

On Wellness...



The main barriers most people have when committing to a wellness plan... Our willpower is like a reservoir. We must look at it like a resource that can only be drawn from so much until it needs replenishment. The second barrier has to do with the fact that accomplishing these steps alone is not only boring but more challenging than it needs to be! Finding someone to exercise with, for example, or to report back to can be an extremely important aspect of self-care.

Easy self-care tips that people can do today to make a difference in their lives...

The first, by far, is to get the sleep you need. It absolutely colors your day and will only serve to have a positive effect on your mindset, your willpower, and your relationships. Another self-care tip is simply this: know that laughter is good medicine.

Try laughing, yoga, watching a comedy show, or hanging out with a friend who makes you feel joyful. That counts as self-care as well!

– Barbara Waxman, *founder of Odyssey Group Coaching.*

Ask the Experts: Manuele Mariani on Self-Care and Vision Loss

Manuele Mariani has been an Independent Living Skills (ILS) instructor at Braille Institute for more than 15 years. SCENE sat down with him and he shared how teaching self-care may impact someone with vision loss and what a path to wellness looks like.

Self-care is one of the building blocks of wellness. What self-care activity or practice should people with vision loss engage in to maintain their well-being?

Self-care and wellness are two different concepts. In the expression *self-care*, the magic word is “self.” When people go through a traumatic event like vision loss, they first must find their “self” again – the “chapter two” of their lives. Until this develops to a point of acceptance, “self-care” is typically not even considered by the person. People must start the process of germination, go through several stages of depression or closure until they can accept their new reality. At this point they can come to Braille Institute, get in touch with their body and soul again and blossom!



Do mindfulness techniques or practices play a role in Independent Living Skills workshops and classes?

Mindfulness is one of the coping strategies we teach in our classes. Remember, our students are interested in recovering the other senses once they have lost or are losing their vision. Meditation, guided imagery, introspection, physical training, and muscle relaxation are among other techniques that are taught.

(cont. on page 3)

SUNNY DAYS: Staying Healthy with Members of the Braille Community

Name: **Robert**
Occupation: **Retired**
City: **Anaheim Hills**



How did you first become acquainted with Braille Institute (BIA)?

Everybody knows about BIA. So, when I had vision problems and it was difficult for me to read, my ophthalmologist referred me to BIA.

What are your top tips for staying healthy?

I exercise about two hours a day – stationary bike and hand weights for upper body strength. I also watch shows about science and physics to keep my mind stimulated and I watch Dodger games to keep me entertained.

Name: **Don**
Occupation: **Retired Civil Engineer**
City: **Cerritos**



How did you first become acquainted with Braille Institute (BIA)?

Through my brother, John. He was an advocate for people with vision loss, especially children.

What are your top tips for staying healthy?

Get enough exercise, at least three times a week. Eat a proper diet, as much as you can. Get plenty of sleep.



Name: **Pearl and her daughter, Meagan**
Occupation: **Mom, Jack Of All Trades, Travel Manager**
City: **Santa Barbara**

How did you first become acquainted with Braille Institute (BIA)?

When my daughter suddenly lost her vision at age nine, a very dear friend (who is also visually impaired) suggested I visit. It was the first place I went to for support, resources, and direction – much needed services at a time when I felt completely overwhelmed.

What are your top tips for staying healthy?

Enjoy a treat here or there, but for the most part make healthy food choices. Get outside and get active: an early morning walk, a coffee by the beach, bike ride on a trail – whatever it is that brings joy and peace.



Name: **Nancy**
Occupation: **Retired Accounting Manager**
City: **La Mirada**

How did you first become acquainted with Braille Institute (BIA)?

I was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa at a very young age. My ophthalmologist suggested that I look into BIA's services and programs. When I retired, I went to the Anaheim center to seek more information, signed up for the library services, and eventually became a volunteer for the arts program.

What are your top tips for staying healthy?

Focusing on BIA online classes and taking a variety of classes has helped me mentally. I love our art instructor, Erin. Gardening is another hobby that I love, and it keeps me busy.

Discover the Braille location nearest you at brailleinstitute.org/locations

WORD FINDER PUZZLE

“COMMITMENT”

In the space below, make 5 new six-letter words using the word Commitment

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

To find the answers go to:
brailleinstitute.org/resources/publications

Ask the Experts *(cont. from page 1)*

If someone with vision loss is new to Braille Institute and has not yet enrolled in its programs, what is the first thing they can do to make a step towards wellness and a better life?

If they are not independently able to “pull the ropes” of their wellness, they should visit the nearest Braille Institute Center and wander in the hallways. There, they will see what others are doing. A simple visit will help erase their misconceptions about Braille Institute as being a depressing place! If I can make an appeal to family members: encourage them to come, but do not force them! It’s a decision they need to make for themselves. There are no miracle recipes to wellness, it’s something you really must want to own!

Review and sign-up for one of Braille Institute’s current remote workshops at brailleinstitute.org/remote-services

Ways to Give to Braille Institute

There are many options when making a charitable gift.

Donor Advised Fund (DAF)

A Donor Advised Fund is an account you fund to manage all of your charitable donations to organizations like Braille Institute.

Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

If you are over age 70 1/2, the IRS permits you to rollover up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA to charity without increasing your taxable income or paying any additional tax. In addition, you may designate a charity as a beneficiary of your account.

Life Insurance Policy

If you maintain an existing life insurance policy, a gift of life insurance can provide immediate benefits for you and allow you to name Braille Institute as a beneficiary.

Stock

Rather than sell your stock, consider making a meaningful tax-deductible gift with no cash out-of-pocket by donating it to our organization.

Important reminder

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

Call

323-210-2607

F R E E W I L L

A New Resource to Protect What You Love Most

Braille Institute has partnered with FreeWill to help you write a legal will or trust. This resource makes the process simple, quick, and free.

Get started at FreeWill.com/Braille to create your plan in the comfort of your home and get peace of mind for the future.



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In This Issue • Staying Healthy with Members of the Braille Community • Ask the Experts on Self-Care

Welcome to SCENE



Wellness comes in many forms. I hope you'll enjoy the tips outlined that can help us all feel relaxed, refreshed, and ready to face the day. For additional resources on wellness and much more, visit our

BrailleInstitute.org website and explore the "Classes & Events" section – you'll find classes and techniques you and your loved ones can try. Braille Institute is a community of learners and I'm glad you're here.

Wishing you good health and happiness,

Gary Jimenez
Vice President of Development

Contact Information

Would you like to speak to someone about making a gift or do you have further questions?

Phone	1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553) Ext. 1238
Fax	323-663-1428
Email	givetobia@brailleinstitute.org
Donate by Mail	ATTN: Development 741 N. Vermont Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90029
Donate online	brailleinstitute.org/scene

To make a gift of stock, IRA assets, estates, or other specialized gifts, please contact:

Phone	323-210-2607
Email	plangift@brailleinstitute.org
Hours	Monday through Friday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM