

**CAPE COD & ISLANDS COMMUNITY HEALTH NETWORK AREA ~ CHNA 27**  
**Minutes for Thursday January 13th, 2022 9:00-10:30 am**  
**Zoom Meeting – Meeting Minutes By Kelly Sommers**

**Present:**

Louisa Stringer, Cape Wellness Collaborative	Ann Burke, Fenway
Mary Jo French, Spaulding	Linda Whittlesey, We Can
Regina Correira, Family Continuity	Colleen Kennedy-Meilo, Southeast Tobacco-free community
Laura Smith, Oakdale Farms	Trudy Avery,
Lauren Fogle, LCSW & Virtual Assistant	Jessica Simmons, CORD
Patrick Logan, Beacon Public Safety	Cheryl Kramer, Outer Cape Health Services
Marina Mendoza Burris, We Can	Katie Fitz Nickerson, WIC
Emily Smalley, Calmer Choice	Annie Catalano, Yarmouth PD
Mairead O’Callaghan, We Can	Mandi Speakman, BC Human Services
Laura Will, Know Rare and CCCP	
Joshua Maloney, Resilience Practice + Training	

**Welcome:**

Meeting started at 9:05am

**Regular Business:**

- Mary Jo read the purpose of CHNA27
- Format of meeting explained
- Massage Coffee Card giveaway explained

**Topic: Resilience in 2022**

**Speakers:**

- ◆ **Joshua Maloney**, Resilience Practice and Training
- ◆ **Emily Smalley**, Calmer Choice
- ◆ **Linda Whittlesey**, We Can
- ◆ **Laura Will**, Nurse Practitioner - Know Rare

**Presentation: Louisa Stringer** - Caregiving Guide and **Mary Jo French** - Spaulding

**PANEL:**

**Laura Will**, Nurse Practitioner/Rare Mom - Know Rare

\_\_\_\_\_A nurse practitioner and mom of a medically challenged child. Majority of work in home care, palliative care - treating the whole person. Son born in 2020 with a rare brain malfunction, led to severe medical complexities and shortened life expectancy. Went from Palliative care nurse practitioner to mom of palliative care patient. Catalyzed another career change. After the grieving process started seeking resources - books, podcasts, webinars, local support. Resilience is multi faceted - unique to each person. I’ve found the most rewarding outlet for me - creative outlet (poetry), finding humor, nature, connecting with others, self compassion, and trying to meditate. Mantras I use - Strong enough for today, I am enough. Virtually I am doing a support group with Mary Wilson at Cape Cod Children’s Place called Roads Less Traveled. A support

group for parents of children with complex medical needs or disabilities. I try to introduce a resilience concept at the beginning of each group. Power of a group is knowing you're not alone. I also write a monthly column for an organization called Know Rare about parental resilience. Each much is a focus on a resiliency skill based on research. Official job title at Know Rare is Nurse Practitioner/rare mom. Continue to learn from parents and patience, take away about resiliency is its subtle sometimes that adds a bit of a buffer to carry us through. The ability to begin again, and again and again.

**Emily Smalley, Calmer Choice - Chief Executive Officer**

\_\_\_\_\_ Calmer Choice is a non-profit founded in 2010 in South Yarmouth. Mission: Cultivating awareness, living mindfully and enhancing resilience. Provide evidence based mindfulness programs at schools on Cape Cod and recently Southeastern MA. We offer programs in person and now virtually since the pandemic. We started as a school based program in 2010 to serve 12-15 students in crisis. The founder Fiona Jensen had a daughter who was a part of student group where two suicides and a murder occurred, she wanted to bring mindfulness to them. That grew to serve about 38,000 people in the last 10 years on Cape and Southeastern MA. I am in recovery from alcohol abuse. I had a stroke in my car on my way to work in Boston in 2016, my life changed after that and I had to draw on the resiliency I gained throughout my life as part of my recovery journey. When I came to Calmer Choice sober I wanted to align my lived experience to help others, it felt like my calling and now I'm excited to help lead this journey. We were founded in a crisis and we were in crisis again in 2020 when the pandemic hit. Opioid use, suicide increase, bullying, kids feels stressed. What has happened with kids over these two years of the pandemic has been transformative. There's been a 334% spike in self-harm rates, ED visits for mental health visits are up for kids from ages 5-11yrs old, higher for teens. 47% adults reporting increased stress, 60% adults drinking more during the pandemic. When we needed to adapt during the pandemic, we had to downsize our budget but still impact our community. It wasn't school based, which was a big shift for us. Schools are barely staying afloat and our 8 week course wasn't as practical anymore, we started making short videos to be implemented in classrooms and popping into google classrooms to do quick breathing exercises to get these tools in front of kids. After 2 years of building these programs we decided to look into seeing if we were really making an impact. We knew people liked it online but was it really helping? We had researcher from Tufts with us over the summer and we saw the markers for wellness, resilience and decrease stress go up significantly and that was really remarkable for us. We are shifting a bit as an organization from school based and into the community more. We just heard this morning about a grant to support mindfulness with parents with Cape Cod Children's Place. We are doing Parent-child classes together for 5-9yr olds to learn together, 4 wk classes for people who want to learn mindfulness but not commit to an 8 wk class. We are trying to create that accessibility and skills for everyone. We are hoping in the next phase we will keep with our roots in the schools and become a resource for the broader community. We have wonderful scholarship and financial aid programs, we would never turn anyone away. We are trying to work with nonprofits, DA offices, police departments and other organizations across the Cape, Southeast MA, and Beyond to customize them for their needs. We just did a program with 18 frontline nurses who had seen the worst of the worst the last 2 years to help give them the oxygen mask and so they could teach their patients and their families. When mindfulness and resiliency is learned it can spread to others to help those skills grow and pass on to others.

