingale Museum (FNM), London, seek to recognize the contributions of nurses globally and advocate for the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs are eight international development goals that 192 United Nations Member States and at least 23 international organizations agreed to achieve by the year 2015. They were officially established at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, where world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration from which these Goals were promoted.

The goals center around sectors including health, poverty, education, gender and environment, and aim to



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# Inside the Society

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focus the world's attention on critical issues impacting the health of humanity.

A special Commemorative Service is being conducted 25 April at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., USA from 4:00-5:00 p.m to honor Florence Nightingale and IYNurse. The event is open to the public.

How will you celebrate 2010 IYNurse? Events, stories, poems and special tributes from around the globe have been collected and submitted to the IYNurse Web site, [www.2010iynurse.net](http://www.2010iynurse.net). Please add your events or stories today!

## BookMarks

### *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual and Kind Diet: A Simple Guide to Feeling Great, Losing Weight, and Saving the Planet*

On a recent "Oprah" show titled "Before You Shop Again: Food 101," Oprah spotlighted two books, *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual* by Michael Pollan and *The Kind Diet: A Simple Guide to Feeling Great, Losing Weight, and Saving the Planet* by actress and vegan Alicia Silverstone.

Pollan's book offers easy to use rules for shoppers to become more mindful of the foods we eat. On the show he spoke of the "common sense" rules shoppers should

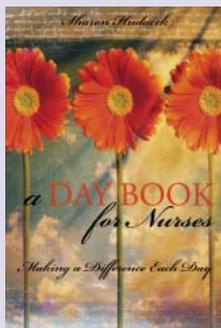
use, like avoiding food products containing ingredients that a third-grader cannot pronounce, eating food that will eventually rot and, my favorite, eating all the junk food you want as long as you cook it yourself. Silverstone's book is a collection of about 100 easy and earth-friendly recipes.

More information on "Oprah" and the featured books is available online at [www.oprah.com](http://www.oprah.com).

### Honor yourself or a special nurse with a gift from Nursing Knowledge International!

Now through 12 May 2010, receive US \$10 off orders totaling US \$50 or more or US \$20 off orders totaling US \$100 or more. Enter code NURSE10 at checkout.

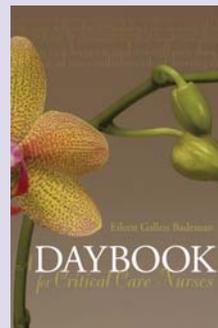
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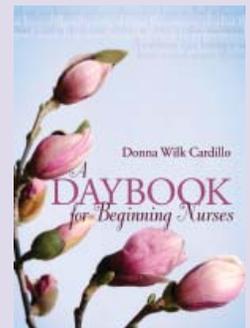
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More than  
12,000 sold!



*A Daybook for Nurse  
Leaders and  
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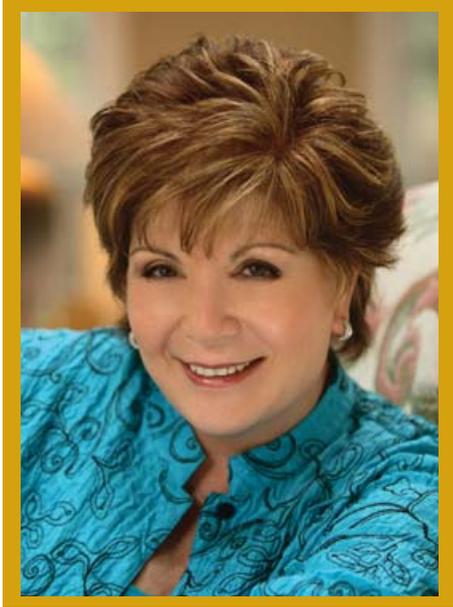
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## "So, what about laughter?"

### Meet Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN



Sharon Weinstein

As a diploma graduate from Pennsylvania Hospital School of Nursing, Philadelphia, I continued my education in Florida and Texas as I moved around the country and around the globe – somewhat of a pioneer at the time. No, I was not in the military, although that might have been a great choice. Rather, my husband, a successful hospital CEO, and I took turns relocating for one another – always advancing within our careers. During this time, I also had three children...and they became expert networkers as they navigated within school systems and new neighborhoods. To some, this might appear stressful. To us, it represented a journey, an opportunity to meet new people, make new friends and to exercise humor in the process.

And so, our journeys enabled us to own 14 homes in as many states and an apartment in Moscow. Our journeys enabled us to look on the bright side of moving about – clean closets, constant purging, lack of clutter and the development of incredible organizational skills. In spite of this constant activity, or perhaps because of it, our adult children are incredibly well-adjusted, outgoing, and yes, they do see laughter as the best medicine.

I completed master's degrees in gerontology, health administration, and business in Texas and Illinois, and I am Adjunct Clinical Professor at the University of Illinois, Chicago College of Nursing. Like many Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) colleagues, I, too, have paid my dues...and my career has been, and continues to be, so rewarding. My career has spanned infusion therapy, home care, medical school, nursing school faculty and international. I feel blessed to have always been a step ahead of the pack – leading the field and creating opportunities for nurses and nursing.

