Health Connections Presents

Stress Management Essentials Workbook

by Carol Wilcock, RN, MSN, QBD

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Health Connections
Presents

Stress
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Essentials
Workbook

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**About the Author** Carol Wilcock has a passion for health. Her drive to find knowledge and wisdom in Traditional and Complementary Medicine gives her a unique ability to integrate many methods for a Holistic approach.

The world of Quantum Biofeedback tapped on her door when her husband tried a few sessions and had excellent results with bone spurs on his feet. Diving into research once again she found herself engulfed with the EPFX. Soaking in training and education at every turn, Carol received her Nursing Degree from Weber State University and her Masters Degree in Nursing from Belford University. She also has completed her Diplomate with the Natural Therapies Certification Board and Certified Stress Management Instructor.

Her love for teaching starts with each client, workshops, college nursing students, EPFX Practitioners and colleagues and will never end. She lives in Helena, MT and can be contacted at cwhealthconnections@hotmail.com.

**About the Workbook** This workbook is designed to be very simple and easy to use and integrate with any holistic practice. Please read the entire book including exercises and listen to the Relaxation CD before implementing the following steps.

1. Select which stress exercise(s) from the first 6 you would like your client to do to help them recognize when and how they respond to stress. After you have run the EPFX test, have them listen to “Progressive Muscle Relaxation” from the Relaxation CD by Dr. Brian Luke Seaward.
2. On their second visit or session read the description of anger styles from “The Mismanaged Anger Hot Stones” and work in your session to identify how anger and fear may be affecting them and their health. Play quiet music while they do the exercise “Confrontation of a Stressor”.

3. Continue to use an exercise in conjunction with a segment from the CD with each session. Of course, you should use your intuition as to what may work better for you and your client to meet their health needs. You may want to have them do Art Therapy twice and skip Journal writing altogether.
4. Each session should include some form of Relaxation Technique. There are many other meditation relaxation CD’s that can be purchased at www.brianlukeseaward.net
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**Introduction for EPFX Practitioners:**

For those of us fascinated with the Quantum world there is a drive to learn and master programming and align it with our client's needs. We balance, detox, restore and rejuvenate and at the end of our session we make sure we've covered all our bases.

Our clients point of view is very different. They come to our office, fill out a form that states they will be receiving stress, pain and muscle re-education, etc. then sit in a chair, get hooked up to straps and stare at the back of a laptop. Even if looking at the screen they often don't understand it or are overwhelmed at the massive amount of information we so easily extract from them. This is not relaxing.

Our guidelines from the FDA are clear. We are to implement stress management techniques, re-educate muscles and teach them pain management if needed. What skills are we sending home with them to use on a daily basis? *The purpose of The Stress Management Essentials Workbook is to assist you in bringing more energy and tranquility to your practice so that you and your clients can live peaceful lives.*

I was so delighted when I saw the course outline on a Stress Management Instructor Course by Dr. Brian Luke Seaward sent to me by the American Holistic Nurses Association. As I went to the class and have studied his work, I see a perfect fit for EPFX Practitioners, especially in light of the scrutiny from the FDA. Implementing these techniques will erase all doubt that we are Stress Reduction Specialists. Not to worry . . .

> “In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity.” --Albert Einstein

We can rise above our challenges by embracing that which is so obvious and so needed in our current world. Stress Management is not just a good idea, it is and will be an important survival skill. We are strong. Our theories are sound. Our technology is far beyond state-of-the-art. We are having success in our practices (otherwise the FDA wouldn’t care). We will raise our sails to catch the winds of change that will lift health care into a new paradigm.

Before implementing any of these techniques, it is important to determine how your client responds and perceives stress. In the following pages there are several questionnaires you may want to add to your initial client intake forms or later as needed. One of my favorites is the "Top 10 Stressors". It is very helpful in identifying how clients perceive stress and where they feel it's impact in their lives.

*Take a moment to review the stress assessment forms. Choose several to keep on file for use in your sessions as you explore the possibilities of living every day free of feeling STRESSED! This is an opportunity for you to explore each of these exercises yourself, personally understanding your own stress responses and therefore how you can eventually help your clients in their stress responses. You should actually go through the exercises and do them yourself individually, then choose the ones that resonant best with you to use with your clients.*
Although there is no definitive survey composed of 20 questions to determine if you are stressed, burnt out, or just exactly how stressed you really are, questionnaires do help increase awareness that, indeed, there may be a problem in one or more areas of your life. The following is an example of a simple stress inventory to help you determine the level of stress in your life. Read each statement and then circle either the word Agree or Disagree. Then count the number of “Agree” points (one per question) and use the Stress Level key to determine your personal stress level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have a hard time falling asleep at night.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I tend to suffer from tension and/or migraine headaches.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find myself thinking about finances and making ends meet.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I wish I could find more to laugh and smile about each day.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. More often than not, I skip breakfast or lunch to get things done.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. If I could change my job situation, I would.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I wish I had more personal time for leisure pursuits.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I have lost a good friend or family member recently.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am unhappy in my relationship or am recently divorced.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I haven’t had a quality vacation in a long time.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I wish that my life had a clear meaning and purpose.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I tend to eat more than three meals a week outside the home.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I tend to suffer from chronic pain.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I don’t have a strong group of friends to whom I can turn.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I don’t exercise regularly (more than three times per week).</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I am on prescribed medication for depression.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My sex life is not very satisfying.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My family relationships are less than desirable.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Overall, my self-esteem can be rather low.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I spend no time each day dedicated to meditation or centering.</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stress Level Key

