



**YMCA**  
**ACTIVATE**  
**AMERICA**



YMCA of Tacoma-Pierce County

# Activate America... Engaging the Spirit, Mind and Body

Dale A. Fletcher, M.S.





# What's Your Passion?



# Activate America

Research does support a  
holistic approach to personal health.

**SPIRIT - MIND - BODY**



# What the Research Shows

Faith impacts positively on our health  
in the following areas:

- Cancer
- Hypertension
- Heart Disease
- General Health
- Longevity
- General Well Being
- Substance Abuse
- Suicide
- Life Satisfaction



# The Research

*“Our research and amazing new scientific technology are continually adding exciting new evidence that our Great Creator, God, has equipped us with marvelous mechanisms by which, through faith in him, our spiritual beliefs and behaviors can actually help heal us.”*

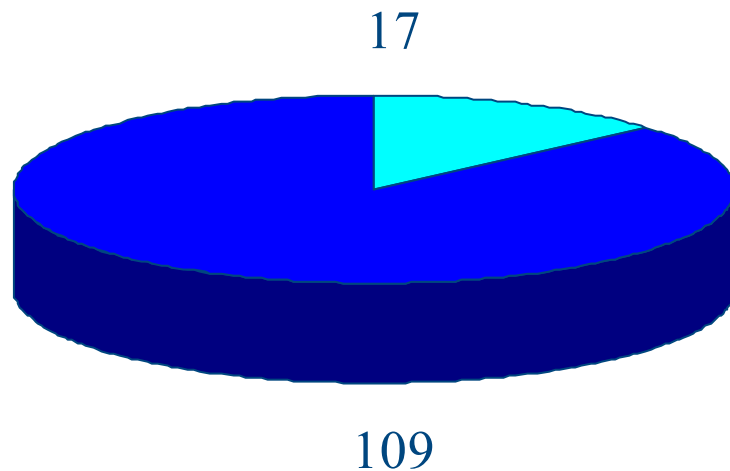
Harold G. Koenig, M.D.

Duke University

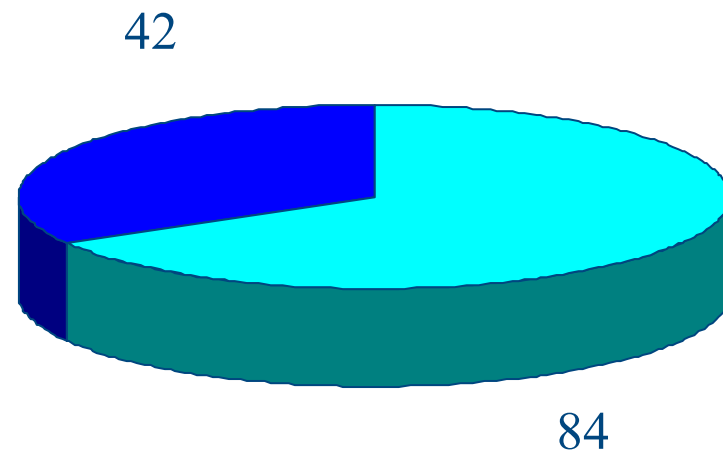
Author, *The Healing Connection*

# US Medical Schools Teaching Courses on Spirituality and Health

1994



2004





# National Polls on Faith and Health

- 99% of physicians say religious beliefs can have positive impact on healing process
- 83% of Americans believe their faith beliefs are closely tied to their mental and emotional health
- 79% of Americans believe faith can help people recover from illness, injury or disease
- 65% of patients want doctors to discuss matters of faith yet only 10% of patients say their doctors have such discussions.