As director of the Office of International Affairs for an 1800-hospital alliance, I created partnership opportunities for our North American hospital and their foreign counterparts. I served as U.S. advisor to the Kremlin Hospital (Central Clinical Hospital in Moscow) for 10 years and created the international patient department.

As founder of the International Nursing Leadership Institute hosted by the American International Health Alliance, I had the opportunity to collaborate with many STTI leaders as we shared knowledge and expertise with our peers from the new independent States of the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern European nations. We focused on learning as fun-damental and we put the edu-tainment in education. Our goal was to create a cadre of nurse leaders/educators.

A series of leading management books were used by faculty to generate the curriculum. Students and faculty, in full costume, acted out the stories. For example, the parable, "Who Moved My Cheese," encouraged students to have contingency plans and to expect change. The book, *The Oz Principle*, told students that they could be or do whatever they wanted...if they wanted it badly enough! The book, *Goldilocks on Management*, featured a series of revisionist fairy tales for serious managers. Thirty-four of our graduates have been granted international membership in the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) and more than 68 graduates have been inducted as community leaders in STTI.

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## "So, what about laughter?"

### Meet Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN

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So, what about laughter? For years, our children referred to me as 50 percent...meaning that 50 percent of the time (or less), I had a good sense of humor. I actually "got" a joke; I could laugh at myself. I think that I have now graduated to 80 percent. Sometimes, I am the first to see the humor in a situation or to come up with a great line. Of course, family members are still amazed! Sometimes, I get "it" – whatever "it" might be! And, my level of awareness has increased as I have transitioned within my career from a focus on intervention to one of health and wellness – prevention and health promotion.

It is fascinating to work with colleagues who embrace ownership of one's body and the need to advocate for self-care, self-reflection, meditation and laughter. Laughter definitely has a place within every aspect of one's life. Laughter has enabled me to change my mindset, shift my paradigms and it has enhanced my well-being!

As nurses, we all need to assume responsibility for the joys of life! As nurses, we work in stressful environments. Humor allows us to deal with stress more effectively; humor impacts healing and recovery time. And, humor has enabled me to grow personally and professionally.

As I have transitioned within my career, a sense of humor has definitely helped. In my work with foreign Ministers of Health, Education and Finance, I always needed to see the big picture of what was possible, but perhaps not always probable. In my consulting practice, I have integrated humor in my work related to positive practice environments and wellness. As founder of the Integrative Health Forum ([www.ihfglobal.com](http://www.ihfglobal.com)), I am leading the field in creating the evidence-base for nursing's wellness practice. My practice interest is in offering solutions for health, wellness, safety and the environment. I collaborate with organizations insuring between 500 and 2,000 lives, and I help them to maintain healthcare costs through WellWorks™ programs. And, I work with nurse entrepreneurs, helping them to envision the next phase of

their nursing careers and executing the process.

So, like me, step back, look at the big picture and use that perspective to help people feel good about themselves...that is the critical skill that's allowed me to touch the lives of people like you and me on a global scale! I can combine my background in western medicine with integrative and functional medicine to help people feel better and live longer naturally. From personal experience, I know that sometimes it all comes down to the environment in which we live and work. That environment can hinder our ability to be well and can create stress-induced illness. This can take a huge toll on energy levels and the feeling of well-being we all rely on to have optimal vitality and wellness.

I have had a long and exciting nursing career; I often joke that I should be at least 100 years of age given all that I have crammed into 40 years as a nursing professional. And, the best is yet to come. Visit me online at [www.corelimited.com](http://www.corelimited.com).

**Sharon Weinstein is a member of Alpha Lambda Chapter of STTI; she is the author of multiple publications, two of which have been published through Nursing Knowledge International: *Nursing Without Borders: Values, Wisdom, Success Markers and Bs for Balance: A Guide to Creating Balance at Home and at Work*. Sharon has contributed an article to this issue of *Always a Nurse*, available on pg. 5.**

## Share your story!

If you would like to share your advice or retirement stories with *Always a Nurse* readers, please e-mail [alwaysanurse@stti.iupui.edu](mailto:alwaysanurse@stti.iupui.edu). Your article may be featured in an upcoming issue!

# Laughter: The Best Medicine

By Sharon Weinstein, RN, MS, CRNI, FACW, FAAN

**“What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul.”**  
—Yiddish Proverb

Without question, one of the best feelings in the world is being overcome with uncontrollable laughter. You know the kind; when you laugh so hard you cry, and you keep chuckling each time you relive the moment, even hours after the “fit of laughter” has left you. Laughing, it turns out, lowers blood pressure, reduces stress hormones, increases muscle flexibility and boosts the immune function (Berk et al., 1989). It does this by raising the levels of infection-fighting proteins and cells that produce disease-destroying antibodies—T-cells and antibodies IgA and IgB. Additionally, one study at the University of Maryland Medical Center revealed a connection between laughter and the healthy functioning of blood vessels (Miller, 2000).

With today’s hectic pace, we need a few moments of daily laughter—the more the better. It is free of charge and readily available. In the face of frequently dispiriting news from around the globe, it is easy to become glum and irritable, and that can quickly and quietly throw off your balance.