- Less than 5 points You have a low level of stress and maintain good coping skills.
- More than 5 points You have a moderate level of personal stress.
- More than 10 points You have a high level of personal stress.
- More than 15 points You have an exceptionally high level of stress.

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Exercise

Personal Stress Inventory: Top 10 Stressors

It’s time to take a personal inventory of your current stressors, those issues, concerns, situations, or challenges that trigger the fight-or-flight response in your body. The first step to resolving any problem is learning to identify exactly what the problem is. Take a moment to list the top 10 issues that you are facing at the present moment. Then place a check mark in the columns to signify whether this stressor directly affects one or more aspects of your health (mind, body, spirit, emotions). Then, next to each stressor, chronicle how long it has been a problem. Finally, check whether this stressor is one that elicits some level of anger, fear or both.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Mental</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
<th>Spiritual</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Duration of Problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Exercise

Physical Symptoms Questionnaire

Please look over this list of stress-related symptoms and circle how often they have occurred in the past week, how severe they seemed to you, and how long they lasted. Then reflect on the past week’s workload and see if you notice any connection between your stress levels and possible stress-related symptoms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Tension headache</th>
<th>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Migraine headache</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Muscle tension (neck and/or shoulders)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Muscle tension (lower back)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Joint pain</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cold</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Flu</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Stomachache</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Stomach/abdominal bloating/distention/gas</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Diarrhea</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Constipation</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ulcer flare-up</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Asthma attack</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Allergies</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Canker/cold sores</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Dizzy spells</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Heart palpitations (racing heart)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. TMJD</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Insomnia</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Nightmares</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Fatigue</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Hemorrhoids</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Pimples/ acne</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Cramps</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Frequent accidents</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Other</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please specify ____________ )

Score: Look over this entire list. Do you observe any patterns or relationships between your stress levels and your physical health? A value over 30 points most likely indicates a stress-related health problem. If it seems to you that these symptoms are related to undue stress, they probably are. Although medical treatment is advocated when necessary, the regular use of relaxation techniques may lessen the intensity, frequency, and duration of these episodes.

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Exercise

Your Picture of Health

We all have an idea of what ideal health is. Many of us take our health for granted until something goes wrong to remind us that our picture of health is compromised and less than ideal. Although health may seem to be objective, it will certainly vary from person to person over the entire aging process. The following statements are based on characteristics associated with longevity and a healthy quality of life (none of which considers any genetic factors). Rather than answering the questions to see how long you may live, please complete this inventory to determine your current picture of health.

3 = Often 2 = Sometimes 1 = Rarely 0 = Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. With rare exception, I sleep an average of 7 to 8 hours each night.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I tend to eat my meals at the same time each day.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I keep my bedtime consistent every night.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I do cardiovascular exercise at least three times per week.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My weight is considered ideal for my height.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Without exception, my alcohol consumption is in moderation.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I consider my nutritional habits to be exceptional.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My health status is considered excellent, with no pre-existing conditions.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I neither smoke, nor participate in the use of recreational drugs.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have a solid group of friends with whom I socialize regularly.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Score:**
- 26-30 points = Excellent health habits
- 20-25 points = Moderate health habits
- 14-19 points = Questionable health habits
- 0-13 points = Poor health habits

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**Stress-Prone Personality Survey**

The following is a survey based on the traits of the codependent personality. Please answer the following questions with the most appropriate number.

*3 = Often 2 = Sometimes 1 = Rarely 0 = Never*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1. | I tend to seek approval (acceptance) from others (e.g., friends, colleagues, family members). |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. | I have very strong perfection tendencies. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. | I am usually involved in many projects at one time. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. | I rise to the occasion in times of crisis. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. | Despite problems with my family, I will always defend them. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6. | I have a tendency to put others before myself. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7. | I don’t feel appreciated for all the things I do |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8. | I tend to tell a lot of white lies. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9. | I will help most anyone in need. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10. | I tend to trust other’s perceptions rather than my own. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11. | I have a habit of overreacting to situations. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12. | Despite great achievements, my self-esteem usually suffers. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13. | My family background is better described as victim than victor. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14. | I have been known to manipulate others with acts of generosity and favors. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15. | I am really good at empathizing with my friends and family. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16. | I usually try to make the best impression possible with people. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17. | I like to validate my feelings with other’s perceptions. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18. | I am an extremely well-organized individual. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19. | It’s easier for me to give love and much more difficult to receive it. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20. | I tend to hide my feelings if I know they will upset others. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

**TOTAL SCORE**

**Score:** A score of more than 30 points indicates that you most likely have traits associated with the codependent personality, a personality style known to be stress-prone.

