Some thoughts on truth and consequences
By Angela Menghraj, Contributing Editor

We know that stress takes different forms. It may come as a surprise that one form we don’t think about is telling the truth to people we care about. In “Just Listen,” author Sarah Dessen writes:

“So you’re always honest,” I said.
“Aren’t you?”
“No,” I told him. “I’m not.”
“I’m not saying I’m a liar,” I told him. He raised his eyebrows. “That’s not how I meant it, anyways.”
“How’d you mean it, then?”
“I just … I don’t always say what I feel.”

“Why not?”
“Because the truth sometimes hurts,” I said.
“Yeah,” he said. “So do lies, though.”

There are risks in telling the truth. Here are some examples:

1. The risk of loss.
The person I love may leave if I say what I feel.

True, but on the other hand, she may appreciate I’m being up front. Suppose she judges me to be a bad

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5 brain benefits of walking
You probably know the benefits of walking for building strong bones, improving heart health and losing weight. But did you know that walking offers benefits for your brain, too? Here are five ways walking can give your brain a boost.

1. Stay mentally sharp. A number of studies suggest that walking helps ward off age-related memory decline.

2. Lower Alzheimer’s risk. One study found that older men who walked more than 2 miles per day were half as likely to develop Alzheimer’s disease and other types of dementia compared to those who walked less than a quarter mile per day.

3. Lift your mood. Research suggests that fast walking at least 35 minutes a day, five days a week, can improve your mood and reduce mild to moderate depression symptoms.

4. Spark creativity. A recent study suggests that walking boosted creativity by about 60 percent compared with sitting.

5. Sleep better. Research suggests that a brisk mid-morning walk can help you get a better night’s rest.

Active seniors have healthier hearts
When looking forward to retirement age, many people envision a slower-paced escape from the frenzied workplace hustle. And while having time to focus on hobbies and leisure activities is an exciting prospect, it’s important to incorporate plenty of physical activity into your leisure pursuits, too.

In fact, in a recent study of adults ages 65 and older, researchers found that maintaining or boosting physical activity levels in your golden years can improve heart health and lower the risk of heart attack. In the study, those who walked more and had more physically active leisure time had fewer irregular heart rhythms and greater heart rate variability, a marker of heart health, than those who were less active.

So how can you increase your activity? Seek out active hobbies, like golf, tennis, hiking, gardening, dancing and more — the possibilities are only limited by your creativity!

Want to live longer? Eat whole grains
According to researchers, regularly eating whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread, brown rice or oatmeal, could add years to your life.

The findings come from two long-term health studies involving more than 118,000 nurses and health professionals. In the studies, participants answered diet questionnaires every two to four years, which included questions about their intake of whole grains — which help slow digestion, prevent blood sugar spikes and contain more vitamins and minerals than processed grains. The researchers found that one-third fewer people died among the group that ate the most whole grains daily when compared with those who ate the least amount of whole grains. In fact, a person’s risk of early death declined with each serving of whole grains added daily.

To add more whole grains to your diet, try a few simple swaps:

- Use whole-wheat bread instead of white bread.
- Substitute brown rice for white rice.
- Add barley to vegetable soups.
- When baking, experiment with replacing some of the white flour with whole-wheat or oat flour.

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No more head games: Relief for headache sufferers

Headaches can be a painful and confusing ailment. Often they seem to come and go mysteriously. Have you struggled to find out what’s causing your headaches? In some cases, making changes to diet, lifestyle or sleep habits can help provide relief. Here are some of the most common headache types, causes and treatment options.

WHAT KIND OF HEADACHE IS IT?
Not all headaches are created equal. Some may be dull and throbbing, while others are focused and intense. Different types of headaches include varying symptoms and may require different treatments to find relief.

Migraines can cause intense throbbing or a pulsing sensation. They are often accompanied by nausea, vomiting and extreme sensitivity to light and sound. Migraine headaches can last for hours or even days.

Tension headaches often feel like a tight band is wrapped around your head. They involve a mild to moderate pain that is spread over a wide area.

Cluster headaches are some of the most painful headaches you can experience. Named for their tendency to occur in cycles or clusters, cluster headaches occur as an intense pain centering around one eye on one side of the head.

WHAT COULD BE CAUSING IT?
Headaches can be caused by a range of triggers. Often a headache is a symptom of another condition, such as acute sinusitis, ear infection or dehydration. Headaches can also be caused by lifestyle factors such as:

- Alcohol
- Bad posture
- Certain foods, such as processed meats
- Lack of sleep
- Missed meals
- Stress

WHAT CAN I DO?
Finding relief from a headache isn’t always easy. Sufferers may need to try one or multiple treatment options to relieve pain.