## Health Benefits

Laughter has enormous health benefits for those with a diversity of clinical conditions from chronic diseases, such as diabetes, to lowering risks of heart attacks and everything in between. In the world in which we live, replete with modern medical breakthroughs, who would

ever dream that something as simple as laughter could induce such amazing benefits for your health?

A study of patients with Type 2 Diabetes revealed that laughter helps regulate gene expression (Hayashi et al., 2006). Studies also suggest that laughter positively affects rheumatoid arthritis by affecting the level of the condition as well as psychological benefits in controlling stress and stress-related conditions.

Laughter makes it easier to handle life and its challenges because it puts us “in the moment.” When we are in the moment, we are less aware of our problems. Remember a time when you have laughed and things have somehow seemed different? Going back to childhood, our parents and grandparents would try to get us to laugh through our tears after a skinned knee. Later, it was over a broken heart or a betrayed friendship. Throughout life, even at the lowest points like the death of a close loved one, remembered laughter can lighten the load and help restore equilibrium to our lives.

Laughter is therapeutic because it relaxes us and gives us a better perspective: A period of laughter gives us the opportunity to look at things differently and defuses painful emotions. With practice, we can and should make laughter a part of our everyday lives.

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# Laughter: The Best Medicine

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In office-work environments:

- Decorate your office with toys that you and your visitors can play with when things get difficult. Play dough is a great office tool!
- Start a Laugh-In club with contests for the best (appropriate) jokes or clowning around.
- Make those around you laugh at least three times a day, and they will return the favor.
- Keep silly photos of you and your loved ones around you.
- Keep "dress up" items like silly costumes found at garage or yard sales in your office. When the stress gets too high, walking the halls in a curly rainbow wig or Superman cape can lighten the atmosphere considerably.



- Bring in music that calms you.

Don't forget humor in your personal life too. Remember, a smile goes a long way, and laughter will:

- Promote a positive environment.
- Create an air of trust.
- Cheer you and others around you.
- Rechannel energy to something more positive.
- Release tension.
- Reduce stress.
- Work the diaphragm and increase the body's ability to use oxygen.

If you can laugh at something, it ceases to be so overwhelming. Remember: Laughter is contagious. Have something in your workplace that automatically makes you smile.

Once you're smiling, spread it around and make your co-workers and patients smile too!

## Celebrate Nurses Week

**Be Inspired. Be Motivated. Be Renewed.**

Do you remember the person that inspired you to become a nurse? The mentor that made a difference in your life?

Nurses Week, 6-12 May, and International Nurses Day, 12 May, are great times to celebrate the nurses that have made a difference in the lives of people worldwide. STTI has several resources currently available to help you start celebrating.

Submit stories and tributes to be posted on *Reflections on Nursing Leadership (RNL)*, STTI's online magazine. Share the link with the nurses that have inspired you and let them know how much they have impacted you and your career! Comments will be displayed throughout Nurses Week. Visit [www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org](http://www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org) to post your tribute today!

You can also go online to download a special Nurses Week wallpaper for your computer, to display to your friends, family and colleagues your nursing pride. Download wallpaper, available in various sizes, at [www.nursingsociety.org/Membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Membership) by clicking on "Campaigns" and then "Nurses Week 2010." This page also has several opportunities for chapters to become involved in Nurses Week activities, including press release templates and gift ideas for members

Happy Nurses Week!



## Changing the face of retirement communities

Builder Del Webb started one of the first retirement communities in Sun City, Ariz, USA, some 50 years ago. More than 100,000 people participated in the grand opening, where 1,300 homes were sold. At that time, homes were 840-square foot bungalows that were wheelchair accessible and sold for \$8,500. The community included recreational centers, arts and crafts, activity clubs and multiple golf courses; all this geared to retired married couples. In his article for National Public Radio (NPR), "Community Helped Change How We See Retirement," Tim Robbins visits one of the first established retirement communities in the Sun Belt.

Fast forward to 2009-2010, and retirement communities are evolving to meet the needs of the more "active senior." Residents in the community tend to be more affluent and able to afford the more spacious resort-style homes priced at US \$180,000. Most homes are still one-level bungalows, but in some cases the square footage has nearly doubled or tripled: Homes now boast 1,099 to 5,000-square feet.

Amenities can include internet cafes, continuing education classes, water parks and playgrounds, which may appeal more to the large number of baby boomers who may be looking into this lifestyle. Residents who live in the communities may be continuing to work in order to maintain their active lifestyle, or homes may include additional family members to assist with needs.

Overall communities are changing to meet the needs of the times and to entice people who may not be so interested in moving away from their longtime homes or their families. But either way, life after "retirement" is a new phase to be enjoyed wherever you are.

Story and photos provided by NPR:  
*Community Helped Change How We See Retirement*,  
Tim Robbins, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122218966>



*On the left, people visited Sun City, Ariz., when the community opened 50 years ago. On the right, A clubhouse in Sun City's newest community reflects the evolution retirement communities have undergone.*

always a nurse always a nurse always a nurse always a nurse



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