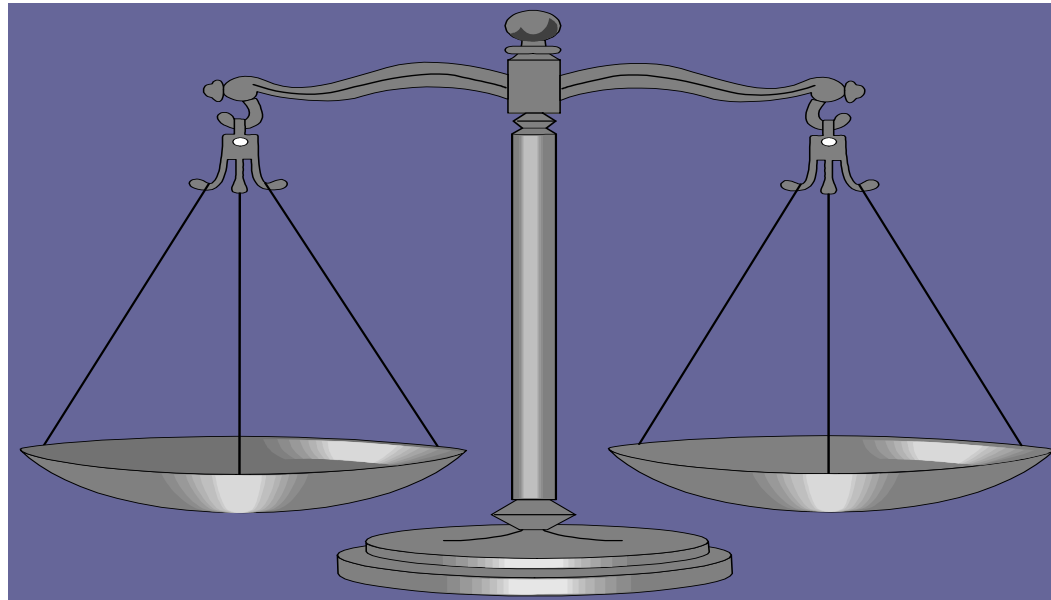


# On Wholeness

*“You ought not to attempt to cure  
the eyes without the head, or the  
head without the body....  
the body without the soul.  
For the part can never be well  
unless the whole is well.”*

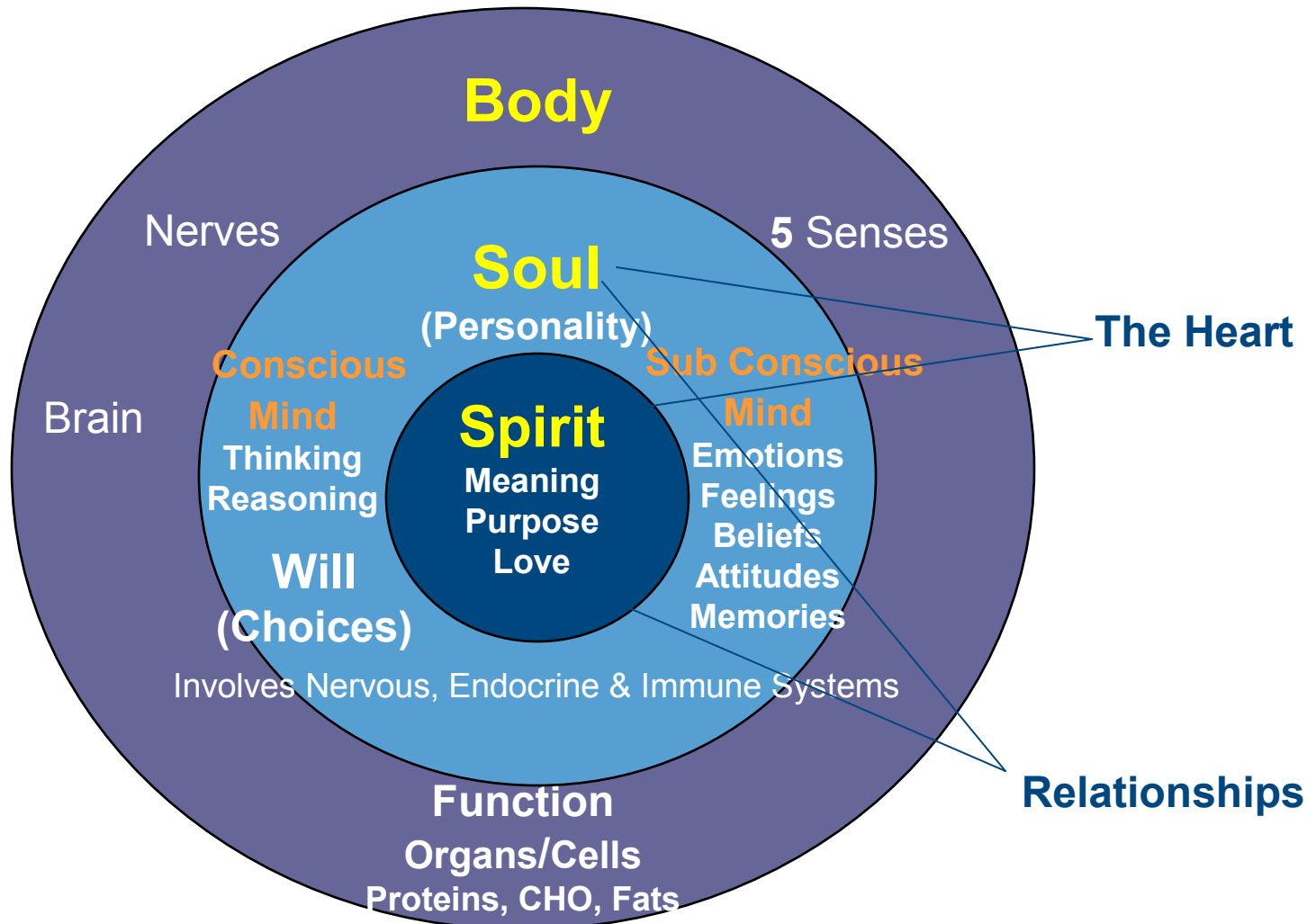
Plato 399 B.C.

