

CREATING an EDGE EFFECT:

Stress Management in the 21st Century

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STRESS SYMPTOMS QUESTIONNAIRE

Rate each stress-related symptom below according to how often you have it:

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Much of the time 5=Always

PHYSICAL

Frequent colds
Muscle tension
Headaches
Arthritis
Backaches
Fatigue
Muscle twitches
Rashes or itching
Powerlessness
Constipation
Hemorrhoids
Respiratory Problems
Stiffness in neck
Stomach aches
Gas
High blood pressure
Colitis
Heart Disease

BEHAVIORAL

Nervousness
Aggressiveness
Use of alcohol
Poor posture
Difficulty concentrating
Anger
Teeth grinding
Compulsive eating
Daydreaming
Forgetfulness
Sleeplessness
Sighing
Loss of appetite
Tears
Agitation
Quick temper
Escapist fantasies
Racing thoughts
Clearing throat
Repetitive behavior
Use of drugs

EMOTIONAL

Depression
Impatience
Loneliness
Anxiety
Irritability
Frustration
Inflexibility

STRESS

Stress begins in the mind and ends in the body.

Exercise:

Relax:

1. Alarm System
2. Activating System
3. Recovery System

Nutrition: Desserts spelled backward is .

Mentor:

Time Management:

Long Term Goals: The feeling of stress has less to do with your work load and more to do with the feeling that you are in control of your work load.

TONING

Toning – making sounds with elongated vowels for extended periods of time such as, ah, ou (as in soup), ee, ay, oh and om

Tone on a regular basis for 5 minutes a day.

Toning balances brain waves, deepens the breath, reduces the heart rate and imparts a general sense of well-being.

Don Campbell

- **Ahh** – immediately evokes the relaxation response
- **Ee or Ay** – helps with concentration, releasing pain and anger
- **Oh or Om** - can warm skin temperature and relax muscle tension

5 Day Toning Course

1st day: sit comfortably in a chair, close your eyes and spend five minutes humming –, a pitch that feels comfortable, not a melody. Bring the palms of your hands to your cheeks and notice how much vibration is occurring within your jaw. This five-minute massage will release stress and help you relax.

2nd day: instead of humming, make an ahhhh sound. The ahhh immediately evokes a relaxation response. You produce it naturally when you yawn. Allow the sound to move gently through your breath. You will notice that your breaths are much longer and that you feel more relaxed.

3rd day: the toning sound is eeee. This is the most stimulating of all vowel sounds, awakening the mind and body. When you feel drowsy while driving or are sluggish in the afternoon, three to five minutes of the ee sound will stimulate the brain, activate the body and keep you alert.

4th day: oh is an instant tune up. The oh sound vibrates most of the upper parts of the body. Five minutes of the oh can change skin temperature, muscle tension, brain waves, and breath and heart rates.

5th day: start at the lowest part of your voice and let it glide upward, like a slow elevator. Massage parts of your skull, throat and chest with long vowel sounds. 26-32

Campbell, Don. The Mozart Effect for Children. Awakening Your Child's Mind, Health, and Creativity with Music. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc. 2000. p.26-32.

CEREBRAL CORTEX

MIDBRAIN

BRAIN STEM

Survival

- Aggressive: physical and verbal Arms disappear in clothing
- Cannot sit still Itchy eyes
- Clothes-sucking and shirt turning Off task
- Constantly going to the bathroom Does not finish work
- Easily distracted Everything is boring
- Hyperactive Knee-sitters and chair rockers
- Pencil chewing Perfectionist
- Speech difficulties Stressful reading
- Tears Trouble with boundaries

Debra Wilson Heiberger and Margot C. Heiniger-White. S'cool Moves for Learning.

Three Most Important Exercises

Integrating Both Sides of the Brain

The Cross Crawl

2x a day

Sit down. Do 28 puppet movements. (Puppet movements touch the elbow of the right arm to the right knee and the elbow of the left arm to the left knee.)

Do 28 crossover movements. (Crossover movements touch the elbow of the right arm to the left knee and the elbow of the left arm to the right knee.)

