

CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Divine Stewardship – Driven by Spiritual Values

Stewardship is the fifth of six core values of the Optimum Health Institute (OHI) that supports our Mission to “serve as a change agent for humankind by improving the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of everyone we touch.”

Many people view stewardship as how we spend our money when it is actually the careful and responsible management of all that God has entrusted to our care. In our case at OHI, God has entrusted us with you, our missionaries, employees and the assets that support our Mission – just to name a few.

Stewardship is how we nurture everything from our physical being, our time, talent, treasure, and personal relationships, to the Earth's natural resources. In a Democracy such as ours, it also requires us to be stewards by participating in Local, State and National issues by voting for candidates that exercise good stewardship.

In uncertain times, such as we are experiencing today, it is very important that we all take the time to review and prioritize our individual responsibilities relating to stewardship. This can appear as a daunting task at this time, but I have some simple big picture steps that will help you focus on what matters most.

First, focus on what you personally can control through the grace of God - your physical, mental and spiritual well-being. If we are not good stewards of our own God given gifts, we can not help others.

Second, focus on prioritizing the things you can influence, in terms of supporting family, friends and work.

Third, look to issues of concern, such as the economy, politics, and the environment and identify what you may be able to influence through correspondence, community involvement and your privilege to vote.

In each of the areas of control, influence and concern, prioritize what you need first and let go of your wants. Ask yourself am I reacting emotionally or responding pragmatically out of the love of God, others and self. Make sure your priorities are balanced in terms of your time, touch, talent and treasure. Once you have a “big picture” framework for making healthy choices related to stewardship, you are ready to focus on action items.

First and foremost, take care of your relationships. It's easy to be kind when things are going smoothly, but effective stewardship means digging deep inside to find God's grace when the going gets tough. Are you communicating with compassion, patience, and love when interacting with an upset spouse, rambunctious children, aging parents and demanding friends, customers and colleagues? It takes more effort, but the rewards are equally great.

Second, become better stewards of your money. Relationships can experience extra strain in tough economic times. Therefore, to ease the stress, I urge everyone to review your last two months of spending and create a “needs” budget. This will be the quickest way to identify where you are spending, and make sure your spending is in alignment with your needs and spiritual values.

After you've discovered exactly where the money is going each month, ask yourself – based on your needs, is this the most appropriate flow? Does my spending truly represent my priorities, and are my priorities healthy? Do you choose altruistic, loving priorities that illustrate and reinforce your deeply held spiritual values, or gluttonous self-consumption? -- Continue to next page



Robert P. Nees, Jr.

“Ultimately,
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Robert P. Nees, Jr.

THE FIVE P'S TO OPTIMUM HEALTH

Purpose to achieve a natural balance and reconnection to the Divine.

Positive mental attitude that supports the healing process.

Persistence in following the holistic disciplines of the OHI program.

Patience with your body and yourself, as you allow your mind, body and spirit to heal.

Prayer to a higher source who will share the load with you.



CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE – Continued

Remember, money is merely an instrument, and it is how we use that instrument that determines if we are being good stewards. A good thing about tough economic times is we are all forced to reevaluate our financial stewardship, and look at our lives holistically.

We also have the opportunity to take a close look at the leaders we're going to put into office in November. How will they be prioritizing what the government spends? Will they tax and spend recklessly out of self interest? Or, will they invest and create incentives in the interest of all?

It's easy to fall into one of two extremes – either a mindset of scarcity, where “what's mine is mine,” someone wins and someone loses – or the other extreme where “there's a redistribution of wealth from those people who worked hard to obtain it, to those who don't have it.” Neither option is holistic. If we are to be effective stewards, we need to come to a place where the poor are given a helping hand, while the rich are being given incentives to be generous, create jobs and a culture of abundance.

Ultimately, balanced stewardship must be driven by spiritual values and needs-based priorities at all levels of our great Democracy.

What better place to jumpstart your process of evaluating what stewardship means to you than at OHI where you can leave the noise and stress of the everyday world behind. We can help you refocus your lives and identify your spiritual values and priorities. While you are thinking of it, take advantage of our “Bring A Buddy Program” going on right now. It is our way of helping you and a friend save on costs and focus on your physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

Feel the peace and grace divinely inspired stewardship can bring to each day!

Yours in prayer,



Robert P. Nees, Jr.