# Achieving a Healthy & Holistic Balance



- **Spiritual**
- **Emotional & Mental**
- **Physical**

# We Are a 3-Part Whole

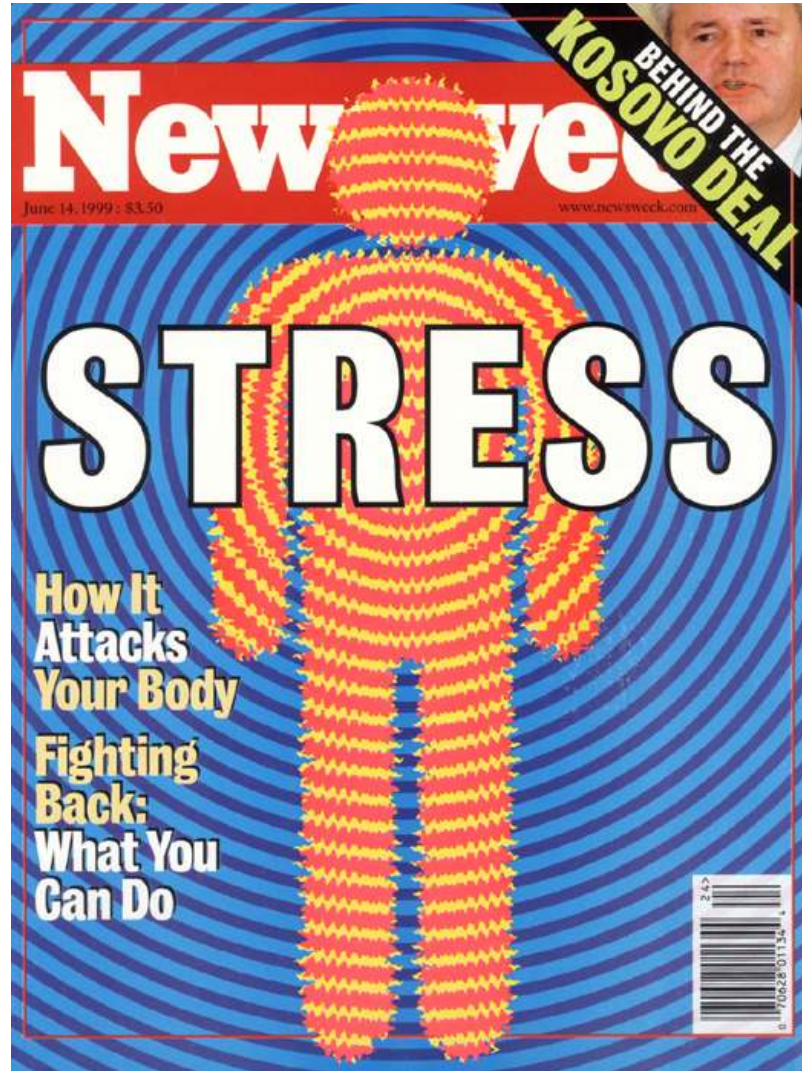


Man is essentially a spirit, who has a soul and lives in a body



# Emotions & Memories and Our Health

- Our body's glands produce chemicals
  - Brain – Neuropeptides
  - Other Glands – Hormones (cortisol, adrenalin)
- Emotions influence chemicals released into the body
  - Positive (Joy, Bliss, Love, Peace) **Your Passion** → Healthy chemicals
  - Negative (Fear, Anger) → Unhealthy chemicals
- Ongoing stress, if not well managed, produces chronic inflammatory conditions in our body
- Example: Deep anger in our heart → stored as a memory in the tissues → eats connective tissue, joint membranes, intestinal lining → chronic health issues.