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Exercise

Stress-Resistant Personality Survey

The following survey is composed of statements based on the hardy, survivor, and risk-taking personality traits—all of which share common aspects that resist rather than attract or promote stress in one’s life. Please answer the following questions with the most appropriate number.

4 = Always  3 = Often   2 = Sometimes  1 = Rarely 0 = Never

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I wake up each morning ready to face a new day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I tend not to let fear run my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I would consider myself to be an optimist.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I tend to see “problems” as opportunities for personal growth and success.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Although I like to be in control of my fate, I know when to go with the flow when things are out of my control.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Curiosity is one of my stronger attributes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Life isn’t always fair, but I still manage to enjoy myself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. When things knock me off balance, I am resilient and get back on my feet quickly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. My friends would say that I have the ability to turn misfortune into luck.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I believe that if you don’t take risks, you live a boring life and won’t get far</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I like to think of myself as being a creative person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I believe in the philosophy that “one person truly can make a difference.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I am both organized and flexible with my life’s day-to-day schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Sometimes having nothing to do is the best way to spend a day.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I trust that I am part of a greater force of life in the universe.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I believe in the philosophy that “you make your own breaks.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. I approach new situations with the idea that I will learn something valuable, regardless of the outcome.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. When I start a project, I see it through to its successful completion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I am strong willed, which I see as a positive characteristic to accomplish hard tasks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I am committed to doing my best in most everything in life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL SCORE

Score: A score of more than 30 points indicates that you most likely have traits associated with the hardy, survivor, and calculated risk-taker personalities, personality types known to be stress-resistant. © Paramount Wellness Institute. Reprinted With Permission. All rights reserved.
The Stress Emotions:

Anger and Fear

(Fight or Flight)
The Stress Emotions: Anger and Fear

Emotional well-being is the ability to feel and express the entire range of human emotions and to control them, not be controlled by them. This sounds like a tall order but can be done through unlearning, re-learning and implementation. At an early age, we are socialized to behave in a certain way. We are told to calm down, chill out, never talk back, not cry, and wipe that smile off your face. The implied message that we receive is that it is not socially acceptable to exhibit various emotions.

Consequently, as adults we carry a lot of unresolved emotional baggage with us. Many health-related problems are thought to be directly tied to our inability to recognize and appropriately express our emotions. There are two primary emotions specifically associated with the stress response: anger; which produces the urge to fight, and fear; which promotes the urge to run and hide. Each of these emotions has many shades and layers, which often overlap each other and allow them to coexist in the same situation. The exercises here will look at both anger and fear and some helpful strategies to gain control of them.

Enjoy!
Anger Recognition Checklist

“He who angers you, conquers you.” — Elizabeth Kenny

The following is a quick exercise to help you understand how anger can surface in the course of a normal working day and how you may mismanage it. Please place a checkmark in front of any of the following that apply to you when you “get angry” or “feel frustrated or upset.” After completing this section, please refer to the bottom right-hand corner to estimate, on average, the number of anger episodes you experience per day.

When I feel angry, my anger tends to surface in the following ways:

- anxious
- depressed
- overeat
- start dieting
- trouble sleeping
- excessive sleeping
- care less driving
- chronic fatigue
- abuse alcohol/drugs
- explode in rage
- cold withdrawal
- tension headaches
- migraine headaches
- use sarcasm
- hostile joking
- accident prone
- guilty and self-blaming
- smoke or drink
- high blood pressure
- frequent nightmares
- tendency to harp or nag
- intellectualize
- upset stomach (e.g., gas, cramps, IBS)
- muscle tension (neck, lower back)
- swear and or name call

* My average number of anger episodes per day is ____________________
The Mismanaged Anger “Hot Stones”

“Anger is like a hot stone. If you pick it up to throw at someone, you will get burned.” —Ancient proverb

The Silent But Deadly Stone (SOMATIZER): Some people never seem to get angry. Perhaps, as kids, their parents told them repeatedly, “Don’t get mad” or “Don’t ever talk back to me” or “Don’t give someone the satisfaction of knowing they hurt you,” and so they never do. It’s as if they actually swallow these Hot Stones just to get rid of any trace of anger. It may look like these people never show feelings of frustration (just a happy face), but what is silence on the surface soon becomes a health problem. In essence, the body becomes the battlefield for the war games of the mind. Examples of health problems associated with this style of unresolved anger are: migraine headaches, tension headaches, TMJ (grinding your teeth at night), digestive problems.

The Volcanic Hot Stone (EXPLODER): When some people get mad, they are like a volcano ready to erupt. Like a volcano, these people seem to have steam coming out of their ears and nostrils. They often use swear words, they may hit something or someone, or they might “flip the bird” at the slightest hint of insult. Some examples of explosive behavior: cursing, verbal intimidation, slamming doors, throwing things, kicking things or people, road rage, sports rage, physical abuse.