Chairman

Optimum Health Institute of San Diego and Austin



BRING A BUDDY, GET A BARGAIN HAS BEEN EXTENDED!

OHI's popular “Bring a Buddy, Get a Bargain” special discount has been extended through the week of December 14th, 2008. Here are the details:

OHI – SAN DIEGO (Through December 14th, 2008)

When you book a stay in any standard private or courtyard room at the double occupancy rate at our San Diego facility through the week of December 14th, 2008, your buddy receives a \$350 discount off the price of the double occupancy rate. Even better, if two guests book a townhouse through December 14th at the double occupancy rate, the third guest stays for only \$100. That's a savings of \$495 for three guests paying the triple occupancy rate!

OHI – AUSTIN (Through December 14th, 2008)

Book a stay in any private or preferred room at the double occupancy rate at our Austin Facility, and your buddy receives a \$350 discount off the price of the double occupancy rate.

Space is limited at both Missions, so make your reservations today. Call OHI toll-free at 800-993-4325 and ask for the “Bring a Buddy – Get a Bargain” discount. Please provide the Guest Services Representative with one of the following codes:

- OHI – San Diego Code: OHI – SDN
- OHI – Austin Code: OHI – AUN

Rooms are required to be “paid in full” at the time of your reservation. A 50% cancellation fee applies to all cancellations; there are no exceptions. These special offers do not include large private, shared or preferred rooms or suites at our San Diego Facility and do not include dormitory or cottage rooms at our Austin Facility. This offer is good for only one week per guest.

“TO SHARE AND TAKE CARE”

Everything we have, and every gift we enjoy in our life, is a gift from God. Given that belief, how do we give back to God? Certain behaviors such as generosity, compassion, and gratitude to God would honor this belief. Guests at our Austin facility have demonstrated these behaviors in grand form by their generous gifting to our scholarship program. It has allowed us to extend a scholarship to a guest in need every month. Those of us with responsibility to administer these funds must in turn be good stewards of these gifts and honor the donors and God by making trustworthy decisions.

Good stewardship is often discussed in scripture and other spiritual texts, but in its most simple form it means, “take care.” Take care of things that have been given to us by God and others. Ideally, we take care of our earth, our property, and possessions, and leave a legacy and a healthy environment for our children and their children. Many of these disciplines are taught in our mind, body and spirit program at OHI.

In Austin, we have been recycling for several years, and along with our San Diego co-workers, we always look for the most “green” products we can find to use in our Missions.

Another simple message from stewardship is “to share.” This is most likely the best way we can give back to God. Share what we have with those who do not have.

These twin disciplines, “to share and take care,” truly are at the heart of proper stewardship. We take care of our bodies, our minds, and our spiritual relationship with God and others. We share our strength, our love, our forgiveness, and our gratitude. Truly, we all have much for which to be thankful!

Blessings,

Lou Ann King

Executive Director, OHI - Austin



Lou Ann King

Note: For additional scriptural readings on stewardship, I invite you to read.

- Proverbs 3:27-28
- 1 Corinthians 4:1-2
- 2 Corinthians 9:7-10
- Psalm 112:5-9



Amandou Thiam

EYE ON THE INSTITUTE:

Meet Amandou Thiam

Sometimes being a good steward means traveling around the world to care for a precious treasure – your health. That’s the case for OHI San Diego guest Amandou Thiam, a senator from the Republic of Senegal on the coast of West Africa.

When Amandou experienced health opportunities, some friends suggested he come to OHI.

“I wanted to care for this body that God gave me, so I would be able to provide for my beautiful wife and three small children,” said Amandou. After an exhausting 16-hour, 10,000 mile flight to the United States, Amandou found what he was looking for – a peaceful sanctuary from a demanding outside

world, where his body could begin to balance and heal.

“OHI has given me back my life,” Amandou said. “Here I have found my second home, and some lifelong friends. I plan to apply much of what I have learned here about health and nutrition to my daily life.” Some of the things that make OHI so special, says Amandou, include:

- The positive camaraderie that makes the program easier to follow.
- The way guests support and encourage each other.
- How each part of the program supports mind, body and spirit as an integrated whole.
- How the classes teaching spiritual change effectively helped him shift old habits and mindsets, and made him an effective change leader for others.

Even with his enthusiastic dedication to the OHI program, Amandou realizes that lasting change is a gradual process, and reinforcing the new teachings will require more visits. Despite the fact he lives half a world away, he plans to return to the Mission at least twice a year to fully integrate the program.