# Stress and Health

75 to 90 % of all physician office visits  
have stress-related components.

American Psychological Association



# Stress and Health

"I find that my patients with the highest levels of stress and anxiety tend to have the most physical problems. A mind weighed down with cares and concerns may be the greatest threat to our health."

Kenneth Cooper, M.D.  
Author, *Faith-Based Fitness*



# Negative Feelings Lead to Chronic Internal Stress

- Fear – of death, disease, disaster
- Conflicts with other people
- Too many demands made on us
- Anger, bitterness, hatred
- Uncontrolled desires, addictions
- Guilt, shame, sense of rejection
- Depression



# Stress-Related Illnesses

- Hypertension, much cardio-vascular disease
- Chronic headaches, some depressions
- Some digestive and intestinal disorders
- Chronic fatigue or pain syndromes
- Some malignancies
- Auto-immune diseases, adult diabetes



# Spirit Mind Body Integration at the YMCA



# Body

- Physical Activity
- Smoking Cessation
- Diet and Nutrition
- Weight Management
- Relaxation Techniques
- Screenings
- Health Education



# Spirit Mind Body Health

What could an integrative holistic approach to personal health look like at your branches?



# What Could it Look Like at the Y?

- Educational Workshops/Talks
  - Anger, Forgiveness
- Support Groups
- Educational Articles
- Bible Studies
- Recovery Programs
- Social Functions
- One-on-one Wellness Coaching
- Strong Referral Network
  - Houses of Worship, Counselors
- New Member Follow up
- Resource Center
- On-site Professional Services
- Equipping & Developing Staff in Spirit, Mind, Body Health
- Equipping Volunteers in Spirit, Mind, Body Health



# Mind

- Stress Management Programs
- Health Information
  - How Spirit, Mind and Body work together
  - The spirituality & health connection
- Thinking Healthy, Mind Management
- Emotion Management



# Spirit

- Life Purpose Discovery
- Relationships – with Self, Others & God
- Spiritual Fitness Assessments
- Spiritual Practices/Exercises
- Whole Person Care
- Healing of Soul and Spirit



# Five Spiritual Principles That Promote Good Health

John Hopkins University Video

“Plans to Prosper- A Patient Guide to Good Health”

1. **Clean House** - Get rid of garbage, Let go of past hurts/anger
2. **Give Thanks and Be Grateful**
3. **Trust God**
4. **Serve and Help Others**
5. **Allow Others and God to Help You**



# Original Gulick Project Focus

- Purpose - Help more people improve their spiritual, mental and physical health.
- 2 Key Priorities - By seeking to improve a person's:
  - Ability to cope with stress
  - Spiritual awareness
- 2 Key Principles:
  - Staff receive ongoing training in Spirit, Mind Body healthy living
  - Relevant health information & messages are ever present in many forms



# It Means Shifting the Focus


From

To

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ■ Biomedical Health/Fitness  | ■ Whole Person Health & Well Being   |
| ■ Disease Risk Factors<br>BP, Body Fat, Smoking, Cholesterol,<br>Aerobic Endurance, Diet | ■ Health Enhancing Factors<br>Social Support, Love, Thought Patterns,<br>Spiritual Beliefs & Practices, Life Purpose |
| ■ Telling as an Expert   | ■ Supporting as an Ally/Partner  |

It will require staff who are compassionate that embrace & model this new focus.

It must become a way of work.



How do we respectfully engage  
the spirit, mind and body with  
our members?



# The Greatest Commandment - Love

Mark 12:31

- If you embrace this as God's greatest commandment, how do we do this in this YMCA setting?
  - Growing in Your Faith & Relationship with God
  - Caring for Yourself
  - Being available for one another & members
  - Being compassionate & respectful
  - Listening with your heart to understand at a deeper level



# On Love...

“Unconditional love is the most powerful stimulant of the immune system.”

Bernie Siegel, M.D.