The Razor Stone (SELF-PUNISHER): The Razor Stone is not only hot, it is sharp. First it burns, then it cuts deep. Not only is there frustration associated with this stone, but there is guilt, too- guilt from feeling angry. The kind of person who holds this Hot Stone feels so bad about feeling guilty that they engage in some excessive behavior to make them feel better. Many eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia fall into this category. Self-mutilation (i.e. cutting the wrists) and depression (depression is anger turned inward) are often linked to holding the Razor Stone. Some other examples of this mismanaged anger are excessive: smoking, sleeping, exercise, drinking, drug use, shopping, playing video games, sleeping.

The Revenge Hot Stone (UNDERHANDER): The motto of the person who holds the Revenge Stone is “Don’t get mad; get even.” Some people try to get more than even; they get one up. This kind of person seeks revenge by getting even in a passive-aggressive way. In other words, these people are nice to you, but the minute you turn your back, they start hurling the Revenge Stone. For others, the Revenge Stone is the “grudge stone.” Once again, the holders of this stone may hit his or her target, but get burned badly in the process. They lose the respect and trust of their friends. The most common behaviors of people who hold this stone are: back-stabbing (cutting people down behind their backs); sarcasm (a word which actually means to tear flesh), verbal sabotage.
Mismanaged Anger Style Indicator

Part I: Check the statements that are true for you the majority of the time.

— 1. Even though I may wish to complain, I usually don’t.
— 2. When upset, I have a habit of slamming, punching, or breaking things.
— 3. When I feel guilty, I have been known to contemplate self-destructive behaviors.
— 4. I can be real nice to people, but then back-stab them when they’re not around.
— 5. I have a habit of grinding my teeth at night.
— 6. When I am really irritated or frustrated by others, I tend to intimidate them.
— 7. When I am frustrated, I feel like going shopping and spending money.
— 8. I can manipulate people without them even knowing it.
— 9. It’s fair to say that I rarely, if ever, get angry or mad.
— 10. I have been known to talk back to people of authority.
— 11. Sleeping in is a good way to forget about my problems and frustrations.
— 12. Watching TV or playing video games offers a good escape from my frustrations.
— 13. If I complain, I feel people won’t like me as much, so I usually don’t.
— 14. When driving at times, I feel like I want to hit people with my car.
— 15. When I get mad or frustrated, I have been known to eat to calm my nerves.
— 16. I plan a script or rehearse what I am going to say to win a conflict.
— 17. It’s hard/uncomfortable for me to say the words “I am angry.”
— 18. I usually try to get the final say in situations with others.
— 19. I have been known to use alcohol and/or drugs to deal with my anger feelings.
— 20. By and large, I tend to agree with the statement, “Don’t get mad, get even.”
— 21. I tend to keep my feelings to myself.
— 22. When I get angry, I have been known to swear a lot.
— 23. I usually feel guilty about feeling angry, frustrated, or annoyed.
— 24. It’s OK to use sarcasm to make a point.
— 25. I am the kind of person who calms the waters when tempers flare at home or work.
— 26. It’s easy to say the words “I am angry” or “I am pissed” and really mean it.
— 27. On more than one occasion, I have imagined taking my own life.
— 28. I think of various ways to put people down.
— 29. Typically, I place the needs of others before myself.
— 30. I suffer from migraine headaches or TMJD or rheumatoid arthritis or lupus.

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Mismanaged Anger Style Indicator Index

Part II: SCORE SHEET:
Write down the numbers of the statements that you checked off in Part I:

________________________________________________________.

As a rule we all tend to engage in all of these behaviors at some time; however, some behaviors are very common to us whereas others are more occasional, suggesting that when certain predominant behaviors are grouped together they reveal a specific style of mismanaged anger. Mismanaged anger leads to a host of serious problems for both ourselves and others. By learning to recognize series of behaviors that fall into one or perhaps two categories, we can more easily identify this pattern and then make a strategy to change or modify it so that stress is reduced rather than perpetuated. Labels are good to identify behaviors, but they are not meant to serve as mismanaged scarlet letters.

• If you have four or more answers from choices: 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, or 30, your mismanaged anger style strongly suggests you might be a Somatizer (Silent-But-Deadly Stone).
• If you have four or more answers from these: 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22, or 26, your mismanaged anger style strongly suggests you might be an Exploder (Volcanic Stone).
• If you have four or more answers from these: 3, 7, 11, 12, 15, 19, 23, or 27, your mismanaged anger style strongly suggests you might be a Self-Punisher (Razor Stone).
• If you have four or more answers from these: 4, 8, 16, 20, 24, or 28 your mismanaged anger style strongly suggests you might be an Underhander (Revenge Stone).
Strategies for Well-Managed Anger (Dropping Hot Stones)

In a well-managed anger style, the cycle of anger is broken because the situation and the feelings generated from it are worked through and resolved, starting with #1 and ending with #5.