**Linda Whittlesey, We Can**

\_\_\_\_\_ When I retired I thought a lot about how to best give back to the community, I came up with helping women, empowering women, to help them live their happiest lives. I learned about We Can through two

women I worked with in private practice. They were deeply impacted with We Can, I would refer more clients to We Can. One client said deciding to get a divorce is like deciding to jump off a cliff. Divorce is rated second highest adult stressor behind losing close family member, major life event. In my experience, divorce really gets overlooked in the importance in someone's life and often leaves people isolated. Social message often is don't talk about it, move on. Healing entails reaching out and overcoming these challenges to get help. Not everyone can afford a lawyer and therapist - need more outlets. Divorce support groups can provide a lot of help. Resilience focus within group - Get stronger relationship with self, compassionate with self, take on skills with compassion. Support groups - safe place for sharing, started in person now online. Writing exercises - exploring feelings, accepting. Safety. Emotional, spiritual, psychological, social, physical needs. What choices and goals do you have? All build resilience and how to meet one's own needs and self-care. I include mediation, body scan for relaxation, journal writing, new self-care techniques, enjoying alone time. Social bonding occurs and often participants connect after the group. Some come back to do other programs or become volunteers for We Can.

### **Joshua Maloney, Resilience Practice and Training**

I grew up on Cape Cod and joined the Army at 18, deployed to combat at 19, police officer for the Town of Barnstable at 21. I joined the Army again after, I thought I was dealing with it all OK with alcohol and meds. I became a drill sergeant, which was challenging while dealing with so much trauma. When talking about a police officer that just up and left, I was told it happens with no signs. This former officer started birding to manage his stress. 6 years after working on the PD, I decided to leave and work with Veterans. I started hearing the common thread that was my problem - drinking, stress. I went to VA for help, I went to a VA detox which I'm still sober from. First time I did yoga was at a rehab near Boston. I got one second of bliss and it went along with my therapy telling me to try to find that peace. Continued yoga and treatment programs, in one I got to hold a bald eagle. I learned about DDT and damage to the environment - the resiliency of birds/nature but when it's really bad they need help just like Veterans do when suffering with PTSD/traumas. Two years after holding the bald eagle I started volunteering at Long Pastors in Barnstable helping with maintenance, counting birds with a Birder. I was using yoga skills while birding. I started going to college, environmental science, I graduated from 4C's and will be attending MA Maritime next year. Birding is my thing now. I started noticing what looked like Bald Eagles on Cape Cod, most were skeptical. I kept following them, they were building a nest but they weren't on Cape and others didn't believe it. In 2020, I found the first Bald Eagle nest in 150 years. I took a photo of the first chicklet born in 150 years. We sprayed DDT and so much that made it nearly impossible for them to survive here but they are back - resiliency. You're going to fail and that's essential. Set a goal with whatever you do and be ok co-existing with failure. As a community we have abandoned our damage, wounded and sick, they have a lot to offer. After Vietnam the Veterans helped teach people that and those in the society might be the exact thing we need. Wounds and mistreatments don't wipe out our need to continue to serve.

Resilience Yoga Practice - Veterans Yoga Project - open and free for Veterans, first responders, families and communities. We have classes for those who work with Veterans and the stress. Also teach at Evoke Yoga Friday's at 2pm for First Responders, Veterans, and their families. There's a ton of training online through Veterans Yoga Project that's often free. Often people who want to work with Veterans take those trainings.

### **Q + A**

### **Coffee Card Giveaway**

### **Announcements**

Meeting ended 10:25am

*Meeting minutes respectfully recorded by Kelly Sommers, CHNA27 Administrative Coordinator;*  
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