Author, *Love, Medicine and Miracles*

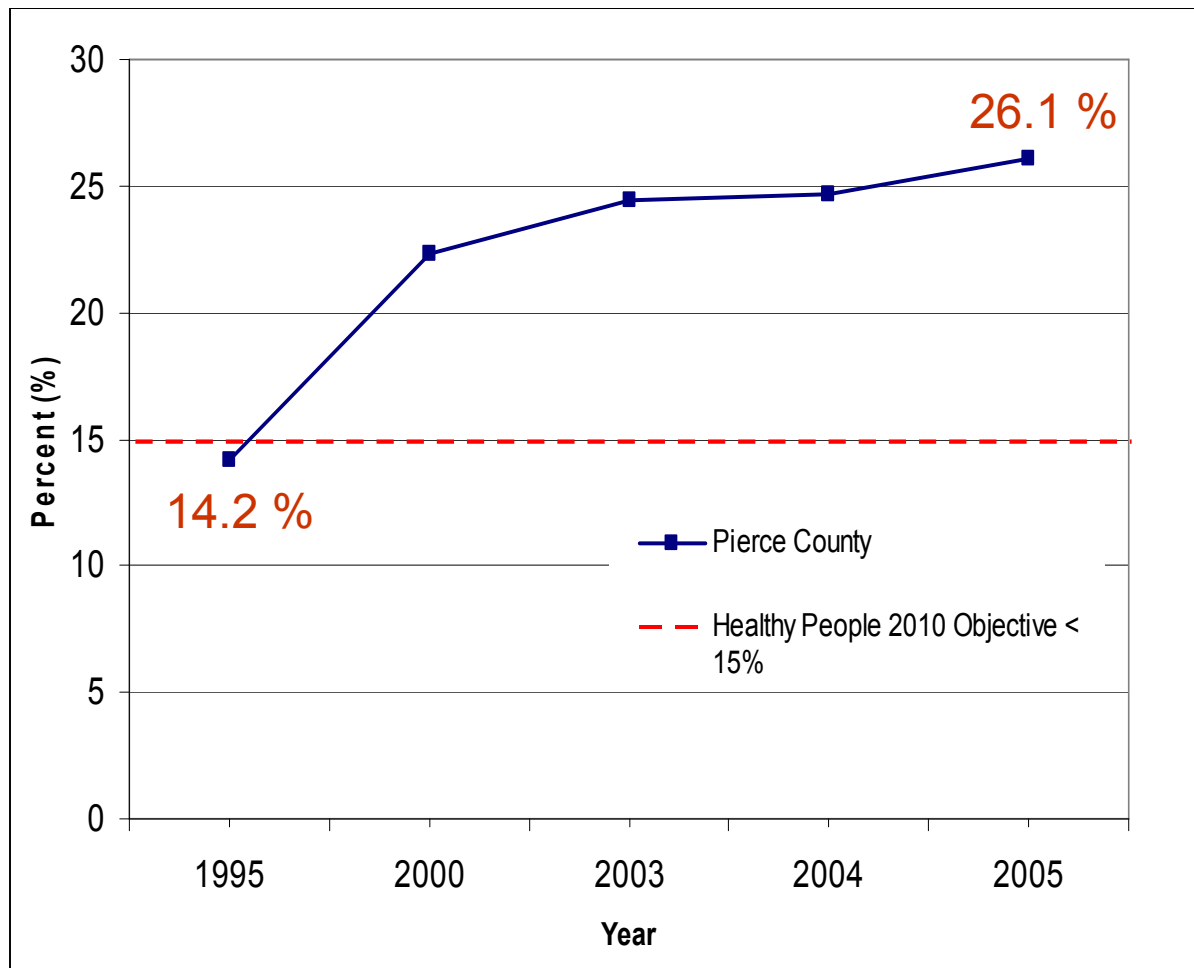


# Closing

Why the Y?

Why now?

