

# HEALTHY INDEPENDENT LIVING: For People with Disabilities



## HEALTH & WELLNESS CONFERENCE

October 3, 2017  
St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

[www.mnccd.org/conference](http://www.mnccd.org/conference)



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### Welcome to MNCCD's First Health and Wellness Conference!



**The idea for this conference** came after touring a Living Well Disability Services group home and hearing about their incredible success with wellness programming. Their data on improved health, weight loss, and lowered use of medications among residents was outstanding and I left thinking, "We need to bring this to the people." With that idea in mind, MNCCD decided to host a conference; here are some highlights:

**Our keynote speaker**, Dr. Henry Emmons, is a well-known psychiatrist and author who integrates mind-body and natural therapies into his practice.

**Breakout session topics include:** nutrition, self-care, financial health, sexual health, attitude, yoga, therapeutic recreation, executive functioning, technology, and chiropractic care (by none other than our own HHS Committee Chair, Senator Jim Abeler).

**Lunch** is being catered by Simpli's and will feature soups, sandwiches, salad and dessert. Dine on delicious healthy food while enjoying musical entertainment by Thabiso Rowan.

**Our wrap-up speaker** will be Mathew Sanford. Mathew is a renowned speaker with an inspirational story who will leave us on a positive note for the day.

Certificates of Attendance for CEU's are will be available for the conference. Interpreter and CART services will be offered courtesy of the Minnesota Council on Disability (MCD) for the morning keynote.

People with disabilities often have compromised health as part of their disability. Sometimes health is compromised by the inability to get or cook good food, or the inability to afford things like supplements that support good health. Living with a disability can be stressful, and stress compromises health. Overall it behooves us in the disability community to take a look at ways to better support people with disabilities in achieving good health. It is our goal to create a fun, experiential, educational conference in which to learn about different ways to support health and wellbeing.

I want to thank our major sponsors: **Pediatric Home Service, Allina Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare, MN Department of Health, and UCare** for their financial support. Also to the MNCCD board of directors, and our member organizations who were integral in getting financial backing and promoting this conference in a myriad of ways; thank you, thank you, thank you!

To register go to: [www.mnccd.org/conference](http://www.mnccd.org/conference)

*Dr. Sheryl Grassie*

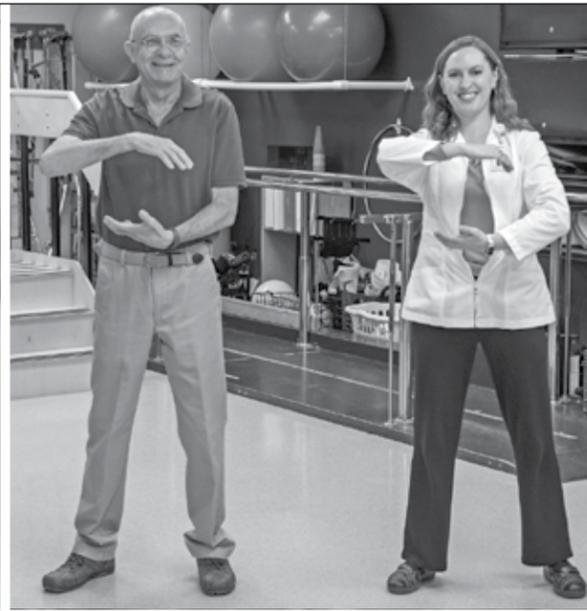
**Dr. Sheryl Grassie**  
Executive Director, Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities



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## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

8:15 **REGISTRATION**

8:55 **WELCOME**  
**Dr. Sheryl Grassie**

9:00-10:00 **KEYNOTE**  
**Dr. Henry Emmons**  
Restoring Resilience: Blending Science and Wisdom to Sustain a Healthy Mind, Mood and Heart

10:15-11:00 **BREAKOUT SESSION ONE**  
a. Ricka Kohnstamm: Self-Care  
b. Julia Mclean: The "GAPS" Diet  
c. Amy Samson-Burke: Yoga  
d. Joe Kukla: Financial Resources

11:15-12:00 **BREAKOUT SESSION TWO**  
a. Cassie Weness: Nutritional Solutions  
b. Barb Turner: Technology & Health  
c. Katie Thune: Sexual Health  
d. Brenda Frie: Five-A's

12:15 - 1:00 **LUNCH**

1:15 - 2:00 **BREAKOUT SESSION THREE**  
a. Matthew Hansen: Assistive Technology  
b. Kat Gordon: Self-Care  
c. Sen. Abeler: Chiropractic & Health  
d. Jenna Matteson Laabs: Executive Dysfunction

2:15 - 3:00 **BREAKOUT SESSIONS FOUR**  
a. Thabiso Rowan: Positive Attitude  
b. Tony Schmit: Estate Planning  
c. Rod Carlson: Culture of Wellness  
d. Emily Miller: Therapeutic Recreation

3:15 - 4:00 **WRAP-UP KEYNOTE**  
**Matthew Sanford:**  
A Mind-Body Approach to Disability and Wellness



Aaron Myers recently landed a job at The Works Museum. Now he's looking forward to another milestone: living independently. Aaron, 24, is diagnosed with cerebral palsy. With support from his family and the Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare Transition Clinic, the question isn't IF Aaron will live on his own. It's WHEN.



