



# Connections



VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

PAIN SUPPORT GROUP

FALL 2001

## Banishing those insidious “if onlys”

You’ve all heard people say, “If only I could win the lottery,” or “If only I had a fancy car,” or “If only I were younger (or thinner or richer).” This phenomenon—which I call the “if onlys”—presents those of us who live with chronic pain an especially seductive temptation. We may find ourselves constantly yearning:

- If only I didn’t have chronic pain.
- If only researchers could find a cure.

- If only things could be the way they used to be.

Beware! These are not the harmless expressions of hope that they seem. Instead, the “if onlys” are insidious roadblocks that prevent us from living our lives to the fullest.

That is not to say we need to—or should—give up hope. We can continue to keep our eye on that faraway star of a cure. But, in the meantime, if we are to thrive, we must accept our current condition, make those accom-

modations necessary to living as rich a life as possible, and cope the best we can with things the way they are.

If we put our lives on hold while waiting for the if onlys to come true, we squander the most precious gift we all possess—time. The recent tragedies in New York and Washington have painfully reminded us how precious life is—even lives marred by chronic pain. Let’s not waste one minute of our lives on the if onlys.

*Sue Gold*

## We have a new home at The Pines

We have been invited to hold our meetings at The Pines in Ocean Park. We will be meeting in the Hospitality Room at Pinewood, the second set of buildings in the retirement community. The room has comfortable chairs, kitchen facilities, tables where we can hold our holiday potluck celebration, and storage for our supplies and pamphlets. There is plenty of parking, and the building is handicapped-accessible, with bathrooms that are also equipped for people with disabilities. We are looking forward to welcoming

residents of the retirement community who might benefit from our group. Some may have wanted to join us in the past but have been reluctant to drive at night.

Please consult the map on page 2 of this newsletter for directions to our new meeting place. We are very grateful to the residents of The Pines and to director David Howe for welcoming us to their facility.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Chancellor Place of Saco, which so generously has provided us

with meeting space for the past year. As soon as she heard that the First Parish Congregational Church had burned, administrator Christina Smittle invited all the groups that had met at the church to use her facility. We gratefully accepted her invitation and have enjoyed our time there.

The people at both facilities are good examples of the spirit of sharing that thrives in this community and, as we have so poignantly seen in recent days, in every other community in this great nation.

### Fall-Winter 2001 Schedule

#### OCTOBER

**18** “Healthy Eating”  
Speaker: Sheila Ouellette

#### NOVEMBER

**1** Group Discussion  
**15** “Gentle Art of Qi Gong”  
Speaker: David Timmerman, MTS

#### DECEMBER

**6** “Using massage to ease holiday stress”  
Speaker: Lisa Bouchard

**20** Holiday Potluck

#### JANUARY

**3** Group Discussion  
**17** “Grieving losses caused

by chronic pain”

Speaker: Susan Haskell Correia, LCSW

Meetings held at Hospitality Room, Pinewood, Ocean Park (OOB), 7-8:30 p.m., 1st & 3rd Thursdays. All are welcome!

### New Brochures

Thanks to a generous grant from the Arthritis Foundation, Northern New England Chapter, our support group now has new brochures. If you would like to distribute them to patients or others, please call Susan Gold at 284-4655.

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Thanks to Southern Maine Medical Center for sponsoring this newsletter.



**Take Control.** We Can Help.™

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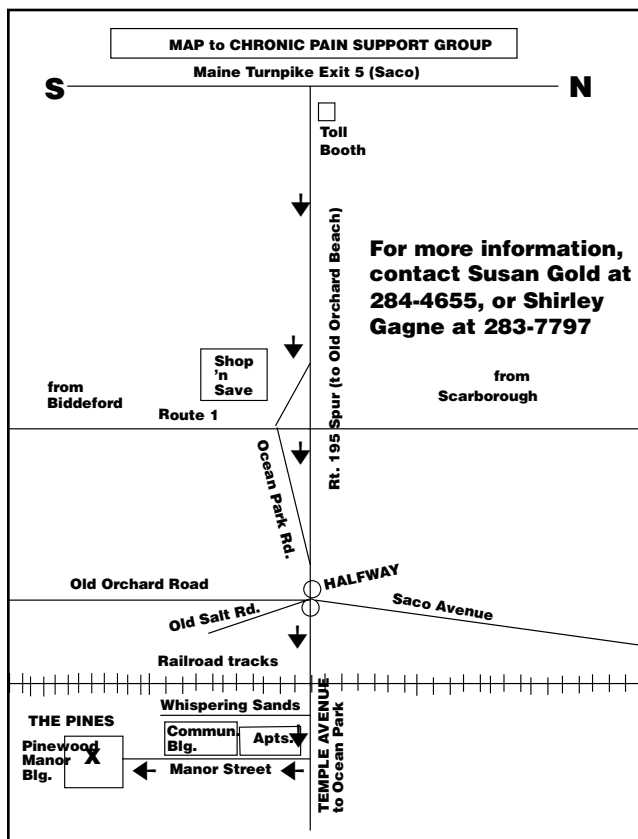
## Directions to The Pines

**From the Maine Turnpike:** Take Exit 5 (Saco). Go straight ahead to Old Orchard Beach. At the traffic island (Halfway), continue straight for .6 miles on Temple Ave. to railroad tracks. Take the second right after the tracks onto Manor St. As you enter, you will pass by the first set of buildings and the Ocean Pines community building on right. Follow signs to the office. The Hospitality Room is on the first floor of the three-story Pinewood Manor Building.

**From Saco:** Take Ocean Park Road (opposite Shop 'n Save) and continue straight onto Temple Avenue. Follow directions above.

If the door is locked, please ring the bell—we can hear it in the meeting room—and someone will

let you in. The residents of The Pines are welcoming us into their home. Some live in apartments on the upper floors of the building, so please keep this in mind as we gather for our meetings and talk quietly in the hallways and parking lot as you are leaving.



**For more information, contact Susan Gold at 284-4655, or Shirley Gagne at 283-7797**

## Upcoming

We are fortunate to have excellent speakers this quarter. These experts are volunteering their time to present us with information designed to help us cope better with chronic pain. On October 18, **Sheila Ouellette** of New Morning Natural Foods Market in Biddeford and Kennebunk will tell us about healthy foods and how to prepare them.

**David Timmerman**, MTS, of Southern Maine Medical Center will join us Nov. 15 to teach a second class in Qi Gong, a gentle form of exercise combining meditation and motion.

Just in time for the holidays, **Lisa Bouchard** of Massagecraft in Saco will show us how to ease stress with self-massage techniques at our December 6 meeting.

And to help us through the post-holiday/winter blues, **Susan Haskell Correia**, LCSW, of Portland, will guide us through the grieving process January 17 as we discuss the losses caused by chronic pain.

Don't forget our annual potluck holiday feast on Dec. 20!

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Pain Support Group is to provide a safe place where people with chronic pain can support one another, develop friendships, share ideas and thoughts, obtain information about their condition from professionals and each other, and learn coping skills in a nonjudgmental and caring atmosphere.