



Winter 2025

Responder Newsletter

**Stony Brook World Trade Center (WTC)
Health and Wellness Program**

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Book your annual monitoring exam today!
Call to schedule: (631) 855-1200



Dr. Luft's Letter



Greetings and Welcome to Winter!

During this time of year, we take time to reflect upon our friends and family. Our clinic is here for you, please take advantage.

I think this particular newsletter is one of our very best so please take some time to check it out. Lots of excellent information, reading suggestions, winter wellness and research updates.

My staff and I want to wish all of you a happy, healthy and peaceful holiday season.

Stay warm and stay healthy!

Benjamin J. Luft, MD

Director, Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program





Patient Spotlight Book Club



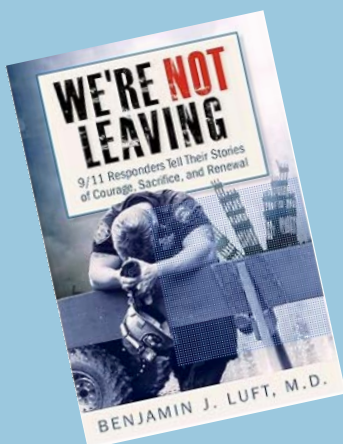
March is National Reading Month!

We encourage you to check out these books authored by or featuring the journeys of your fellow responders.

***We're Not Leaving* by Benjamin J. Luft, M.D.**

We're Not Leaving is a compilation of powerful first-person narratives told from the vantage point of World Trade Center disaster workers-police officers, firefighters, construction workers, and other volunteers at the site. While the effects of 9/11 on these everyday heroes and heroines are indelible, and in some cases have been devastating, at the heart of their deeply personal stories-their harrowing escapes from the falling Towers, the egregious environment they worked in for months, the alarming health effects they continue to deal with-is their witness to their personal strength and renewal in the ten years since. These stories, shared by ordinary people who responded to disaster and devastation in extraordinary ways, remind us of America's strength and inspire us to recognize and ultimately believe in our shared values of courage, duty, patriotism, self-sacrifice, and devotion, which guide us in dark times.

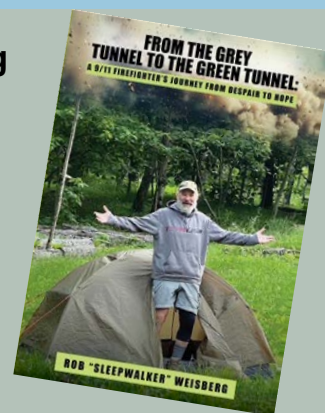
*Available on Amazon



***From the Grey Tunnel to the Green Tunnel* by Rob "Sleepwalker" Weisberg**

This book goes beyond merely recounting Rob's experiences at Ground Zero on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent nine months. It delves into the hidden challenges he faced for over two decades. Rob opens up about his battles with PTSD and suicidal thoughts and reveals how hiking the Appalachian Trail for more than five months helped him discover the peace he was searching for. He hopes this book will inspire anyone contemplating a permanent solution to a temporary problem to stay in the fight!

*Available on Amazon

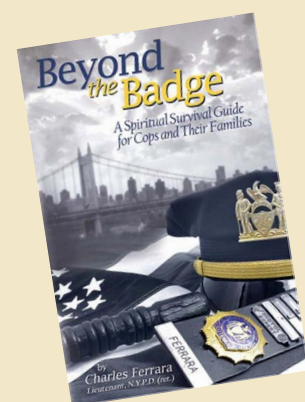


***Beyond the Badge, A Spiritual Survival Guide for Cops and Their Families* by Charles Ferrara**

"After having read Chuck Ferrara's book, I will never again think of police officers without a deep, new appreciation for what they do for the protection and well-being of us all. As I read this book, I felt at times that I was there with Chuck racing down a dark New York City alley or up the stairs of a stench-filled tenement apartment in pursuit of a dangerous, armed suspect. I almost felt at risk as a suspect pulled a gun on Chuck only to have it discharge prematurely and fall to the ground. I realize now, for the first time ever, the danger and vulnerability cops live with routinely in the line of duty. The demands made upon an officer of the law are enormous. As a former cop and police chaplain, Chuck Ferrara understands that. He knows that to be successful, officers need something beyond the badge."