Do 14 puppets

Do 14 crossovers

Do 10 puppets

Do 10 crossovers

The Wayne Cook Posture

Sit down. Fold hands. The thumb of the hand that is on top is the ankle to cross on top. Extend arms and cross the arm of the thumb on top over the other arm. Point thumbs down. Wave at the fingers. Fold hands. Draw hands to chest, like a pretzel. Take ten deep breathes with the tongue on the roof of the mouth to breathe in, down to breathe out. Uncross ankles, put fingertips together. Rest hands with finger tips touching on lap. Take ten more breathes.

Donna Eden, Energy Medicine, New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 1998.

Thymus Thump

Rapidly, tap chest on both sides of the collar bone at the same time. Resets the body's balance.

Water

Weight divided by 3 = number of ounces needed daily

of ounces divided by 8 = number of glasses of water needed daily

- Lack of water is the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue.
- Preliminary research indicated 8-10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers; 5 glasses per day decreases risk of colon cancer by 45%, slashes risk of breast cancer by 79% and decrease bladder cancer by 50%
- A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.
- Fruit juice, soft drinks, coffee and tea are all diuretics—they fail to provide neutral pH water because the sugars bind to the water and are treated as food by the brain.

Carla Hannaford, Ph.D. Smart Moves: Why Learning Is Not All In Your Head. Utah: Great River Books. 2005.

Nutritionally Speaking

The average American consumes:

- 170 pounds of sugar per year

Refined sugar triggers sodium and water retention by decreasing potassium

The influence of a high sugar diet on brain chemistry: **hyperactivity, depression, fatigue, inability to focus and concentrate. B complex vitamins are needed to metabolize the quantities of sugar we are eating.**

Breakfast

Carbohydrates are broken down to glucose in the liver and then are sent out to the rest of the body to use for energy. Glucose is the only source of energy the brain can use. A drop in brain glucose due to insufficient carb intake will result in slow reflexes and reduced concentration. You may experience a gnawing hunger, dizziness, lethargy, and irritability. Eating a high-carbohydrate breakfast starts the day with optimal serotonin levels.

Protein in-take in the first half hour upon arising evens out the blood sugar for the day. Protein boosts the production of dopamine and norepinephrine, which increases alertness and concentration.

Diet provides the fuel for the brain to work.

Diets high in simple carbohydrates make attentional problems worse.

How to Make Brain Chemicals

Serotonin: feelings of calmness, mood elevation, sense of well-being

Sources: nonfat organic milk, turkey breast, legumes, whole-grain breads and cereals
high-fiber carb snacks

Dopamine: feelings of excitement, increased energy, coordinated motor ability, mental alertness

Sources: beans, legumes, tofu, tempeh, lean turkey, tuna

Norepinephrine: increased memory, quick reaction time, mental energy, alertness, goals

Sources: salmon, oatmeal, legumes

Acetylcholine: increased memory, verbal behavior, concentration

Sources: egg whites, soybeans, wheat germ, peanuts, salmon, chicken breast

Avoid Trans Fats ~ hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils Trans fats raise bad LDL cholesterol, lower the protective HDL cholesterol, interfere with essential fatty acid metabolism and are suspected of being causes of certain cancers **Good fats** ~ olive oil, butter, flax oil, borage, evening primrose and black currant oils provide the proper balance of omega-3 and omega-6 essential fatty acids. EFA's are necessary for the proper operation of cellular neurotransmitters

*Flax seeds contain EFA's along with soluble and insoluble fiber and lignins. The nutrients in flax can give you quick recovery from stress, mental clarity, calmness, enhanced learning ability and focus, enhanced immune system function and increased energy and stamina

Healthy Snacks

- Fruit Ezekiel cinnamon-raisin bread
- Raw vegetables
- Almonds (serving size 11 almonds) or prunes

Other nuts including serving size		
peanuts – 14	pecan halves – 10	walnuts – 8 halves
Brazil nuts – 4	hazelnuts – 10	cashews – 9
		flax seeds – 2 T
- rice crackers baked tortilla chips
- whole wheat pretzels popcorn sprinkled with parmesan cheese for flavor

