

## **St. John's aims to help women identify and deal with stressors**

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There's an old saying that, "Women dip into the bucket until it's dry and whatever is left is theirs." Which is to say, women tend to take care of others before they take care of themselves. With workplace and family stressors compounded by increasingly dire economic news, the Women's Wellness Journey at St. John's Hospital in Maplewood is addressing stress one woman at a time.

Selina Blatz, CNP, certified health and wellness coach and program coordinator, works one-on-one with women to help them identify and achieve their vision of health and wellness.

"Over a four-month period, we define goals and identify lifestyle practices they can implement to reach their goals," she said. "Women are always doing; they don't take time for themselves, and self-care is a form of insulating against stress."

The program begins with an introductory session called "The Journey Begins," in which a woman completes basic tests and talks about risk factors and areas she would like to change and can control. For some women, one session is enough, but according to Blatz, the majority want further coaching through the "Stepping Stones" portion of the program.

"There are 10 coaching sessions. We set goals, and along the way we track their goals. The changes may seem small, but we're putting control back into women's hands. It's trial and learning, not trial and error," she said.

If, through the process, Blatz discovers underlying anxiety or depression, she will refer someone to a therapist.

For anyone dealing with stress, Blatz recommends the following:

- First, identify that stress exists in your life and identify the causes of it.
- Figure out what you can change and control.
- Set goals to help alleviate the symptoms of stress.

- Get more sleep. (“The recovery of energy is just as important as expending it,” she said.)
- Nourish your body and eat well.
- Get more exercise.

“The causes of stress are very individual, so we focus on what each person can do to manage stress and minimize unhealthy practices,” Blatz said.

***MORE...***

***Women’s Wellness Journey***

**Where:** St. John’s Hospital, Maplewood

**Program coordinator:** Selina Blatz, CNP

**Founded:** March 2006

**What:** Coaching packages start at \$75

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