

Health Ministries News



New Seed Leaders Attending the ARMin Training in São Paulo

Addiction Recovery Training for Church Planting Teams

Manaus and São Paulo, Brazil | SAD

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a marked increase in the use of substances and other addictions has been noted among all ages. In an effort to meet that need, two church plants in Brazil ministering to people's felt needs hosted an Adventist Recovery Ministries Global Journey to Wholeness Training. The Manaus "Alpha Space" church plant had their training on December 10-12, 2020 followed by the "New Seed" Church in May 9-13, 2021. Among the attendees were health professionals, pastors, church leaders and other lay members from various professional backgrounds. 'This is such a needed ministry,' said Dr. Luciana Costa, dentist and leader at the New Seed church in São Paulo. "We hope to use the 12-step Christ-centered approach to reach people struggling with addictions." The New Seed church currently offers individual help to people living at cracolândia, a region where many crack addicts live, many of them homeless. Both Alpha Space and New Seed churches started as a church plant among the affluent and are now growing in members. The teams started meeting and experiencing emotional healing through Christ themselves. They ask for prayer as they implement this new ministry in their cities. A Division-wide training hosted by the South American Division was postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic and has been tentatively rescheduled for March 2022.



One of the many families who participated in this series.

Regular Family Health and Fitness Programs Make a Difference

Virtual | Southern Asia Pacific (SSD)

The Southern Asia-Pacific Division has implemented regular educational meetings on family health and fitness during this time of Pandemic. Hundreds attended the virtual programs that focused on fitness and healthy choices to prevent disease and promote wellbeing. These meetings occurred every week for several months, bringing together experts from the fields of fitness. The participants learned through presentations and also practical demonstrations of new exercises and stretches. This regular educational activity has proven to assist people in creating new habits and learning about the benefits of physical activity for physical, mental, social and spiritual health and wellbeing. The series culminated with an awards ceremony for Health Champions on September 5, when dozens celebrated completing the series of classes.



Pastor Delmar Reis and the Youth Alive Leaders in Albania

Youth Alive Keeps Youth Engaged Through the Pandemic

Albania, Lithuania, Thailand | TED and SSD

Youth and young adults have struggled during this pandemic when they could not connect with their peers or attend small group meetings in person. The result has been increased symptoms of depression, anxiety and substance use. Youth Alive leaders across the world, such as in Albania, Lithuania and Thailand, resolved to do something about that in their territory. They used creative ways to host virtual meetings, activities and sports in the fresh air, and training opportunities to equip youth for leadership roles in youth alive friendship groups. "We have welcomed new leaders and are excited to re-open our Youth Alive Hope Center downtown," said Pr. Delmar Reis, Albania project coordinator and Adriatic Union Youth Ministries leader. "We praise God that we can now meet in person at the center and continue reaching out to youth during this trying time," he added. In Thailand, Pr. Ron Genepago, Division Youth leader, and Dr. Lalaine Alfanoso, Division health director, have hosted virtual Youth Alive activities and events. In Bangkok, Thailand, the students from the Adventist International University attended a Youth Alive Facilitator summit to equip them in engaging the youth and young adults on campus. They are passionate about this ministry and ask for prayers!



Participants of the Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training in March.

Lifestyle Coaching Comes to the Middle-East

Middle-East North-Africa Union (MENA U)

Lifestyle change is a process that can be difficult. Recognizing the value of health coaches can be crucial for success. Many health professionals, global mission pioneers, Health Ministries director and volunteers from the Middle-East North-Africa Union attended the Lifestyle Coaching Skills training offered by the General Conference Health Ministries in the months of March, June, and August. Over 100 leaders have attended the 15-hour training which is taught by Dr. Katia Reinert and Dr. Lilly Tryon aiming at equipping health promoters in using coaching skills when ministering to those interested in adopting healthier habits. "I am a health practitioner but wanted to check out what this course had to offer. I was pleasantly surprised that I have received such good tools and learned a lot regarding what lifestyle coaching should really be about," said one participant. "This was one of the best online trainings I have attended." Marcia McEdward, the Health Ministries director for MENAU reported, "This is exactly what we need in our ministry here. We plan to implement coaching strategies in all of our health outreach programs." They are in the process now of translating it into Arabic, Farsi and Turkish.



