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STRESS MANAGEMENT

Reestablishing great health will rely on several factors; with stress reduction and stress management being among the most critical. Stress has been shown to initiate and contribute to many disease processes. Stress can worsen the effects of current diseases. Think in terms of restoring health without lowering stress being as effective as trying to stop an elephant by throwing ping pong balls at it.

A simple definition of stress might be the following: The demands of your life are outpacing your current resources or capabilities. When this is the case, the best long-term solution lies in the realm of your own personal effort. To an extent, your present and past way of life has contributed to this problem and life-style/attitude must be changed if lasting improvement is to occur.

Your first assignment is to examine your life and make concerted efforts to eliminate all habits that can add to stress. Basically, you must decrease demands to a point below your current capability levels. This is the only way to begin to create the surplus energy needed for good health. With this in mind, the importance of adequate rest cannot be overstated. The only way for regeneration to occur is for less energy to be expended than can be regenerated. If you are not improving, you are doing too much and allowing too much stress in your life. In essence, if you are not improving, you are probably exceeding your current capabilities.

If stress is contributing to dysfunction, you are overextended. This means that there is more in your life than you can handle. The following factors will often act to add stress into your life. The cure is to consistently limit or eliminate exposure to as many of these situations as possible.

Crowds of People
Unproductive Meetings
Financial Concerns
Long Telephone Calls
Negative Emotions
Anxiety for Others
Cold or Hot Weather Conditions
Sunbathing
Lack of Sleep
Coffee (more than 1 cup)
Smoking
Dieting (low calories)
High Carbohydrate Breakfast
Too Much Sugar and Starch
Violent Movies
Chemicals Strong
Smells of Any Type
Loud Noise
Low Quantity or Quality Sleep
Perfumes
Over Extended in Any Area
Overwork
No Exercise or Too Much Exercise
Arguments

Long-term health habits that are essential for the management or lowering of stress include:

- ❑ In bed no later than 11pm
- ❑ Rest periods (mini vacations of 5 – 10 minutes) at least 2 daily
- ❑ Cultivate positive feelings and experiences (find things to be happy and joyful about)
- ❑ Practice deep, slow, abdominal breathing
- ❑ Appropriate Exercise (Yoga, walking or moderate aerobic exercise, low intensity weight lifting)
- ❑ Expose yourself to early morning sunlight immediately after waking (this is the most important time of the day to be outside so is a great time for a walk)
- ❑ Music: Chants, Classical (especially Baroque), Ravi Shankar
- ❑ Movies: Films that make you laugh or feel good
- ❑ Eat a well-balanced breakfast with some form of protein (think dinner — a great breakfast should be just what you imagine a great dinner would be)
- ❑ Limit dietary sugars, starches, caffeine, alcohol, drugs, and nicotine as much as possible.

Notes:

Depending on the state of your current health, building up a surplus of reserves can be a short or a long journey.

Note:

Be careful about overextending your energy once you are starting to feel better. Your reserve supplies might still be low and will be exhausted readily. You may feel the effects of doing too much today, when in fact you over extended yourself several days ago.