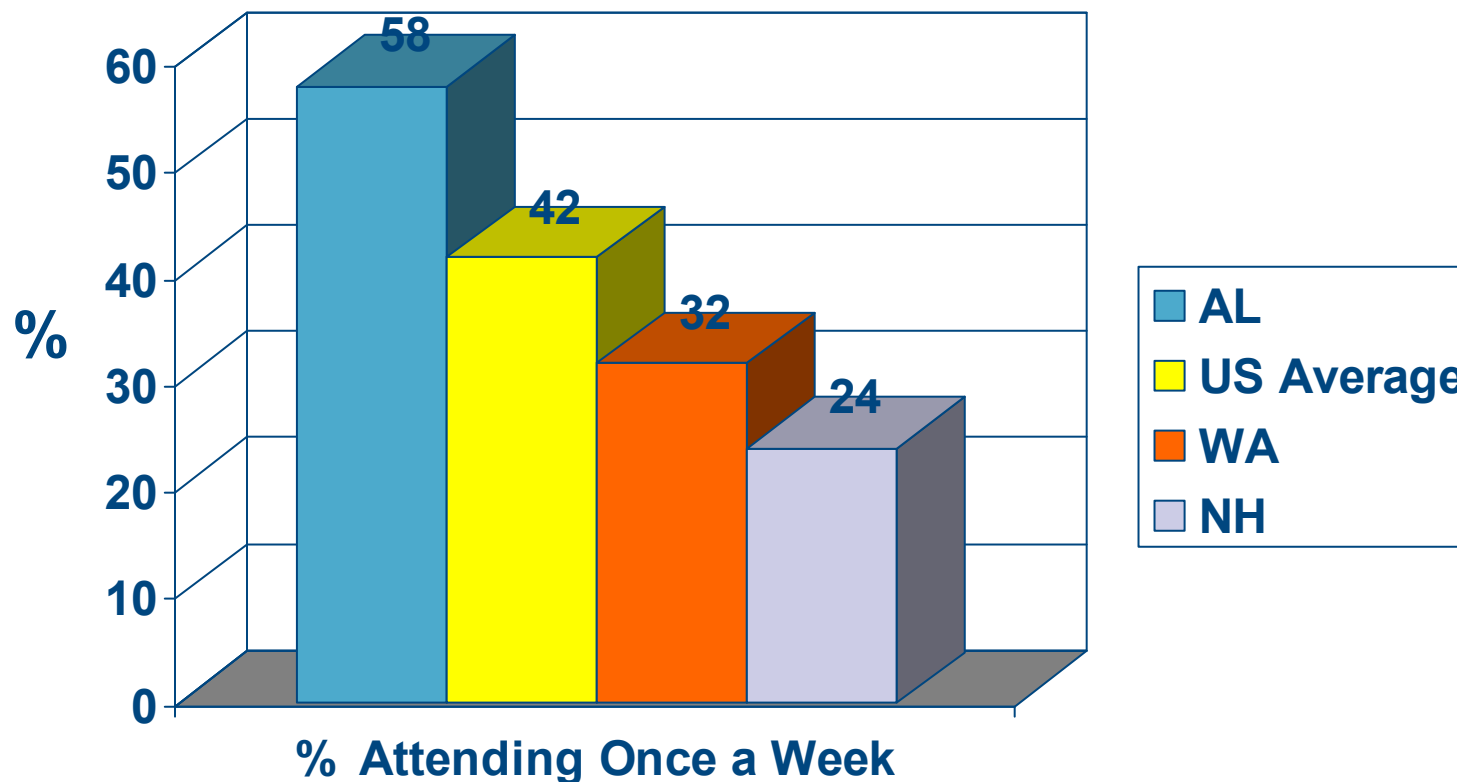
# Prevalence of Obesity among Adults Pierce County, WA 1995 - 2005



An 84% increase  
In 10 years

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, BRFSS

# Weekly Church or Synagogue Attendance



2006 Gallup Poll of 68,000 People in the US




America's Authority  
on Fitness

## 12 Fitness Trend Predictions for 2007

### # 7 - The mind and body connect for a complete health and fitness experience

“By incorporating *elements of mental and spiritual fitness*, individuals will take better care of their entire being and psychological self, not just their bodies.”



"Man's essential unity – body, mind, and spirit – each being a necessary and eternal part of man being neither one alone but all three," a wonderful combination of dust of the earth, and the breath of God."

"Our physical education should be all around; have reference to **spiritual** and **mental** growth; be educative and progressive; give each man what he individually needs and be interesting."



Luther Gulick, M.D. 1891  
Father of the YMCA Triangular Logo





# An opportunity to address your personal health in a more holistic way

*“We must become the change we want to see.”*

*Mahatma Gandhi*

“I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast, and when I run I feel his pleasure.”



**Eric Liddell**

Eric Liddell  
“The Flying Scotsman”  
1924 Olympian & Missionary

The movie - Chariots of Fire

# A HIGHER CALLING

If not us, then who?  
If not now, then when?





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