1. Conflict Situation
   Anger feelings begin (e.g., impatience, envy, guilt, rage)

2. Identify Unmet Expectations &
   Recognize and Validate Your Feelings
   Remember, it’s OK (normal) to “feel” angry

3. Evaluate the situation:
   Why are my thoughts irrational?
   Do I have all the information I need to understand the situation?
   What expectations weren’t met?

4. Be Proactive
   Not reactive!
   EXHIBIT CONTROL!
   1. Do not pick up a hot stone
   2. Drop the hot stone you may have already picked up in defense.
   3. Use auditory, visual and kinesetic strategies to re-script the irrational thoughts and negative self-talk.

5. Problem Resolution
   Positively resolve the conflict (use one or more coping strategies)
CONFRONTATION OF A STRESSOR

It happens to us all the time. Someone or something gets us frustrated, and we literally or figuratively head for the hills, either avoiding the person or thing altogether or ignoring the situation in the hope that it will go away. But when we ignore situations like this, they typically come back to haunt us. In the short run, avoidance looks appealing, even safe. But in the long run, it is bad policy. Really bad policy! We avoid confrontation because we want to avoid the emotional pain associated with it, the pain our ego suffers. Handled creatively, diplomatically, and rationally, the pain is minimal, and it often helps our spirits grow. After all, this is what life is all about: achieving our full human potential.

The art of peaceful confrontation involves a strategy of creativity, diplomacy, and grace to ensure that you come out the victor, not the victim. In this sense, confrontation doesn’t mean a physical battle but rather a mental, emotional, or spiritual battle. Unlike a physical battle where knights wear armor, this confrontation requires that you set aside the shield of your ego long enough to resolve the fear or anger associated with the stressor. The weapons of this confrontation are self-assertiveness, self-reliance, and faith. There is no malice, spite, or deceit involved. Coping mechanisms that aid the confrontation process include, but are not limited to, the following strategies: communication, information seeking, cognitive reappraisal, social engineering, and values assessment and clarification.

We all encounter stressors that we tend to run away from. Now it is time to gather your internal resources and make a plan to successfully confront your stressor. When you initiate this confrontation plan, you will come out the victor with a positive resolution and a feeling of accomplishment. First, reexamine the list of your top 10 stressors. Then, select a major stressor to confront and resolve. Prepare a plan of action, and then carry it out. When you return, write about it: what the stressor was, what your strategy was, how it worked, how you felt about the outcome, and perhaps most importantly, what you learned from this experience.
Exercise

Confrontation of A Stressor

**The stressor** (State the stressor you plan to confront here.)

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

**Action Plan:** (State your plan of diplomatic confrontation here.)

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

**Emotional Processing:** (After you have faced your fear, describe here what happened and how you now feel having done this. Also, what did you learn from this experience?)

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Health of the Human Spirit

Spiritual Dimensions
For Personal Health and Wellness
**Stress and the Human Spirit**

No holistic approach would be complete without addressing the impact of stress on the spirit. Spirituality need not be confused with religion. Spirituality is like water here on the earth. Spirit is a human characteristic with no limitations on personal access to connecting to Divinity. Religions are organizations that encourage spirituality through rituals, teachings, and examples bringing divine awareness into our daily lives. In essence, they are like water containers. Some are ornate vases with detailed engravings, some a simple but beautiful pitcher, others an old coffee mug. Each container still holds water and allows us to carry or store water when it is needed. However, there is no container that compares to a plunge in the warm ocean and feeling the pulse of earth in the waves. This is available to everyone. Spiritual experiences that stimulate a divine sense are not restricted to religion.

Two common phases heard today are spiritual hunger and spiritual bankruptcy, a concept that suggests a sense of moral decay, perhaps due to an emptiness that cannot be filled with material possessions. Yet a strong element of human nature encourages us to try anyway. On the eve of the new millennium, Rev. Billy Graham stated, "I am afraid that people are losing their faith in God and replacing it with a faith in technology that will solve all our problems. They are being led down the wrong path. There must be a change in the human heart." This change is called a spiritual awakening, a turning point in consciousness.

According to Donna Eden, a gifted Medical Intuitive and healer, the planet had a shift in consciousness in about 1990. Globally, there are more and more people craving and experiencing their own spiritual awakening. Some say this idea has reached a "critical mass" and is rolling forth across the world. Spirituality was once a taboo subject in academia and now is a hot topic of study, particularly with regard to prayer, faith, and the out-comes of healing. This is largely due to Dr. Larry Dossey whose work has made prayer a bona fide field of study in medicine. Quantum physics unfolds and reveals aspects of what used to be intangible to scientific evidence that our connection to divinity is a critical part of human health.

There are many fabulous authors and teachers of spirituality to learn from.
Some are ancient and timeless like Lao Tzu and Jesus of Nazareth. Modern experts include Albert Einstein, Deepak Chopra, Joan Borysenko, Wayne Dyer, Carl Jung and Black Elk along with religious leaders. One group that is frequently overlooked is the pure insight of small children. Ask any teacher and they will tell you that there is a special quality about many of the children now that is different from years past.

