

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple A Day, Lake Region's health and wellness program, where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I'm Katie Johnson and my guests today are Jason Bergstrand and Natalie Knutson, no strangers to the show but kind of here in a different role. Jason and Natalie, you both are on the Live Well Fergus Falls project, one of the destiny drivers from Forward Fergus Falls, for people who are familiar with that ongoing project in the city of Fergus Falls, but you have an exciting new initiative as part of Live Well Fergus Falls, called Thrive, that you're going to talk with us about today. So thanks for joining me.

Jason Bergstrand: Thank you.

Natalie Knutson: Thank you, Katie.

Katie Johnson: Well let's just start at the very beginning. Live Well Fergus Falls, what is it trying to accomplish and how did it come up with this project as a way to meet the goals of Live Well Fergus Falls?

Natalie Knutson: So Live Well Fergus Falls is a destiny driver of the Forward Fergus Falls. We've been established for four or five years probably and each year we sit down and we set goals and how can we work together? What are some gaps we're finding in the community? What are some needs? Mental health just continues to be one of those areas that we're stumped on. What can we do as a group? How can we pull something together? Jason started becoming a little bit more connected with this idea of the Bounce Back project and it continued to get bounced around and we continued to talk about it and then all of a sudden it was like, "Hey, maybe we can do this in our community." We proposed the idea to just some general people around Fergus and everybody started to light up and so the two of us, I think started saying we need to go for it.

So we brought it to Live Well Fergus Falls and it's a community resilience project, focuses on just some simple tools that you can implement in your everyday life, just creating a happier, healthier community overall.

Katie Johnson: Good stuff. So maybe we could step back and refresh people's memories. What are some of the other initiatives that Live Well Fergus Falls has done that people might recognize?

Jason Bergstrand: So we concentrate mainly on the physical side of things and so we're promoting trails, promoting bike friendly communities, the YMCA's doing a fantastic job of holding nutrition classes and cooking classes, helping people learn what to do with healthy, whole foods. So for a number of years, that was kind of our heavy emphasis, more on the physical side of things. Then, as we saw news happening in our own community about the need for improvement over mental resiliency, we began to realize, "You know what? The two really are linked together." You really can't have one without the other and we're kind of doing an injustice to

our community if we only concentrate on one or the other and we know that there's other organizations that are working on these initiatives but are maybe more so in a silo and we really feel like this is an opportunity that the whole community could come together and we can make this out to be a grander scale community wellness initiative.

Katie Johnson: I think it speaks to exactly what probably why Lake Region Healthcare is involved as well as a Live Well Fergus Falls partner, to those seven components.

Natalie Knutson: Exactly.

Katie Johnson: You cannot be balanced and fully, optimally healthy by only focusing on physical activity and nutrition. Tell me more about what the project means then? What is Thrive made up of?

Jason Bergstrand: Yeah, so what we're hoping that folks would do, number one is come to our training, which is on September 25th at M State and it's free and open to the public. We're hoping that folks will come and learn about these mental health resiliency tools and they're very simple. I'll just give you a couple. They're things like random acts of kindness, or three good things and this is part of why we're so excited about this, is that they're really simply things that people can do, almost so simple that people may question its efficacy, but the science is there and it's so exciting that we have these trainers that have implemented this in their community and they're seeing just wonderful results from it, that they'll be able to come and share with us exactly what they've done in hopes that they can inspire us to do something similar.

So our goal is that there'll be folks that will want to come, learn about the tools and then become an agent of change. Whether it be in their home, but more importantly, in the community in terms of their employment, or maybe their place of faith that they worship at, or maybe it's a service club they belong to. Can they help bring these tools forward so that we are practicing this as a community wide?

Katie Johnson: So tell us more about the training. You said open to the public, when, where, what kind of time commitment? Those kinds of things.

Natalie Knutson: Sure. So on Tuesday, September 25th, 8.30 to 3.30 out at M State Legacy Hall, there'll be light breakfast and lunch provided by Service Food, nice healthy food out there and Dr. Corey Martin and his partner, Christy Secor, are the ones that developed the Bounce Back, so they are coming to speak first hand on some of their experiences and how can we do this as a community. So they're going to bring it down to our level in what are the needs that we're facing and I see that the morning is going to be more an informational session and then the afternoon is going to be probably more round table discussion in terms of what

are our needs and how can we do this and what are some of the things we need to focus on moving forward after the training?

Katie Johnson: And maybe some real hands on ways, like you said, this is where I can take it and how I can implement it to help my circle, whether that's my family or my workplace, thrive.

Jason Bergstrand: What's kind of fun is they'll be coming with real life scenarios, stories that have been documented in their own community for success so I think folks will really be able to walk away with very specific things that they can do. How would I begin to do a random act of kindness? Maybe start with your family but you can also take that to some stranger, for instance, leaving a \$5 bill on the bus stop so to speak. There's a million different ways that you can start that type of a practice and they're going to share some of those thoughts with us and then we're going to provide ... as a Live Well Fergus Falls group, we will continue to provide support after the training. So folks, if they're asking themselves, "Okay, now that I know this, what do I do? How do I take this to the next step?" There'll be resources for them.

Katie Johnson: That was going to be my next question. Once the training's done, then what's next down the road to make sure that this continues to be an initiative that achieves success and really sees results throughout the community?

Natalie Knutson: Yeah, so we've already developed some stakeholders, some main stakeholders in this project, so the public library has some things on the horizon, Lakeland mental health has expressed wanting to be involved. So they're going to nail down some things and opportunities. Lake Region Healthcare is planning their community health challenge, and their Live Well education series are both going to be tied into the Thrive events on a monthly basis and I anticipate at the training, there's going to be a lot of things that pop up. So we're hoping to combine all of our thoughts and ideas and really map it out for people so they have one reference or one website they can go to and have a run down of all the different things they can tap into to keep it rolling.

Katie Johnson: And like you said earlier, so that these things aren't happening in a silo-

Natalie Knutson: Exactly.

Katie Johnson: ... that we're really spreading it out throughout the community. I think that will be really great to see. So speaking of, where can people go to find some more information or to follow this going forward if they're interesting in the training or more information going forward?

Natalie Knutson: So at this point, I would say let's bring them to the Lake Region Healthcare website, www.lrhc.org. We're partnering with Forward Fergus Falls & they're going to also link us in with the Forward Fergus Falls website at some point. And

Live Well Fergus Falls also has a Facebook page so hop on Facebook, search Live Well Fergus Falls, and like us, follow us, we can keep that updated as well.

Jason Bergstrand: Yeah, that's where you'll be able to get the link for the event right so that you can register. We have limited space and encourage you to register early. We have 150 spaces and about half of that's already full so we want folks to ... hopefully they're inspired today and will want to sign up soon.

Natalie Knutson: And if you're coming from your workplace, we encourage you to bring a buddy with, bring one or two other people so when you return, if there are things that you think, "Hey, there's a need for this." You've got someone else to bounce the ideas with.

Katie Johnson: Sure, and you've already got some built-in buy-in. Great. So the event again is training for the Thrive Resiliency Project at Legacy Hall, being held at M State September 25th. Look for Live Well Fergus Falls on Facebook to find a link to register for that and again, lhrc.org will have a link to some more of those resources as we continue to roll it out through our programming as well. Jason, Natalie, anything else that we've missed that you want to mention to our listeners this morning?

Jason Bergstrand: I think we're good.

Natalie Knutson: Great, yeah,

Katie Johnson: Great, well thank you for your work on Live Well Fergus Falls, Forward Fergus Falls and particularly for introducing Thrive, a resiliency project for our community to learn how to implement strategies that improve personal and community wellbeing. We appreciate your work and your time this morning.

Natalie Knutson: Thanks Katie.

Katie Johnson: Jason Bergstrand and Natalie Knutson, my guests today on Apple A Day, reminding you there is so much to do here, stay healthy for it. Have a great day.