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HENRY EMMONS, MD



9:00 A.M. KEYNOTE

**Restoring Resilience: Blending Science and Wisdom to Sustain a Healthy Mind, Mood and Heart**

**Henry Emmons, MD**, is a psychiatrist who integrates mind-body, neuroscience, and mindfulness into his work. He is a founder of Partners in Resilience, committed to integrating the best of nutrition, movement, natural therapies and the psychology of mindfulness to help restore resilience and rediscover joy. Henry is the author of *The Chemistry of Joy*, *The Chemistry of Calm*, and *Staying Sharp*.

Resilience is a natural trait, yet rates of anxiety and depression have risen dramatically in recent years. As we rely more upon medications, we risk not giving people the emotional skills with which to confront their problems. What has happened to erode the natural ability to bounce back from adversity? And what can be done to regain resilience and sustain it throughout a lifetime?



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MATTHEW SANFORD



3:15 P.M. KEYNOTE

**A Mind-Body Approach to Disability and Wellness**

**Matthew Sanford** is a nationally recognized yoga teacher, public speaker, and founder of the non-profit Mind Body Solutions. A paraplegic for the last thirty-five years, he is the author of the critically acclaimed *WAKING: A MEMOIR OF TRAUMA AND TRANSCENDENCE*. Matthew is a leading voice in integrated health and has appeared on NBC's Today Show and was profiled in People Magazine.

Utilizing his transformational story, Matthew Sanford explores the nature of a mind-body approach to disability for both individuals and their caretakers. Participants will gain insight into their own mind-body relationship, the importance of self-care, along with unique tips about how to live vibrantly within the body they currently have.

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10:15 - 11:00 BREAKOUT SESSION ONE

<p><b>1a</b></p> <p>Self-Care for Health and Wellbeing</p> <p><i>Ricka Kohnstamm</i></p>	<p><b>1b</b></p> <p>Nutrition and the "GAPS" Diet in Supporting Disability</p> <p><i>Julia McLean</i></p>	<p><b>1c</b></p> <p>Living Better through Yoga</p> <p><i>Amy Samson-Burke</i></p>	<p><b>1d</b></p> <p>Managing Financial Resources for Adults with Disabilities</p> <p><i>Joe Kukla</i></p>
<p>Self-care is essential to health and wellness. Start to envision your own self-care plan through the alignment of your unique values and beliefs with your behaviors.</p> <p><i>Ricka Robb Kohnstamm is completing a MA in the Health and Wellbeing Coaching Program, Center for Spirituality and Healing at the University of Minnesota. Her practice focuses on alignment of values and behaviors.</i></p>	<p>The Gut and Psychology Syndrome (GAPS) diet is renowned for its amazing effects. It helps Autism, learning disabilities, autoimmune diseases, and various psychological conditions. Learn how GAPS can have a positive effect on disabling conditions.</p> <p><i>Julia McLean, ND works as a traditional naturopath practicing alternative medicine since 1998. She is certified as a GAPS Practitioner.</i></p>	<p>Learn how yoga can help people of any ability to live more comfortably in their body and have fun doing it.</p> <p><i>Amy Samson-Burke, PT is a Professional Yoga Therapist. She is Director of Programs at Mind Body Solutions and has developed programs for Park Nicollet, HealthPartners and Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare.</i></p>	<p>Let's have a discussion about managing SSI/MA asset limits; with options for supplementing benefits with either a special needs trust or ABLE account.</p> <p><i>Joe Kukla is a disability attorney with ten years' experience resolving issues and appeals related to Social Security and Medical Assistance.</i></p>



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11:15 - 12:00 BREAKOUT SESSION TWO

<p><b>2a</b></p> <p>Nutritional Solutions for Better Digestion</p> <p><i>Cassie Weness</i></p>	<p><b>2b</b></p> <p>It Starts with a Conversation: Increased Health, Wellness and Independence through use of Technology</p> <p><i>Barb Turner &amp; Drew Henry</i></p>	<p><b>2c</b></p> <p>Supporting Sexual Health for People with Disabilities</p> <p><i>Katie Thune</i></p>	<p><b>2d</b></p> <p>Five-A's to Promote Physical Activity</p> <p><i>Brenda Frie</i></p>
<p>Before you reach for the antacid or the little purple pill in your desk drawer, learn a better solution for uncomfortable digestive problems. Restoring healthy digestion can be a simple process that will contribute to better overall health.</p> <p><i>Cassie Weness, RD, LD who works for Nutritional Weight &amp; Wellness. She has specialties in nutrition for pregnancy, diabetes, obesity, cholesterol, and Celiac Disease.</i></p>	<p>Technology can be used to increase health, wellness and independence as well as sharing how these resources can be accessed by individuals, families, providers and case managers.</p> <p><i>Barb Turner VP of External Affairs at ARRM has worked in the disability field for over 35 years.</i></p> <p><i>Drew Henry is the Director of Communications at ARRM and is leading ARRM's Technology Resource Center project.</i></p>	<p>This workshop will explore how to respond to inappropriate sexual behaviors that may happen at work, in public transportation, at home, or in the community and review the background on sexual education for people with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Katie Thune has taught Special Education and Health for 12 years in the St Paul Public Schools. She has done extensive curriculum writing on relationships and sexuality education for many well-known disability organizations.</i></p>	<p>This interactive session on the 5-A's model (Assess, Advise, Agree, Assist, Arrange) will work with programming for self-management of physical activity, fatigue and stress management for those with living with disabilities.</p> <p><i>Brenda Frie, MA has degrees in occupational therapy and is currently pursuing a doctorate in higher education. She is an assistant professor in the Master of Arts in Occupational Therapy program at St. Catherine University.</i></p>