Dr. Brian Luke Seaward developed an integrative theoretical model to emphasize the dynamic relationship between stress and human spirituality. There are four facets to this model.

1. **Internal and External Relationships.** An insightful personal relationship with yourself begins with centering or discovering the real you. Over time this leads to Divine Personification. As you strengthen your internal relationship you also strengthen the bond to a higher power residing both within and beyond your physical domain. Once you gain an understanding of the real you, external relationships take on a stronger bond.

2. **Personal Value System.** The identification, clarification, and implementation of a personal value system is tantamount to spiritual well-being. Core values give meaning and depth to our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. Examples of core values are love, honesty, self-esteem, education, leisure, compassion and forgiveness.

3. **Meaningful Purpose in Life.** According to Viktor Frankl (1984), a life mission can be accomplished through the design and achievement of a series of life goals. Sometimes when one goal is achieved, particularly a large one (like raising a family) there is a period of let down and lack of purpose. Finding a new life purpose in the ashes of suffering is not impossible, but takes work and is essential in leading one to new goals and ambitions to accomplish.

4. **Divine Mystery.** Finally, this is a fourth pillar that can easily be neglected. It is best defined as those unexplained happenings that often reveal a bigger picture of life than that observed through the five senses. These include synchronistic moments, divine apparitions, spontaneous remissions and premonitionistic dreams. The lack of scientific evidence
does not invalidate

the divine mystery. Rather, it supports the idea that the human mind will never understand everything in the universe by using just the five senses. Furthermore, to be a good mystic doesn't mean to be able to rationally explain the supernatural; it merely means to appreciate the fact that we will never fully understand all aspects of the cosmos. In essence, to be a good mystic means to see the supernatural as natural and the ordinary as extraordinary.

Explore the following pages for information about your spiritual stresses. Take your time to fully experience the depth of the questions. Remember to breath and relax as you look at this aspect of your life in new ways. Then when appropriate help your clients do the same.

ENJOY! . . . deeply.
The Three Pillars of Human Spirituality

"Every crisis over the age of 30 is a spiritual crisis. Spiritual crises require spiritual cures." — Carl Gustav Jung

The shamans, healers, sages, and wisdom keepers of all times, all continents, and all peoples, in their ageless wisdom say that human spirituality is composed of three aspects: relationships, values, and purpose in life. These three components are so tightly integrated that it may be hard to separate them from each other. But if this were possible, take a moment to reflect on these aspects of human spirituality to determine the status of your spiritual well-being.

I. Relationships
All life is relationship! In simple terms, there are two categories of relationships: Internal (your domestic policy): how you deal with yourself, how you nurture the relationship with yourself and your higher self, and external relationships (your foreign policy): how you relate, support, and interact with those people (and all living entities) in your environment. How would you evaluate your internal relationship and what steps could you take to cultivate it? Moving from the aspect of 'domestic policy" to "foreign policy," how would you evaluate your external relationships?

II. Your Personal Value System
We each have a value system composed of core and supporting values. Core values (about 4-6) are those which form the foundation of our personal belief system. Supporting values support the core values. Intangible core values (e.g., love, honesty, freedom) and supporting values (e.g., education, creativity and integrity) are often symbolized in material possessions. Quite regularly, our personal value system tends to go through a reorganization process, particularly when there are conflicts in our values. What are your core and supporting values? Please list them below (on the next page).
III. A Meaningful Purpose in Life: A meaningful purpose in life is that which gives our life meaning. Some might call it a life mission. Although it is true that we may have an overall life mission, it is also true that our lives are a collection of meaningful purposes. Suffering waits in those times in between each purpose. What would you say is your life mission and what purpose are you now supporting to accomplish this mission?
Roadblocks on the Human Path

If our experience on the human path is, indeed, the evolution of our soul growth process, then roadblocks can metaphorically be used to describe a temporary halt to this evolutionary process. Roadblocks on the human path are not necessarily aspects in our lives that separate us from our divine source or mission—even though they may seem like this at times. Rather, roadblocks are part of the human path. And while they may initially seem to stifle or inhibit our spiritual growth, this only occurs if we give up or give in to them and do nothing. In the words of a Nazi concentration camp Holocaust survivor, "Giving up is a final solution to a temporary problem."

Roadblocks take many forms, including unresolved anger or fear, greed, apathy, laziness, excessive judgment, and denial, just to name a few. More often than not, these obstacles manifest symbolically as problems, issues, and concerns (and sometimes people). Although the first thing we may want to do when coming upon a roadblock is retreat and do an about-face, avoidance only serves to postpone the inevitable. Miles down the road, we will encounter the same obstacles. Roadblocks must be dealt with.