- Over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin, ibuprofen and acetaminophen, are often the first treatment considered when dealing with headaches. These medications can be effective in relieving headaches, especially tension headaches and migraines. They’re generally not effective in treating cluster headaches.
- Stress-reduction techniques, such as meditation or relaxation training, can also help to relieve some headaches.
- Lifestyle changes can also be effective in preventing or providing relief from some headaches. Getting enough rest, eating a healthy diet and maintaining good posture can all provide improvement.
- Prescription medications may be used to provide relief when other methods aren’t effective.

STOP SUFFERING
If you’re suffering from severe or chronic headaches, talk with your doctor to help you find relief.
If you are living with diabetes, you know that taking good care of yourself by watching what you eat, staying active and monitoring your blood sugar (glucose) is vital to your health. Another important aspect of your care is seeing your health care team regularly. It can help you stay healthy, prevent complications and catch any problems early, when they may be easier to treat. These guidelines outline routine tests and care you need.

**AT LEAST TWICE A YEAR:**

- **See your health care provider** — At each visit your doctor should review your self-care plan; check your blood pressure and weight; and examine your feet for calluses, infections, sores and any loss of feeling in your feet (called peripheral neuropathy).

- **A1c blood test** — It measures how well you’re controlling your blood sugar levels over a three-month period. The normal level is less than 6 percent. Most people with diabetes should aim for an A1c of less than 7 percent; your doctor will help you decide what your target should be. If your A1c is higher than 7 percent, it may be checked more often.

**AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR:**

- **Complete foot exam** — It should include checking the pulses in your feet and your reflexes.

- **Cholesterol** — There are two types of this fat: LDL (“bad cholesterol”) and HDL (“good cholesterol”). Talk to your doctor about what your levels should be. For many people, a target for LDL is less than 100 mg/dL and for HDL, higher than 40 mg/dL for men and 50 mg/dL for women.

- **Triglycerides** — Normal levels for this type of fat in your blood are below 150 mg/dL. Levels above 200 mg/dL are high.

- **Kidney tests** — A urine test can reveal the amount of a protein called albumin in your urine. A high level can be a warning sign of early kidney damage due to diabetes, but there could be other causes, as well. Your doctor may also do a blood test to measure how well your kidneys work.
Eye exam — People with diabetes are more likely to develop glaucoma, cataracts and retinopathy. See an eye doctor for a dilated eye exam.

Dental exam — Having diabetes increases your risk for gum disease; be sure to tell your dentist you have diabetes.

Flu shot — The risk of serious complications from the flu is higher if you have diabetes, so get a flu vaccination each fall.

Pneumonia vaccine — You can get a pneumonia shot at any time during the year. You should get a second vaccination if you are older than 65 and it has been more than five years since your previous pneumonia shot.

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person. She may say, “So what makes you so great that you can say this to me? You’ve made mistakes, too.”

*There is room for agreement here. Indeed, I have made mistakes and I know how hard it can be to admit them.*

2. The risk of being misunderstood.

“You’re saying this because …”

I don’t intend to hurt or insult you. I’m expressing a concern. “Why can’t you be like my other friends? No one else says things like that to me.”

“How can you think like that? Who put these thoughts in your head?”

You don’t need to agree with what I’m saying, just think about it.

3. The risk of being judged.

We pride ourselves in believing we don’t care what people think of us. But could it be that we really do care, very much?

Love tells the truth … saying “As I see it,” leaves the door open for receiving another point of view, the other person’s perception. It may be good to ask the friend for permission to be frank. Depending on the relationship, asking may not be necessary.

We can think of ways to tell the truth gently. I can take myself out of the picture and say what may benefit the other even if there are risks. In the end, it will be worth it. I may be taking the risk of breaking the habit of “being nice” I’ve had all my life and replacing it with the courage it takes to be truthful even when it’s difficult.

“What do you think about this?” becomes a question from my friend I can answer without even saying, “I’m being truthful.” Trust prevails when it’s created on a foundation of truth.

POSITIVE AGING: ALIVE AND WELL!

Learn the value of positivity and how it impacts the way we age. Discover new resources to remain active, make new friends and be challenged.

Facilitators: Vonalis Pina and Marilyn Pacheco

For information, call: 212-342-9224
Superfood smoothies:
Give them a whirl

Looking for a healthful way to stay hydrated this summer? Try adding a homemade smoothie to your menu. Not only are they easy to make (so you can control the ingredients, unlike restaurant and coffeehouse varieties), but they also count toward your daily goal of at least five servings of fruits and veggies. Score! Another health bonus: They’re not loaded down with sugar or caffeine, like some perennial summertime favorites. (We’re looking at you, lemonade and sweetened iced tea!) What’s more, you can pack lots of fiber, vitamins and minerals into a low-calorie (and great-tasting) treat which may help reduce your risk of heart disease and high blood pressure.