*Available on Amazon

-James V. Heidinger II, President and Publisher, Good News



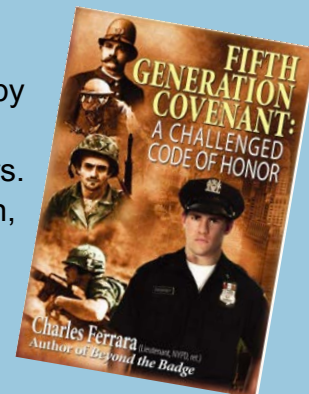


Patient Spotlight Book Club

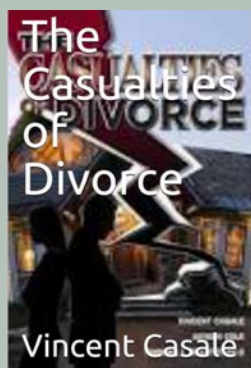


***Fifth Generation Covenant: A Challenged Code of Honor* by Charles Ferrara**

A young rookie police officer witnesses a homicide on a dark Bedford Stuyvesant roof. No surprise for a hot summer night in Brooklyn. The only problem-the homicide is committed by two fellow officers. Officer Dempsey is challenged by the thin blue line of silence and whether or not to break a family covenant that spans five generations of N.Y.P.D. members. Fifth Generation Covenant traces each generation from County Cork, Ireland to Manhattan, USA. The heroics and integrity of this Irish clan moves through the trenches of France during World War I to the war in Afghanistan. For over a century the Dempseys served honorably in military uniform and that of New York's Finest. Doing the right thing was the standard-until it was challenged in the fifth generation. The question remains whether this covenant would hold or be broken.



*Available to order from: Publisher - Xulon Press, Ph: (323) 380-9958



***The Casualties of Divorce* by Vincent Casale, Jayson Cole and Tom Bilotti, PhD**

The Casualties of Divorce offers a front row seat to the turmoil endured by all when two adults decide to end their marriage, for whatever reason. The book explores the different perspectives and experiences as told by dozens of persons who have proverbially "walked the walk" amongst different degrees of separation. It is intended to provide the reader with the understanding that they are not alone, their feelings are valid and that "This Too Shall Pass". Co-authored by three casualties of divorce, this book will enlighten those who are contemplating divorce and comfort those who have survived one.

*Available on Amazon

***Rendered Safe: Tales of an NYPD Bomb Tech* by Jeff Ingber**

Rendered Safe centers on the remarkable life of former NYPD Bomb Squad Detective Donald Sadowy. In the aftermath of the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the most devastating terrorist attack on the United States to that point, Sadowy risked his life to search for evidence in the shattered and dangerous sub-basement. There, he discovered a piece of chassis frame that contained a VIN number which enabled law enforcement to catch the perpetrators just in time. The massive investigation and recovery effort that followed is revealed through Sadowy's recollections as well as those of a number of other law enforcement agents, many never before told.

Mental Wellness in the Winter



Go Outside

Sunlight can help you feel better by triggering the release of serotonin, a neurochemical that helps regulate mood.

Buddle up and take a walk in your neighborhood!



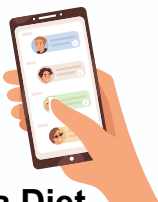
Spend Time with Friends and Family

Take time to gather for hang outs and game nights. And if you're feeling under the weather or your friends or family are far away, try video calls or virtual hang outs.



Join a Book Club

Check with your local library to join a book club!



Go on a Social Media Diet

Exposing yourself to a constant barrage of upsetting news and anger-inducing headlines can take a real toll on your mood. To protect yourself, consider limiting your media consumption.

Tips:

- Check the news only once a day.
- Switch off the breaking news alerts on your phone.
- Once you finished catching up, shut it off.



Get the Right Amount of Sleep

7 to 8 hours a night can help reduce stress and increase energy and resilience.

If you have trouble sleeping:

- Avoid exposing yourself to blue light before bed, it prompts wakefulness
- If you use a device, set it to the red-spectrum light feature
- Develop a nighttime routine such as reading, meditation, journaling or drinking decaffeinated tea.