Good to Know

- Sleep at least 7 hours a night; purpose of sleep is to replenish certain chemicals in the brain to help with efficient nerve cell firing; less than 7 hours can have lower activity in the temporal lobes, the part of the brain involved in learning and memory
- Do not skip breakfast. Skipping breakfast triggers a cortisol release and could cause a sweet craving late at night
- MSG damages the liver by taking in massive amounts of sodium without tasting the saltiness of the food; other names: modified food starch, autolyzed yeast, calcium caseinate, sodium caseinate, hydrolyzed protein, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, carrageenan, glutamic acid, yeast extract and is in protein isolates such as soy isolates and whey isolates
- Drink pure cranberry juice daily. Cranberry supports normal kidney, bladder, and urinary track functions; and is high in potassium and low in sodium.
- Sea Salt has 84 minerals to table salt's 2.

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PRIORITIES AND BALANCE

In a university commencement address several years ago, Brian Dyson, CEO of Coca Cola Enterprises, spoke of the relation of work to one's other commitments:

“Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them – work, family, health, friends and spirit – and you’re keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls – family, health, friends and spirit – are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same.

You must understand that and strive for balance in your life.”

UNDERSTAND

Good thank-you letters demonstrate the characteristics of thoughtfulness, consideration, and gratitude. Manners matter. In fact, good manners are essential to a civil society.

There is a philosophical stupidity that is rampant today -- a theory that what a person is can be different from what he does. "Yes, he abuses his employees, neglects his children, and cheats his partners, but deep down inside he's really a nice guy."

Wrong. How you act is what you are. It is certainly possible for a generally reprehensible person to have moments of goodness, but that doesn't make him essentially good. You can claim to be essentially good when your natural instinct is to do and be good, not to do so only when you are down and out or have a rare transcendent moment.

If you want to be thought of as a considerate, thoughtful person -- someone capable of giving and receiving gratitude --you should develop the habit of writing effective, personal thank-you notes.

If you are not writing personal notes to friends and colleagues now, you are missing an opportunity to strengthen important relationships. I try to write at least one personal note each week. Sometimes, it's to tell someone how much I appreciate their work. Sometimes, it's a thank you. When I first began this as a habit, I was astonished at the reaction I got. People were shocked and often touched.

The effect of personal, handwritten notes will only become stronger as e-mail correspondence becomes more common.

Michael Masterson, Early To Rise

ORGANIZATION

Why take time to simplify and organize your belongings?

Your belongings reflect your inner world. External order and harmony reflects internal order and harmony, while external clutter and chaos reflects internal clutter and chaos. When you put your external world in order, there are corresponding changes internally.

Organizing your possessions reinstates your creativity and vitality. Active chaos is an integral part of the creative cycle. Balancing and enhancing your present space is one of the most powerful things you can do to energize your goals.

Trade “should” for “could” and “can’t” for “won’t”. Could empowers, gives choices and allows you to take credit for your work.

Key Questions to Simplify Your Belongings

1. Am I happy with it?
2. Do I need it?
3. Does it support who I am now in my life?
4. What positive and/or negative memories or emotions do I associate with it?
5. Does it need to be fixed or repaired? Am I willing to do so now?
6. Is it time to let it go? Am I going to sell, lend or give it away? When?

Kingston, Karen. Clear Your Clutter With Feng Shui. New York: Broadway Books. 1998. www.spaceclearing.com

CLUTTER

Clutter is more than an annoyance—it involves people’s deep-seated feelings about themselves, and often creates a paralyzing inertia that zaps energy.

The key word in getting organized is “flow.” The problem isn’t that too much material flows into a home or office—it’s that too little flows out. The difference between paper shuffling and paper management is decision making—deciding what to do with all the items that clutter our lives.

Perfectionism is perhaps the biggest stumbling block to effective organization. Problems aren’t always a lack of organization; they can be a lack of perspective. If you’re constantly feeling stressed because your “to do” list isn’t done, it’s time for a reality check. Revise your expectations. Give up being perfect. Practice being thankful and content.

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