THE HEALTH CONNECTION

Every church a center of hope and health.

REACH UP

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Focus on a Spirit Led Revival



United in Prayer

"I will go...to the end," praying. The church is *United in Prayer*: A global prayer movement including 100 Days of Prayer and 10 Days of Prayer, in which hundreds of thousands of people have participated. With the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping our world, and with many unsettling events now taking place, what better time to be pressing together as a Church in prayer as we seek strength in time of crisis as well as Holy Spirit power for the mission before us? www.revivalandreformation.org/100days/blog/100



Believe His Prophets

Believe His Prophets, the sequel to *Revived by His Word*, is a five-year program reading through the Bible and selected Ellen White writings, including *Steps to Christ*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, *The Desire of Ages*, *The Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*. You can receive daily Bible readings, participate in interactive blogs and read select inspirational writings. Sign up at www.revivalandreformation.org/signup

Books

Live More Happy, by Darren Morton. Over the past decade, neuroscience, positive psychology and lifestyle medicine have exploded as areas of cutting-edge study. In this book, Morton demonstrates how enduring happiness is influenced by our daily choices and habits. www.adventistbookcenter.com/live-more-happy.html



Should We Take Conspiracy Theories Seriously?



What is a conspiracy theory? The term is comprised of two words: "conspiracy" and "theory". It is a theory about a proposed conspiracy – something two or more actors are claimed to have agreed to do, often in secret, that is unlawful or malevolent. The question then is:

"Does evidence support or contradict the theory?" If undisputable evidence overwhelmingly supports a conspiracy theory, then we no longer call it a theory but a fact. We acknowledge that there actually was a conspiracy.

While some conspiracy theories have led us to unmask actual conspiracies, like the Watergate scandal, many conspiracy theories live on despite no real evidence to support them. What do we do about them? Should we take such conspiracy theories seriously?

I suggest we shouldn't. But we should take the people who believe in them seriously. Trying to disprove a conspiracy theory to a believer will often be quite futile. Arguments and facts may not go far with someone whose beliefs are not fact-based and rational. But gentle, compassionate, and respectful interaction may open the way for meaningful dialog.

From studies, we know that people prone to conspiratorial thinking may be driven by a sense of fear, dangers and threats, distrust, anger, desire for explanations, need to feel certain and in control, as well as a need to

boost self-esteem by feeling significant, in the know, and even special. Any attack, ridicule, or humiliation is likely to simply make things worse.

The better way in dealing with believers in conspiracy theories is probably to build relationships where there is compassion, honesty, humility, respect, and safety. Listen to their hearts, not just their words. Then maybe they will listen to you. Don't try to fight a believer in conspiracy theories. If you do, people will probably just get hurt, yourself included. Instead, how about making friends and loving them?

"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you... Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for He is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate" (Luke 6:27-28.35-36 NLT).



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Health Ministries Resources



• **Youth Alive Mental Health Talks.** We have launched a series called Youth Alive Mental Health Talks hosted by youth for youth. From depression, anxiety, and self-esteem, to relationships, faith and lifestyle choices, these talks are intergenerational conversations between youth and mental health experts about relevant issues related to mental health and wellbeing. A new episode is posted every week. This is a new resource to be shared with youth and young adults as an effort of the COVID-19 Mental Health initiative to stimulate positive coping strategies and appropriate support structures and initiatives in the local field. Watch the episodes at the Youth Alive Facebook page <https://bit.ly/30tybD1> and the YouTube Youth Alive Channel <https://bit.ly/316eWxd>. Learn more at: www.youthaliveportal.org/mentalhealth.

• **COVID-19 Health Ministries Resource Page.** Is there a biblical theology that can be applied to immunizations? Is there any counsel by Ellen G White regarding vaccines? The COVID-19 outbreak and immunizations has been accompanied by an "infodemic"—an over-abundance of information, some accurate and some not—that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it. Many conspiracy theories are being

embraced as truth. The General Conference Health Ministries (HM) department continues to update its COVID-19 resource page with articles that answer some of the questions posed above. You will find quality information about vaccination and videos that can be used as health minutes to assist in educating your church and community. www.healthministries.com/coronavirus/