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1:15 - 2:00 BREAKOUT SESSION THREE

<p><b>3a</b> Assistive Technology Overview  <i>Matthew Hansen</i></p>	<p><b>3b</b> The Importance of Self Care  <i>Kat Gordon &amp; Justine Mastin</i></p>	<p><b>3c</b> The Amazing Healing Power of the Body  <i>Dr. Jim Abeler</i></p>	<p><b>3d</b> A Glimpse into Executive Dysfunction  <i>Jenna Matteson Laabs</i></p>
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This session looks at smart home technology, remote monitoring, individual personal safety devices, apps and other fun stuff. There will be examples of specific cases, along with the opportunity to try some of the devices.

**Matthew Hansen, MBA** is a certified Assistive Technology Professional and Environmental Accessibility Specialist. He worked for six years as a Direct Support Professional and as a Director of Assistive Technology.

Caring for yourself because you're worth it is incredibly important. How can we use self-care to bolster self-worth as a door to really loving who we are?

**Kat Gordon** manages the PAS Program at the Metropolitan Center for Independent Living and teaches yoga.

**Justine Mastin, MA, LMFT** is a Marriage and Family Therapist. She speaks on wellness and teaches yoga.

This demonstration on chiropractic care will examine kinesiology, spinal and muscular balancing, and nutrition. Personal responsibility and awareness of underlying causes, along with interventions and life-style adjustments lead to optimal health.

**Dr. Jim Abeler** has been a licensed Chiropractor in private practice for over 30 years. He is also a Minnesota State Senator chairing Health and Human Services and a longtime advocate for people with disabilities.

Explore common difficulties with executive functioning. Learn strategies to help individuals in their classrooms, workplaces, and everyday life.

**Jenna Matteson Laabs, MA** is a pediatric occupational therapist with Courage Kenny Kids, part of Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute and Allina Health.

2:15 - 3:00 BREAKOUT SESSION FOUR

<p><b>4a</b> Positive Attitude, Positive Outcome  <i>Thabiso Rowan</i></p>	<p><b>4b</b> Funding Future Needs  <i>Tony Schmit</i></p>	<p><b>4c</b> Creating a Culture of Wellness  <i>Rod Carlson &amp; Annelies Stevens</i></p>	<p><b>4d</b> The 4 W's of Therapeutic Recreation  <i>Emily Miller</i></p>
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Attitude has an objective outcome on health. This presentation will focus on how to understand that relationship using health assessment and analysis, along with positive attitude exercises such as gratitude recognition.

**Thabiso Rowan** has a degree in Human Services and works for a housing and assisted living provider. On June 12, 2011, he sustained a spinal cord injury that changed his life forever. Now he incorporates a focus on attitude into his work and speaks widely on the topic.

This presentation will look at estate planning for a disabled adult or child using a Special Needs Trust or a Supplemental Needs Trust. How to fund the trust and how it pays benefits.

**Tony Schmit** received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Minnesota in 2012, and his Juris Doctor from the University of St. Thomas School of Law in 2016. He is licensed to practice law in Minnesota and joined Pluto Legal, PLLC in 2016.

Join us to better understand how to develop wellness programming. From getting started, to planning and implementation, we will consider client and employee wellness, key learnings, and looking to the future.

**Rod Carlson** is COO of Living Well Disability Services and is responsible for services and outcomes. He has over 30 years of leadership and management experience.

**Annelies Stevens** is a nurse who has worked with people with disabilities for nine years. Her recent focus is on wellness implementation.

What is therapeutic recreation? Why participate in therapeutic recreation? Where and when are there opportunities to participate in therapeutic recreation? This presentation will answer all of these questions.

**Emily Miller, MA** works as the Director of Adaptive Recreation & Inclusion at Reach for Resources, Inc. Emily graduated from the University of Saint Thomas Graduate School of Professional Psychology with her masters in Counseling Psychology.

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## **The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities**

is a membership based and dues supported nonprofit coalition.  
We are dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities.

We address public policy issues by collaborating with others,  
advocating, educating, influencing change,  
and creating awareness.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

#### **The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD)**

is a broad-based coalition of advocacy and provider organizations,  
working to change public policy to improve the lives of people with disabilities  
through building awareness, providing education, and engaging the community.

### **VISION & VALUE STATEMENT**

#### **The Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (MNCCD)**

envisions equity and opportunity for all people with disabilities  
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