

COMMISSION ON THE AGING
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812

COMMUNITY FORUM

“ARE YOU IN YOUR RIGHT MIND”
WITH JOYCE SALTMAN

MINUTES

June 4, 2016

The Commission on the Aging hosted a Community Forum on Saturday, June 4, 2016 at the Senior Center from 10:00am-12:00pm. The topic was “Are You in Your Right Mind”. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

PRESENT: Maureen Salerno, Chair, Cindy LaCour, Vice Chair, Julia MacMillan, Janet Loya, Jeannette Sweeney, Kathy Hull, and Roberta Ilardo

ABSENT: Katy Johannssen, and Stephanie Shaughnessy

SPEAKER: Dr. Janet Saltman

GENERAL PUBLIC: 34 people present

Maureen Salerno welcomed everyone and Roberta Ilardo introduced Dr. Janet Saltman. Dr. Janet Saltman is a professor of special education at Southern Connecticut State University and refers to herself as a humorist. Janet Saltman does speaking engagements around the country on the importance of humor.

Janet Saltman opened with a few jokes and had the audience laughing. She will randomly tell jokes to people who she thinks are having a hard day. She suggested that when your grandchildren call, start the conversation off with a quick joke, this will lighten the conversation and children will be more likely to open up to you.

Janet Saltman had the audience perform an exercise by having the audience write the numbers 1-13 down the middle of a piece of paper and then asked 13 questions such as: Does your desk appear to be neat & tidy to others; or does it appear to be in disarray? Do you trust data; or do you trust your intuition? Do you remember names or faces? Do you prefer visual reminders or verbal or written reminders? Depending on your answer, you would put a check mark in the right column or left column. People whose answers that

were in the right column use their left brain, and people whose answers were in the left column use their right brain.

People whose answers were in the left column tend to be more organized, don't like major changes and can be rigid or uptight. While those whose answers were mostly in the right column tend to be more creative, spontaneous, and are afraid of boredom. Members of the audience whose answers were mostly one sided, compared how their closets & "piles of stuff" were organized. Everyone in the audience enjoyed going over their own results.

Schools tend to reward students who are in their left brain. This is something that Janet Saltman would like to see changed. It's just a matter of using a different teaching style. The feedback was that most everyone would have liked to go more in depth into this subject and how it not only effects their own daily lives, but how it impacts students and learning styles.

Janet Saltman told the audience to think about things they are doing, and about things they are not doing. Perhaps what you are not doing may not be important. If you are stretched too tightly in the other direction you can become too stressed. If you have to do something you don't want to do, it will take you twice as long to do. For example right minded people who have left minded bosses, tend to take more sick days due to stress.

Maureen Salerno thanked everyone for joining us today. The Forum was adjourned at 12 noon.