“I know each visit will be different, and more rewarding,” he said. He also thanked Pam Nees for her support and caring, and the rest of the staff for being so gracious. He said the very congenial atmosphere helps all the guests get the most from each visit.

“OHI has
given me

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Amandou Thiam

GUEST ENJOYS 3 DECADES OF WHEAT GRASS JUICE!

If the Optimum Health Institute (OHI) issued loyalty awards, Keith Mayer would have the title of “most frequent juicer.” He’s spent a week at OHI every three months since 1979, and plans to continue his visits for the rest of his life.

It’s the way OHI serves as a refuge from the world, and provides him with like-minded people who are also seeking better health and spiritual transformation, that keeps Keith coming back to the lushly landscaped grounds and gardens of the San Diego Mission.

“In the beginning, everything was very spartan,” Keith recalled. “OHI was quite different from everything else in Lemon Grove.” Besides the accommodations becoming more comfortable through the decades, Keith said he appreciates how the food has also improved. “The (raw, organic vegan) diet is almost gourmet compared to the early days,” he said. He also appreciates the decorative touches, like edible flowers, which make each meal appealing to both the eye and the taste buds.

He also appreciates the transformational elements that have stayed the same – positive facilitators, an excellent staff, pristine grounds and the healing environment.

“Everyone shares and encourages each other, so you’re allowed to be imperfect and vulnerable,” Keith said. That safe space, along with the abundance of fresh wheat grass juice, keeps Keith coming back time after time.



Keith Mayer



Larry Taylor

“We care about
your opinions,
and want
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stewards!”

Larry Taylor

WE’RE LISTENING TO YOU!

Being a good steward means honoring the things you’re caring for – and to us, that means our valued guests. We’re constantly reevaluating our efforts in order to provide the most sacred, positive experience possible for all of you who trust us to guide you in detoxifying and realigning your mind, body and spirit during your stay. That’s why we place Guest Surveys in every room and pass them out in our classes, and why we sincerely appreciate it when you take a moment to share your thoughts with us.

Because such an important part of the OHI experience is enjoying the live, raw organic meals we lovingly prepare, we pay special attention to your comments and suggestions about our food. We take great pride in offering locally grown produce from 100% certified organic farms, but we have gone one step further - we have made it a point to make each plate more of a visual treat.

We started adding attractive little touches – putting a scoop of seed cheese in a lettuce cup or celery stick, for instance, or garnishing with brilliantly colored edible flowers. Instead of shredding vegetables together, we now serve individually cut celery, carrot sticks, and whole radishes. Not only can you instantly identify each item – it actually looks like you are getting a bigger meal!

The instant we changed the appearance of the food, we started getting positive feedback saying it actually tasted better.

Another mealtime change is having a person from our talented kitchen staff roaming the dining room, answering questions about specific dishes, and finding out what you enjoy the most. You let us know you’re happy about that, too -- our mealtime scores have jumped into the 90th percentile, according to your comments.

In addition to all these improvements, we found another way to boost the spirits of guests. Because color is energy, and we absorb the energies of the different colors around us, we will be adding bright new chair and lounge cushions in shades of red, yellow, and orange specifically chosen to please and rejuvenate you.

We also extended these upgrades from our kitchen into our grounds by adding vibrant blooms and flowering shrubs to the landscape. We have tucked more inviting meditation benches into secluded little spots. We scattered umbrella-shaded benches around the grounds, so you can sit down, relax, and breathe in the beauty and serenity of the lush foliage and newly planted impatiens, petunias, mums, and lilies. Our new water features are a lovely addition symbolizing abundant flow and freedom of movement, a reflection of life. All these carefully planned changes are definitely worth it when we read how much you appreciate them.

Please keep those comments coming – we care about your opinions, and want to be good stewards!

Warm regards,

Larry Taylor

President





Pam Nees

"I have been given so much that I want to give back. I am in my sixties yet OHI has helped me feel like a 25 year old!"

Bill Raffin



A NOTE OF THANKS!

Stewardship, one of OHI's core values, is also the loving energy we have shared with our guests since we first opened our doors over 30 years ago. Our guests have generously donated so many things that have become a treasured part of both our Austin and San Diego Missions.