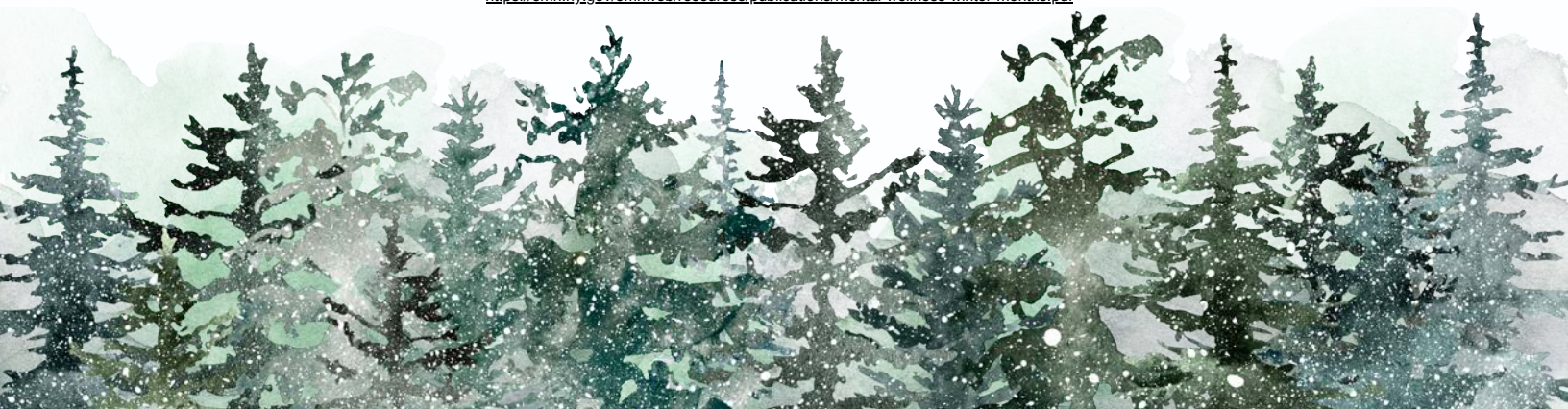
Feeling overwhelmed or down in the dumps? It's okay to reach out for help.

Call 988 - Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Call or Text 988 or chat [988Lifeline.org/chat](https://988lifeline.org/chat)

References:

<https://www.harvardpilgrim.org/hapiguide/strategies-to-maintain-your-mental-health-this-winter/>
<https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/resources/publications/mental-wellness-winter-months.pdf>

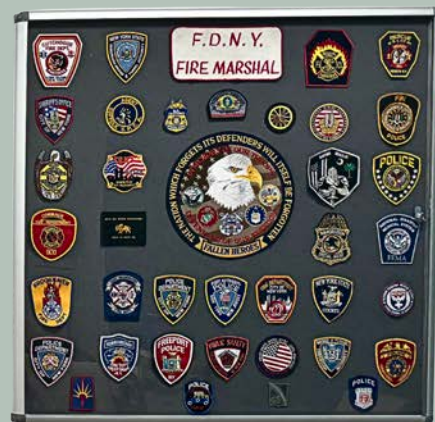


Patch Wall Progress

If we have been fortunate enough to receive a patch donation from you, please accept our thanks and appreciation. Your patch has helped us to grow our patch collection, displayed in both the Commack and the Westbury clinics. They represent the organizations and unions that our members have been a part of since the tragedy of 9/11. The patch wall exemplifies not only the unity of our members, but also the different paths taken in the years that followed. It signifies the diversity of this population and the places you have gone.

Your donation has inspired reflection and sparked meaningful discussions.

Westbury Patch Wall



Commack Patch Wall

March is National Nutrition Month



Food Connects Us

2025 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

A Campaign by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

National Nutrition Month® is an annual campaign established in 1973 by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the month of March, everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits. This year's theme is "Food Connects Us." Food is a connecting factor for many of us. Food connects us to our cultures, our families and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients were sourced. Health, memories, traditions, seasons and access can all impact our relationship with food. While these factors influence the foods we eat, the foods we eat also affect our health.

(Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2024)



Ethiopian Cuisine



Jamaican Cuisine



Brazilian Cuisine



Mexican Cuisine



Dominican Cuisine



Argentinian Cuisine



WTC Health Program Research Study



The Research Study

"The research study we are doing is called **"Effectiveness and Implementation of a Tailored Motivation-Focused Physical Activity Intervention for World Trade Center Health Program Cancer Survivors."**

"The study has two main parts. The first part is to test a motivational intervention to increase physical activity in cancer survivors. The intervention will include motivational education and action planning specific to physical activity. Participants will receive a Fitbit as part of the intervention."

"The second part is to test strategies to implement physical activity education into the clinical visit. The study will last for six months and will include two groups: one will get the intervention for the first three months and the other will get the intervention for the second three months. **Anyone in the WTC Health Program with a history of cancer is eligible to participate.**"



How Pamela Got Involved with WTC

"When I started at Stony Brook, I was introduced to the WTC Health Program research team by my mentor, Dr. Paolo Boffetta. I was impressed with the research and clinical care that the WTC Health Program team was conducting. I was particularly interested in the lifestyle medicine approach from the dietitians Katie and Alexandra. We quickly decided to join forces. We decided to plan a study that would help motivate people to be more active, while also incorporating physical activity teaching into clinical care."

Goal of the Research Study

"The goal of the study is to see if incorporating motivation to be more active into a clinical visit will help cancer survivors increase or maintain an active lifestyle. An important point about the study is that we are not studying any specific type of exercise. Part of the motivational intervention is finding the physical activity that best suits each person - we want them to be more active, with any type of activity. We also want clinicians to make education about being more active part of their routine clinical visit for all patients. Being more active is important for so many health conditions related to WTC exposure, we hope to be able to learn how to best incorporate education into our clinical care and work together with WTC Health Program participants to be active."

