

From the desk of . . Service Program Administrator Mary Mullane

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Serving the states of CT, IA, IL, IN, MA, ME, MI, MN, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT & WI

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As a SPA (Service Program Administrator) for TOPS, I have the unique pleasure of being part of a team and also serve as a Team Leader as I lead the team of Coordinators and staff from the states in my care. It is an amazing job and an exciting opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others and impact the future of

our wonderful organization. As members of TOPS, you too have great opportunities and your words, actions and participation have impact. Sometimes I get to do awesome things, and I kind of forget how awesome they are. Do you? I get stressed at times, and I forget how fortunate I am, how incredible life has turned out to be most days, and some of the special places I've gotten to see and the amazing people I have met along the way. As I reflect on that, I am overcome with joy, the kind that radiates from the inside out and turns into a deep smile. Yes, there are times it is stressful and overwhelming, but my work is as exciting as it is rewarding. As a SPA, I get to do awesome things! I speak daily with members who have concerns or wish to share the joys of their chapters. I help settle disputes, provide rule clarifications, and offer guidance when needed. I meet with and/or email Field Staff to keep the lines of communication open and flowing. Together we plan and brainstorm and share our ideas with one another in hopes of making YOUR TOPS experience the best it can be. I also get to travel, visiting as many recognition events as the schedule permits. I have watched as members who were once shy, take the stage and own it by sharing their story to help and inspire others. I've witnessed your staff work through the night to have things be perfect for you and no matter how much their feet or back hurt, they are smiling and celebrating with you and already making plans to improve so the next time is even better. Sometimes, like your staff, I have filled in last minute, presenting a program, playing a part in a fun but silly skit, singing karaoke or whatever is needed at the moment. Life has, indeed, turned out to be incredible most days. I have seen amazing Coordinators, Advocates, Chapter Officers and members fully engaged in the moment and working on fulfilling the mission of TOPS, each fully committed to the vision. There is so much to be enthusiastic about! I love this often chaotic TOPS life I lead and there is no place I would rather be and I am a proud to tell anyone who listens, what a wonderful organization I am affiliated with as a member and as staff. As 2022 is winding down and we look toward 2023, I urge you to notice when something or someone is awesome, as often happens, and exclaim it. I invite you to join me in recognizing moments that are amazing. Make it known to others. Use it as a way to tell others about TOPS. Enthusiasm is contagious and spreads faster than a virus— keep yours visible. That's how we grow TOPS.

Best wishes and happy fall to you all!

Mary Mullane, Service Program Administrator



Stay Connected via Monthly TOPS Talks



September 17

“What Do My Genes Tell Me?”

With Dr. Michael Olivier

October 15

“Can I Afford Treatment?”

With Arya M. Sharma, MD, PhD, Dssc(h.c.), FRCPC

November 19

“How Do I Quit Shaming Myself for My Weight?”

With Ximena Ramos-Salas, PhD

December 17

“365 New Opportunities are Waiting For Us”

With TOPS President Rick Danforth

How to Register

The registration link for each talk will be available in the [Members Area](#) under The Skinny From TOPS and [My TOPS Resources/Webinars](#). TOPS Talks are presented via Zoom and recorded. Recordings are made available to all members and make excellent programs for chapter meetings.



Something to think about . . .



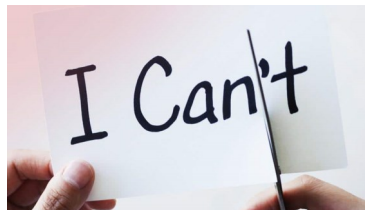
A hypnotist put a powerful fullback into a state of relaxation, then placed a three-ounce paperweight on the locker room floor, suggesting it weighed five hundred pounds. Then he asked the fullback, who could ordinarily bench press hundreds of pounds, to pick it up. "If it weighs five hundred pounds," the player replied, "I don't think I can lift it up." He strained and puffed. His face turned purple, the veins of his arms distended, but he couldn't budge the little glass cube. The fullback's biceps were monitored with biofeedback instruments which indicated that he was pulling up with a force that would have lifted a four-hundred-pound barbell yet he was unable to lift the paperweight. The same instruments measuring his triceps indicated they were pushing down to with more force than he was using to pull up, keeping the paperweight where he "knew" it belonged.

Learned helplessness is a belief that we are at the mercy of external forces and no longer in control of what is happening to us. The larger explanation of the fullback was that his mind forced him to work against himself so that he could confirm his pictured of an immovable object on the floor. Thus, an idea he accepted made him his own worst enemy. How often do we hypnotize ourselves into believing we are helpless victims of external circumstances when that is actually what we have chosen to believe? If you ever feel like you are trying your hardest but getting nowhere, take a moment to ask yourself whether you really believe you can succeed. If you are not truly convinced of the possibility, make a conscious effort to clear your mind of any learned helplessness.

Today, no every day, I encourage you to consider how often you have limited your successes because you see yourself the victim of external forces. Learned helplessness is exactly what it implies, learned. The good news is that we can also learn optimism. We can learn to become positively motivated and to breakdown large, seemingly overwhelming goals into smaller, more manageable ones. Attaining smaller goals helps us to believe we can achieve our larger ones, increasing our perception of success for even the most complex challenges. Thus making sure that the ideas we are accepting are working for us....not against us.

Make Today a Magnificent Day!

Please note - The above article was written by Gary Rupert for his Blog in November 2017. Mr. Rupert is a retired band director and coach in the community where I drive my school bus. This article is used with his permission. His writing is always thought provoking, honest and relatable to many aspects of people living their best life possible. I hope this particular message speaks to you as it did me and that you will choose to learn optimism and let go of the limits you have placed on yourself to turn your I can't into I can.



A hearty TOPS welcome to these chapters and thank you to all who made them happen. Let's continue to grow our TOPS family!

Invite a neighbor, friend, or family member who could benefit from all TOPS has to offer to join you for a meeting. Sometimes just sharing your TOPS News is enough to start the conversation.

Chapter	Chap City	Date Organ
PA 1743	Rossiter	3/30/2022
OH 2268	Lebanon	4/4/2022
PA 1744	Uniontown	4/6/2022
MN 1867	Newfolden	5/10/2022
ME 0431	East Millinocket	5/17/2022
MA 0513	Taunton	6/3/2022
WI 1592	Weston	6/9/2022
IL 2695	Dakota	6/16/2022
NY 1384	Newark	7/7/2022
OH 2269	Alliance	7/11/2022



July 29th and 30th we held a team meeting in Niagara Falls, NY. We were only missing two coordinators at our meeting and they were able to join us briefly via Zoom along with TOPS President Rick Danforth. It was an awesome time together and provided opportunity for exchanging ideas, addressing concerns and making plans to grow TOPS. As they returned home, each Coordinator was asked to make an action plan for their state or local service area. Stay tuned as this amazing team has awesome plans in the works for you!