Want to make your smoothie even more super? Add in extremely nutritious foods, or superfoods as they are often called, to amp up the health benefits even more. Superfoods are loaded with high levels of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. With so many to choose from, the blender is your playground. Try these additions to your next smoothie to make them super:

- A handful of leafy greens like spinach or kale — It’s a great way to get more servings of vegetables even if you have a sweet tooth.
- A spoonful of chia seeds — A tablespoon can provide over 20 percent of your daily fiber needs!
- A fourth of a ripe avocado — Full of heart-healthy fats, avocado also adds extra creaminess to your smoothie.
- A handful of frozen blueberries — Replace the ice in your smoothie recipe with antioxidant-packed frozen blueberries to add more flavor, nutrients and a fun purple hue.

**Summer breeze smoothie**

1 cup yogurt, plain, nonfat
6 medium strawberries
1 cup pineapple, crushed, canned in juice
1 medium banana
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 ice cubes
(optional) 1 tablespoon chia seeds

Place all ingredients in the blender and puree until smooth. Serve in frosted glass. Makes three servings.

Per serving: 121 calories, 0 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 1 mg cholesterol, 64 mg sodium, 2 g fiber, 6 g protein, 24 g carbohydrates, 483 mg potassium

Recipe courtesy of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Mix and match superfoods in your smoothie recipes to create yummy new favorites. You may be surprised by how delicious superfoods can be. So, step up to the blender and find your favorites!
The summer’s heat, while a welcome reprieve from a long winter, comes with its own set of challenges, especially if you have heart disease. The rise in temperatures causes the heart to beat faster and work harder to assist in cooling your body through sweating. When the body can’t cool itself enough — a condition known as heat stroke — strain is put on the heart and other organs.

While anyone can suffer heat stroke, people with heart disease and other cardiovascular diseases are at greater risk. Take these steps to stay safe in the sun:

- **Dress in light-colored, lightweight clothing.** Don’t forget to apply sunscreen whenever you’ll be outside, too.

- **Avoid vigorous physical activity.** Consider moving your exercise program to a pool or indoors.

- **Stay hydrated.** Drink water or sports drinks that contain electrolytes. Avoid caffeine and alcohol, which can contribute to dehydration.

- **Keep indoors cool.** Use air conditioning if you have it. If not, use fans and keep rooms dark. Consider visiting an air-conditioned location, like the mall, movie theater or library, on especially hot days. If you’re not able to leave your home, your town may provide transportation services or ask a friend or family member for help.

**RECOGNIZING HEATSTROKE**

Heatstroke is a medical emergency. Seek medical help right away if you notice these symptoms in yourself or someone else:

- Fainting or dizziness
- Extremely high body temperature
- Change in behavior such as confusion, grouchiness or just acting strangely
- Red, hot and dry skin
- Rapid, strong pulse or slow, weak pulse
- Rapid breathing
- Nausea or vomiting

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*Staying cool when it’s hot outside*
Isabella introduces its new Health Home Program

As necessary as a stay in the hospital might be, returning home brings relief. You can resume your normal life. How disappointing it is when chronic conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension, may require a return to the hospital. We all know how important it is to avoid an unnecessary hospitalization — and to stay as healthy at home as possible.

Isabella is pleased to announce that it is participating in a Health Home Program — a new care management program designed to provide coordinated care so that each participant maintains a healthy lifestyle at home. Best of all, the services of Isabella’s Health Home Program are free.

WHO CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ISABELLA’S HEALTH HOME?
If you are receiving Medicaid — or both Medicaid and Medicare — and are coping with two or more chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma or another chronic condition, you may qualify for this program. Medicaid recipients may also qualify if they are living with HIV/AIDS or coping with a mental illness.

HOW DOES IT WORK?
A Care Coordinator will meet with the individual and his or her family member or caregiver. The Coordinator will assess each person’s needs and collaboratively create a plan of care and will work with the doctor, pharmacy, social worker and other professionals who are involved in providing care.

The Care Coordinators are dedicated, professionally trained individuals who have access to a wide array of resources to provide quality care.

The Care Coordinator will assist in many ways. Here are some examples:
• Helping to understand health needs through education and guidance.
• Referring to and coordinating health care appointments.
• Advocating with health care providers and arranging for social service support.
• Advising on weight management, smoking cessation and other lifestyle options.
• Referring to mental health or addiction recovery services, if needed.
• Making hospital visits, if necessary, to ensure that needs are being met for discharge.
• Supporting the individual to take control of his or her life.

HOW DOES SOMEONE ENROLL IN THE PROGRAM?
You or someone you know may qualify for the Health Home Program as long as the qualifications outlined above are met. An individual may also be referred to Isabella’s Health Home Program by Mt. Sinai Health System and New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

If you or someone you know would like to know more about Isabella’s Health Home Program, please call 212-342-9500.