



# Women's Resource Center NEWSLETTER

A Quarterly Newsletter

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## The Benefits of Being Assertive

**“The only constant in business today is change.” Sound familiar? If it doesn’t, it should. It’s the new reality for working people in every type of job, in every industry, in every city and town.**

To survive and, more importantly, thrive in the business world of today and tomorrow, working people must accept and adapt to changes like these:

- New technology constantly requires new skills.
- Downsizing means each person assumes more work and more responsibility.
- Mergers and realignments alter company uses, bringing changes in job duties, career paths, compensation, retirements and benefits.

Dealing with change isn’t easy. However, some people seem to enjoy the challenges of change, believing they can handle anything that comes their way. When they face obstacles, they find solutions. And although they may experience moments of uncertainty or indecisiveness, they quickly get back on track, hang in there and eventually make good things happen.

Because these people are constantly learning and growing with their changing work environment, they can be labeled as both optimistic and assertive. Optimism tends to reflect a person’s outlook on life and their personality. While it’s difficult, if not impossible, to change your basic personality, it’s certainly possible to learn to be more assertive — to go after and get what you want.

### Assertive vs. Aggressive



In the business world, you often hear the word “aggressive.” Companies talk about their “aggressive” growth plans. Sales managers tell their people to be “aggressive” when calling on clients. Customer service reps are instructed to “aggressively” solve customer problems.

The dictionary actually defines aggressive as “full of enterprise and initiative; bold and active; pushing; starting fights or quarrels; ready or willing to engage in direct action; militant.” Depending on your preferred definition, “aggressive” can be either positive or negative. Typically, it’s used to describe behavior that’s pushy, abrasive or too forceful. In contrast, the dictionary defines assertive as “persistently positive or confident.”

The real difference between being assertive and being aggressive is how our words and behavior affect the rights and well-being of other people. Assertive communication champions our own rights and well-being without violating those of others. It takes their feelings and needs into consideration and shows them respect.

### The Benefits



Each year, companies spend billions of dollars upgrading their employees’ technical, sales and customer-service skills. What many of these companies don’t realize is that assertiveness training also

can affect things like customer satisfaction, productivity and profitability. By offering this kind of training, companies can teach their employees to solve problems through cooperation and negotiation. But that’s just one of the many benefits of an assertive workplace. Here are a few others:

- Every problem seems to have a “win-win” solution. Assertive communicators first ask what the other person or party wants and then quickly negotiate a solution that everyone can live with.
- Because problems are solved more quickly, resentment, frustration and other tensions that block peak performance are minimized.
- Assertiveness training helps employees become problem-solvers rather than victims of a system they believe they can’t control. While victims feel paralyzed, assertive people feel empowered to find the best solutions.
- Assertive behavior can actually reduce physical and mental stress in the workplace because people feel less like victims and more like influencers.
- Employees stop procrastinating and start acting. They form an action plan for success by asking, “What will it take to make my goal or wish a reality?”
- Communication becomes clearer and more concise, which reduces misunderstandings and clarifies expectations. Phrases like “I thought you meant...” virtually disappear. In an assertive work environment, people speak up and say what’s on their minds. They aren’t afraid their ideas will be shunned, ridiculed or ignored.
- Employees concentrate on what’s within their control, rather than what’s beyond their control. For instance, you can always control how you react to a situation, but you can’t control how others react.

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- Instead of wasting time by gossiping and complaining — which accomplish nothing — employees focus on the positive, productive steps they can take to solve problems.



As you can see, it pays to be assertive in the workplace, especially when change and uncertainty are the only constants in today's business world. Being assertive gives you the confidence and communication skills to go after and get what you really want. After all, if you don't stand up for yourself, no one else will.

Article adapted from the National Seminars Group website at <http://www.nationalseminarstraining.com/Articles/>.



## Women's Professional Enrichment Series

Margaret Kellogg, L.C.S.W., will conduct "*Live With Joy and Passion*" on January 26 and February 2, 2006. Scheduled as part of the Women's Professional Enrichment Series for winter 2006, Kellogg's two-part series is focused on the needs and values that motivate us to fulfillment and true happiness. One participant stated, "I can step out and do things I felt were not possible before."

A series designed to help identify one's life purpose, join us for this two-part series that centers on clarifying individual skills and abilities in order to alleviate confusion about one's life purpose. Kellogg will cover the three-step formula for finding your passion, along with aiding participants in discovering the "big" vision for life, which includes action steps to move forward with that vision.

The location, for both the January 26 and February 2 session, is the Forum Room, D.P. Culp University Center, at noon. **Reservations are required.** To reserve a spot or should you require additional information regarding this series, contact the Women's Resource Center at 423-439-7847.



## Women's Health Series

Coronary heart disease is America's No. 1 killer. Stroke is No. 3 and a leading cause of serious disability. That's why it is so important to reduce your risk factors related to heart disease. Heart disease is the leading cause of death among women over 65. American women are 4 to 6 times more likely to die of heart disease than of breast cancer and it kills more women over 65 than all cancers combined. Even though women develop heart problems later in life than men — typically 7 or 8 years later, by the age of 65 women and men develop heart disease-related problems at almost the same rate.

On Tuesday, February 7, 2006, "*Women – Take Heart!*" will be presented by **Lori Hamilton, R.N.C.**, director of the Johnson City Medical Center/Mountain States Health Alliance Health Resources Center, and **Denise Highsmith, R.N.**, also with the JCMC/MSHA Health Resources Center.

Scheduled as part of the Women's Health Series, Hamilton and Highsmith's seminar will focus on women taking the "control role" in their heart health. Hamilton and Highsmith will discuss proactive steps to living longer, healthier, and more vibrant lives.