First make a list of what you consider to be some of the major (tangible) obstacles on your human journey (e.g., the boss from hell, the ex-spouse from hell, etc.) Take a moment to identify each with a sentence or two.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

Next, begin to ask yourself to identify what emotions are associated with each roadblock just listed. What emotions do they elicit, and why do you suppose these emotions surface for you as these obstacles come into view?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

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Exercise

Distractions on the Human Path

Distractions can best be described as those things that pull us off the spiritual path—indeinitely. Distractions begin as attractions, but the allure can often cast a spell of slumber on the soul growth process. Although a respite on the human journey is desirable, and even necessary at times, a prolonged distraction will ultimately weaken our spiritual resolve. The human spirit, like energy, must flow, never stagnate. The lessons of distractions are quite common in fairy tales. Whether it is the story of Pinocchio or Hansel and Gretel, the warnings regarding distractions are as plentiful as the distractions themselves. The lessons of distractions are common in the great spiritual teachings as well. Here they are called 'temptations.' Not always, but often, attractions that become distractions have an addictive quality to them as well. What happens when we become distracted? Metaphorically speaking, we fall asleep on the human path. Like Dorothy and her friends on the way to Oz who stepped off the yellow brick road to smell the poppies and fell fast asleep, we too lose our direction, our mission, and our energy stagnates. The end result is never promising. Unlike roadblocks, distractions are not so much meant to be circumvented, dismantled or even transcended. Rather, they are meant to be appreciated—perhaps from afar, perhaps enjoyed briefly and then left behind. Fairy tales aside, what are contemporary distractions? Common day examples of every day distractions might include social contacts, alcohol, television, cell phones, and the Internet. Take a moment to reflect on what might be some distractions in your life. Make a list and describe each one in a sentence or two. Upon recognition of these, what steps can you take to "wake up" and get back on the path?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

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Exercise

On Being a Good Mystic

In a recent Harris poll, over 70 percent of those questioned admitted to having a mystical experience. It's likely the number is even higher. There are many types of mystical experiences, many of which defy description, but by not attempting to articulate them into a comprehensible language, we begin to forget details of fragments that initially lingered in the mind. By writing them down we make the intangible slightly more tangible, the supernatural a little more natural, and the ordinary, a little more extraordinary.

1. Beyond the five senses: What experiences have you had that you consider to be of a mystical, divine nature? Please take a moment to describe two or three of the most memorable ones here.

2. Renowned psychologist, Carl Jung, spent the better part of his professional career exploring the mystical nature of the mind. Much of his research involved dreams and dream analysis. He was of the opinion that not only are we capable of precognitive dreams and premonitions, but these are common occurrences. Do you recall any dreams that foretold future events? Please explain them here.

3. The word synchronicity was coined by Carl Jung as a means to describe two seemingly random events that come together with great significance. More than just a coincidence, synchronistic events are often thought to be divine messages, when we take the time to decode them. As the expression goes, "There is no such thing as a coincidence. It's God's way of remaining anonymous." What unusual coincidences have you had that are worth noting?
4. Abraham Maslow coined the term "peak experience" to convey a sense of oneness with the universe. People who experience this sensation describe it as "touching the face of God." Although these experiences are often beyond description, describe as best you can, in words through metaphor, simile, or analogy what this experience was like.

5 To be a good mystic means to appreciate the mystery of life. M. Scott Peck, author of the acclaimed book, *The Road Less Traveled,* stated that the highest stage of spiritual growth was to explore the mystery of life, but never lose one's appreciation for it. To some, the mystical side of life, those things that cannot be explained rationally through the framework of Western science, is baffling. It leads to a sense of frustration rather than a sense of appreciation. Where do you fall on this continuum?
Seasons of the Soul

The planet Earth has four distinct seasons. As we travel on the human journey, we too, travel through many seasonal changes. If you were to talk to the shamans, healers, sages, mystics and wisdom keepers of all times and ages, you would learn that like the planet Earth, the human soul has four distinct seasons as well, very similar in nature to the seasons of the earth. These seasons go by different names, but the cyclical process is universal in both scope and style. These are the seasons of the soul:

The Centering Process (Autumn); a time to go within and focus on the Self. It is a time of soul-searching, a time of self-reflection where one quiets the mind to calm the soul, it is a time to be still. The Centering Process is a time to "Enter the Heart."

The Emptying Process (Winter): This is a time to release, let go. and detach from thoughts, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, which at one time may have served us, but now they only seem to hold us back. For some this season (known as the void) becomes the dark night of the soul. Sadly, this season is where most people get stuck. It's also known as the "winter of discontent." This is the one season people tend to avoid and as a consequence, get stuck in. The emptying process is not a pit of despair, it is the womb of creation, but we must take that first step.

The Grounding Process (Spring): a time to seek and process the answers to life's problems and challenges that come to us. Sometimes we must wait for an insight, however, the grounding process is augmented by cultivating the silence of the mind. Remember, Nature abhors a vacuum. By making space in the Emptying Process new insights or wisdom will make itself known to you. When the pupil is ready, the teacher will come. The grounding process is time to access our intuition and perhaps even attain a feeling of enlightenment in preparation for the next stage (season) of our life journey. This insight, this nugget of wisdom is the vision of the vision quest. But remember, greed is not a spiritual value. This wisdom must be shared.