One beloved example of this is the circa 1940 Baldwin baby grand piano that graced San Diego's Multi Purpose Room for decades. Listening to music is so healing, and that venerable instrument filled people's hearts with beauty and joy. We have many talented guests, including some concert pianists, so we've been treated to some spectacular performances.

I noticed in recent years however, that the piano was getting ready to "cross over." The tuning head had cracked, the pedals did not work, and the keys frequently stuck. We could not invest in a new instrument, so I prayed for a solution that was "in tune" with the universe.

Recently, a dear friend and guest – Bill Raffin – was coaxing a song from the tired, yellowed keys when the poor baby grand just gave up. "This place really ought to have a decent piano," Bill said, then quietly left the room.

Before long, I got a call from Bill – he was standing in a nearby music store. "I'd like to give you a new piano," he began, "But I don't want to force it on you..." "I've been PRAYING for a new piano!" I said, excited and moved by his generosity.

"I have been given so much that I want to give back. I am in my sixties yet OHI has helped me feel like a 25 year old!" said Bill.

I feel it is important to point out that Bill is just a jewel of a person – he lives his life with joy and selfless compassion. For example, during the most recent Malibu fires, he and some brave friends put their own lives on the line to save several neighbors' homes. All of them received the Dolphin Award from the city for their heroic efforts. Bill is also an artistic soul, and sometimes for fun, he plays the piano on cruise ships.

The next time you are listening to a performance in the MPR, please join me in sending Bill a silent prayer of gratitude for his generous stewardship. His kindness will enrich all our lives for many, many decades, and the new black lacquer grand piano with brass feet strikes just the right note!

Love,

Pam Nees

Program Director



SEAWEED SALAD

1/4 Lb Seaweed (Arame or Hijiki, soak in water for one hour and drain)

1 Tomato diced and drained

2 Celery stalks diced

1/2 Cucumber diced

2 Sprigs Parsley chopped finely

1 Green Onion diced

Combine above ingredients except for the diced tomato

Seasoning:

1/2 Tsp Ginger powder

1/2 Tsp Garlic powder

1/8 Tsp Cayenne

Add the seasoning mixture to the main ingredients and then add the diced tomato.

TO YOUR HEALTH!

Teach Your Kids To Brown Bag Real Food

Kids are back in school, and the positive things you taught them about healthy food choices during the summer can go right along with them. Cheryl Green, Program Director at OHI Austin, shared some practical tips that are keeping her 11-year-old daughter "eating green."

- Cheryl mindfully combines OHI staples, like veggie sticks, fruit and dehydrated cucumber "chips," with sprouted wheat bread and almond butter sandwiches, and an organic granola bar.
- A handful of sunflower greens or sprouts adds crunch and nutrition to sandwiches and salads.
- Raw hummus with celery sticks is a great snack that packs well.
- Fill a reusable water bottle mostly with ice, and it will keep a bag lunch cold until noon and melt in time for the meal.
- Soaked, dehydrated nuts or sunflower and pumpkin seeds are high-energy snacks kids love.
- Instead of sodas or sugary juice drinks, make fresh juice.
- Lentil and tomato soups are tasty and filling.



OPTIMUM HEALTH INSTITUTE

a Mission of the Free Sacred Trinity Church

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“Like good stewards
of the manifold
grace of God,
serve one another with
whatever gift each of
you has received.”

1 Peter 4:10 NRSV

OUR MISSION

We will serve as a change agent for humankind by improving the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of everyone we touch.

CORE VALUES OF OPTIMUM HEALTH INSTITUTE

Holism, Generosity, Relationships, Life-long Learning, Stewardship and Service

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Trustworthiness, Respect, Empowerment and Alignment

Contact us at newsletter@optimumhealth.org to receive your newsletters via e-mail.

Please visit our website at www.optimumhealth.org

As a not-for-profit Mission of the Free Sacred Trinity Church, OHI accepts donations to support our mind, body and spirit program. Your generous gifts help us maintain the quality of the experience, while keeping tuition fees to a minimum. Thank you!

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CONNECT WITH US!

Visit our weekly Open House every Sunday starting at 4:30 p.m. in Austin and 4 p.m. in San Diego. The program offers visitors, guests and adherents a personal tour of the facility, lecture, prayer circle and an all raw foods vegetarian dinner. (\$3 donation is appreciated, but not required.) Contact us! We'd love to hear from you. Send us an email at newsletter@optimumhealth.org.

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