Location for this Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar is the East Tennessee Room, D.P. Culp University Center, noon.

Much research has recently focused on how antioxidant vitamins may reduce cardiovascular disease risk. Antioxidant vitamins — C, E, and beta carotene (a form of vitamin A) — have potential health-promoting properties. Though the data are incomplete, up to 30 percent of Americans are taking some form of antioxidant supplement.

"*Protect Your Heart with Antioxidants,*" a Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar, will be conducted by **Patsy Meridith**, Tuesday, February 21, 2006. Meredith is owner of the Natural Foods Market located in Johnson City, also Meredith hosts the weekly radio talk show "*Health Matters*" on WJCW.

Meridith will discuss the important role antioxidants, such as beta carotene, lycopene, vitamins A, C, and E, and other substances, play in stabilizing free radicals; thus preventing damage free radicals otherwise might cause. Clearly, there is a myriad of conflicting reports on the health benefits of antioxidants permeating medical journals, news reports, and print media. Often, this makes a proactive decision difficult for the layperson. Meridith's antioxidants "basics" seminar can help with that decision.

Location for this Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar is the East Tennessee Room, D.P. Culp University Center, noon.




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## National Women's Heart Health Day is February 1.

*National Women's Heart Health Day*, which is observed on the first of February each year, provides an opportunity to promote heart health in women by focusing attention on risk factors for heart disease in women and what women can do to reduce their risk.

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## Women's Resource Center NEWSLETTER

The ETSU Women's Resource Center Newsletter is published quarterly at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn.  
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***ETSU Women's Resource Center***  
**Program Schedule**

For more information on the events listed contact the *WRC* at 423-439-7847.

**DECEMBER 2005 – FEBRUARY 2006**

**PROGRAMS - Main Campus**

**Wednesday, December 21**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *The Language of Threads: A Novel* by Gail Tsukiyama. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Wednesday, January 18**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *The Rice Mother* by Rani Manicka. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Thursday, January 26**

**Thursday, February 2**

**"Live With Joy and Passion" – A Women's Professional Enrichment Lunch Break Series.** Join us for this two-part series that centers on clarifying individual skills and abilities in order to alleviate confusion about one's life purpose. Margaret Kellogg, L.C.S.W., personal and professional development coach, will conduct the series. See article page 2.

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.**

**LOCATION & TIME:** D.P. Culp University Center, Forum Room, noon.

**Tuesday, February 7**

**"Women – Take Heart!" – A Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar.** Conducted by Lori Hamilton, R.N.C., director of the JCMC/MSHA Health Resources Center, and Denise Highsmith, R.N., also of the Health Resources Center, this seminar will focus on women taking the "control role" in their heart health. Hamilton and Highsmith will discuss proactive steps to living longer, healthier, and more vibrant lives. See article page 2.

**LOCATION & TIME:** D.P. Culp University Center, East Tennessee Room, noon.

**Wednesday, February 15**

**Book Review Group.** Participants will meet to discuss *The Forest Lover* by Susan Vreeland. New readers welcome.

**LOCATION & TIME:** Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, Basement Suite 2, noon.

**Tuesday, February 21**

**"Protect Your Heart with Antioxidants" – A Women's Health Series Lunch Break Seminar.** Patsy Meridith, owner of the Natural Foods Market located in Johnson City, will conduct this seminar. Meridith will discuss the important role antioxidants, such as beta-carotene, lycopene, vitamins A, C, and E, and other substances play in stabilizing free radicals; thus preventing damage free radicals otherwise might cause. See article page 2.

**LOCATION & TIME:** D.P. Culp University Center, East Tennessee Room, noon.

**ALL THE ABOVE PROGRAMS ARE FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

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## MORE NEWS & EVENTS

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual "HEAD to TOE" Request for Donations**

This project is designed to enhance overall self-image and is sponsored by the ETSU Pre-Professional & Graduate Section of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) and the Tennessee Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (TAFCS). All proceeds, from the sales of the items donated, will benefit Girl's Inc. of Johnson City/Washington County.

***Items requested include:***

**Prom or formal dresses, shoes, and/or accessories.**

**Donations will be accepted through February 1, 2006.**

**Campus drop-off site:**

**Women's Resource Center, Panhellenic Hall, basement suite 2. Office Phone: 423-439-7847.**

### **Course Listing for Spring Semester 2006**

#### ***Social Concerns and Women's Health***

A general elective course open to all majors, also a women's studies elective.

This course examines women's experiences with health, illness and embodiment in the U.S. The course will explore the roles of women as patients and health providers from social, historical, political, and economic perspectives, as well as reproductive and other health issues across the lifespan. Scheduled for Tuesday, 3:45 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., FCNU 4507/5507 – Call #12738, will be taught by instructor Sharon Trumbley. For more information contact Trumbley at 439-4056.



### **National Women's History Month**

**March 2006**

#### ***"Women: Builders of Communities & Dreams"***

Watch for the special programs and lectures currently being planned for the ETSU campus during March 2006.



### **HOLIDAY CLOSING**

ETSU will be closed December 26, 2005, through January 2, 2006.

The university will be closed on January 16, 2006, in observance of ***Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.***

**Spring Semester 2006**

Classes begin January 17, 2006.



### **Black History Month**

**February 2006**

#### ***"Celebrating Community: A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social, and Civic Institutions"***

**East Tennessee State University is a Tennessee Board of Regents institution and is fully in accord with the belief that educational and employment opportunities should be available to all eligible persons without regard to age, gender, color, race, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation.**