About Pamela



"I'm an oncology nurse and currently an Assistant Professor at the Stony Brook University School of Nursing with a joint appointment at the Stony Brook Cancer Center."



*If you are interested in Pamela's Study,
you may reach her at:*

Email: pamela.ginex@stonybrookmedicine.edu

Phone: (917) 207-0174

or

Research Project Coordinator - Candace Arneaud

Email: Candace.Arneaud@stonybrookmedicine.edu

How To Use Your Inhalers

Metered Dose Inhaler



Metered Dose Inhaler

Step 1: Open the device by sliding the cover down and then slide level until it clicks. It will load a dose.



Step 2: Stand or sit up straight and breathe out fully while holding inhaler away from your mouth.



Step 3: Put the mouthpiece in your mouth and close lips tightly.



Step 4: Breathe in **quickly** and **deeply** through inhaler. Do not breathe in through your nose.



Step 5: Remove the Diskus from your mouth and hold your breath as long as possible, up to 10 seconds.



Step 6: Breathe out slowly.



Step 7: Close diskus by sliding the cover up over mouthpiece.



Step 8: Rinse your mouth with water to prevent thrush. Do not swallow the water.



Dry Powder Inhaler

Step 1: Shake the inhaler well for 5 seconds before each use.



Step 2: Remove cap and hold it upright, check for foreign objects prior to use.



Step 3: Stand or sit up straight and breathe out fully through your mouth away from inhaler.



Step 4: Place mouthpiece into mouth and close lips to form a tight seal. Breathe in **slowly** and **deeply** when pressing down the top of canister.



Step 5: Take mouthpiece out of your mouth and hold your breath for about 10 seconds.



Step 6: Breathe out slowly.



Step 7: If another dose is needed, wait 1 min and repeat steps.



Step 8: For any inhaler that contains ICS (Symbicort, Advair HFA, Dulera), rinse mouth with water and spit out.



Winter Recipe: Crockpot Butter Chicken

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium yellow onions, peeled, cut in half, and sliced (~13 oz)
- 2 lbs boneless skinless chicken breast, cubed
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 3 medium carrots, diced (5-6 oz)
- 1 (15-oz) can tomato sauce
- 1 (6-oz) can tomato paste
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger (~2-inch piece)
- 3 tablespoons curry powder
- 2 teaspoons garam masala
- ½ teaspoon fine salt
- 1 tablespoon salted grass-fed butter, chilled, cut into pieces
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt (whole, low-fat, or fat-free)
- **Optional for serving:** cooked white rice or cauliflower rice, naan, chopped fresh cilantro, lime wedges, and/or toasted sesame seeds



INSTRUCTIONS

1. In the crock of a 6-quart or 8-quart slow cooker, place the sliced onions.
2. In a large bowl, combine the chicken, bell pepper, carrots, tomato sauce, tomato paste, lemon juice, garlic, ginger, curry powder, garam masala, and salt; toss until well combined.
3. Add the saucy chicken mixture to the slow cooker over top of the sliced onions.
4. Dot the pieces of butter over top of the mixture.
5. Place the lid on the slow cooker and cook on high for 4 ½ hours or on low for 6 ½ hours.
6. After the time is up, remove the lid, stir all ingredients until well combined, and turn off the slow cooker. When the liquid stops simmering and steaming (after 5-10 minutes), stir in the yogurt. (*NOTE: If you stir in the yogurt before letting the mixture cool down a little, it could curdle.*)
7. Serve over hot cooked rice or cauliflower rice, and/or with naan bread, and garnish with chopped fresh cilantro and toasted sesame seeds.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

Serving Size: 1/6 of the recipe (1 1/3 cups) **Calories:** 298 **Fat:** 6 g **Sodium:** 415 mg
Carbohydrate: 21 g **Fiber:** 4 g **Sugar:** 13 g **Protein:** 38 g

☒ Egg-free ☒ Gluten-free ☒ Grain-free ☒ Nut-free

Recipe: The Real Food Dietitians: <https://therealfooddietitians.com/indian-butter-chicken>





Stony Brook World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program
500 Commack Road, Suite 160
Commack, NY 11725

Clinics Closed:
January 20 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 17 - President's Day
May 26 - Memorial Day

Locations:

Commack Clinic

500 Commack Road, Suite 160
Commack, NY 11725
(631) 855-1200

Westbury Clinic

1600 Stewart Avenue, Suite 220
Westbury, NY 11590
(631) 855-1200



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