• **CELEBRATIONS Tracts and Videos.** Download and share digital copies of the beautiful CELEBRATIONS health guides and videos. The 12 videos are available on YouTube for use in social media <https://bit.ly/2Yg7cQZ>. The health guides are available for western audience as well as contextualized for the South Asian audience. CELEBRATIONS power point presentations are also available along with guides for facilitators of small groups. Learn more about the CELEBRATIONS free resources at www.healthministries.com/celebrations/

• **World Mental Health Awareness Day (October 10).** The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on people's mental health. Some groups, including health and other frontline workers, students, people living alone, and those with pre-existing mental health conditions, have been particularly affected. And services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders have been significantly disrupted. During this year's World Mental Health Day campaign, join the Adventist Mental Health initiative and become an ambassador for mental health in your church, school and community. Register at <https://youthaliveportal.org/mentalhealth>. For more on the WHO World mental health awareness day visit <https://bit.ly/3D94gEo>

Dates to Remember

2021

October 3-7
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
West-African Division (WAD)

October 7-13
GC Lead Conference and Annual
Council | Virtual

October 17-21
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
Trans-Pacific Union Mission (SPD)

November 6-7, 13-14
ARMin Global Training
New Zealand Pacific Union (SPD)

November 14-18
ARMin Global Training
West Africa Division (WAD)

December 5-9
ARMin Global Training
Southern Asia Pacific Division (SUD)

2022

February 4-6*
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
Adriatic Union (TED)

February 12-16
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
New Zealand Pacific Union (SPD)

February 16-20*
Youth Alive Training & Conference
Franco-Belgium Union (EUD)

February 25-27*
Lifestyle Coaching Skills Training
Baltic Union (TED)

* Tentative in Person Training

RESEARCH UPDATES

Share Facts with Hope and Positive Choices



• **Vaccine Boosters.** There are three potential reasons a country may decide to offer an additional dose to one or more population groups: 1. Some people who are immunocompromised may not respond adequately to the recommended dose(s); 2. If immunity following vaccination is found to wane over time for the general population; 3. If the performance of the approved vaccines is less effective against new variants. WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines protect very well against severe disease, including against all currently known variants. For greatest impact in reducing the burden of COVID-19, priority must be given to vaccinating all who have not received the currently recommended number of doses. Boosters will be available as countries approve them for high-risk groups. <https://who.canto.global/b/J5VFF>

• **MRNA Vaccines and Heart Inflammation.** Very rare cases of myocarditis and pericarditis have been reported after the second dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) mostly in young men. The cases are often mild and respond well to treatment. The benefits of mRNA vaccines greatly outweigh the risks. The frequency of myocarditis or pericarditis following natural infection of SARS-COV-2 is much higher (about six times) than its frequency following vaccination. <https://who.canto.global/b/RA4MI>

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The cases are often mild and respond well to treatment.

• **Reducing Risk for COVID-19.** You may catch COVID-19 and be at risk of becoming severely ill, if you have a noncommunicable disease/a pre-existing condition such as: Cardiovascular disease, Chronic respiratory disease, Diabetes, Cancer. But there is hope. Here are tips for people affected by these conditions to stay safe: 1) Get a vaccine when it is your turn. Getting fully vaccinated reduces the risk of infection and protects against severe disease, meaning fewer people being infected, hospitalized and dying, and a smaller chance of new variants of concern emerging. 2) Engage in lifestyle change (exercise, eat healthfully, rest adequately), take your medicine if prescribed and follow medical advice, keep distance from sick people, wash hands often, abstain from alcohol or smoking, and protect your mental health. <https://who.canto.global/b/O1MFV>



• **Protect Yourself and Others During the Upcoming Holidays.** People can have COVID-19 without showing any symptoms and not everyone is vaccinated. During a gathering take all the necessary precautions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Be sure not to attend a party if you feel unwell. If feeling well and attending, do it all (wear a mask, clean your hands, keep a safe distance from others, avoid crowded closed settings, ensure good ventilation when indoors, get vaccinated when it's your turn. These precautions have been demonstrated to be effective in reducing transmission and exposure. <https://who.canto.global/b/HTHOS>

WHO and UN Health Calendar Emphasis



October-December 2021

September 29
World Heart Day

October 10
World Mental Health Day

November 14
World Diabetes Day

November 19
World Day for Prevention of Violence Against Children

December 01
World AIDS Day

December 3
International Day of Persons with Disabilities

EDITORIAL
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