The Connecting Process (Summer); a season when we come back "home" to our community and share what we have learned on the leg of our most recent experience and the wisdom gained from the grounding process. (Remember, greed is not a spiritual value). The Connecting Process is based on the premise of love —nurturing our connections with friends, family, acquaintances (even strangers). As such the Connecting Process is a time of celebration. Careful though, many people tend to get stuck here too!

What makes life challenging, if not difficult at times, is that we are experiencing different seasons with different life aspects (problems). For instance, we may be in the emptying process in one aspect of our lives (e.g., career) while smack in the middle of the connecting process for another (e.g., daughter's wedding). Matters become more complex when a loved one (e.g., spouse, friend) experiencing the same situation (e.g. the death of a child) is in one season while we are in another.
Exercise
Your Seasons of the Soul

Centering, emptying, grounding, and connecting constitute the four seasons of the soul. Now is the time to take stock of your life. Are you in the midst of one particular season at the present time? Like the planet Earth, we can have many seasons occurring at the same time. There is a normal procession of these seasons, however, it is easy to get stuck in one particular season of the soul. The emptying process is one season most people try to avoid only to remain stuck there the longest. Based on the concepts explained earlier in this chapter, lake a moment to identify where you feel you are at this time in your life. Please identify what you normally do in each season to get the most out of it. Is there a season you choose to skip? If so, why? Do you take periodic time to do some quality soul searching? Of these four seasons, is there one that seems to hold the most importance for you? If so, why? How would you describe your connecting process?

The Centering Process (Autumn)

-----------------------------------------------------------

The Emptying Process (Winter)

-----------------------------------------------------------

The Grounding Process (Spring)

-----------------------------------------------------------

The Connecting Process (Summer)

-----------------------------------------------------------
Muscles of the Soul

"Giving up is the final solution to a temporary problem." — Gerta Weizt, Nazi concentration camp survivor

Just as a circle is a universal symbol of wholeness, so too is the butterfly a symbol of wholeness. Given the fact that butterflies, unlike the lowly caterpillar, have wings to fly, Butterflies also are considered a symbol of transformation. They can rise above what was once considered a limiting existence. There is a story of a boy who, upon seeing a young butterfly trying to emerge from its chrysalis, tried to help by pulling apart the paper cocoon that housed the metamorphosis. The boy’s mother, who saw what he was about to do, quickly stopped him by explaining that the butterfly strengthens its young wings by pushing through the walls of the cocoon. In doing so, its wings become strong enough to fly.

If you were to talk with anyone who has emerged gracefully from a difficult situation, they would most likely tell you that the muscles they used to break through their barrier(s) included patience, humor, forgiveness, optimism, humbleness, creativity, persistence, courage, willpower, and love. Some people call these inner resources. I call these "muscles of the soul." These are the muscles we use to dismantle, circumnavigate, and transcend the roadblocks and obstacles in life. Like physical muscles, these muscles will never disappear, however, they will atrophy with disuse. We are given ample opportunity to exercise these muscles, yet not everyone does.

Using the butterfly illustration, write in the wings those attributes, inner resources, and muscles of the soul that you feel help you get through the tough times—with grace and dignity, rather than feeling victimized. If there are traits you wish to include to augment the health of your human spirit, yet you feel aren't quite there, write those outside the wings and then draw an arrow into the wings, giving your soul a message that you wish to include (strengthen) these as well. Finally, if you have a box of crayons or pastels, color in your butterfly. Then hang it up on the fridge or bathroom mirror—some place where you can see it regularly, to remind yourself of your spiritual health and your innate ability to transcend life's problems, big and small.
Imagine, if you will, that there is a life force of divine energy that runs through your body. This life force is what we call the human spirit. We are a unique alchemy of humanity and divinity. Like a river, spirit runs through us with each breath. It is spirit that invigorates the soul. A lack of spirit can literally starve the soul, just as a lack of oxygen can starve each cell. The ways to nurture the soul are countless, yet each ensures a constant flow of this essential life force. Unresolved anger and fear are the two most common ways to choke the human spirit, yet whenever the ego dominates the soul, then the health of the human spirit is diminished. The following are just a few of the many ways to enhance the health of your human spirit. As you read through these ideas, write down, in the form of lists, some ideas of what you can do to engage in these activities, and, in doing so, engage in the health of your human spirit.

1. **The Art of Self-Renewal**: Self-renewal is a practice of taking time to recharge your personal energy and reconnecting to the divine source of life. List three ways in which you can find time to renew your personal energy —alone. Select the activity, the day, and the time of day.
   a.  
   b.  
   c.  

2. **The Practice of Sacred Rituals**: Sacred rituals are traditions that we perform to remind us of the sacredness of life. They include any habit we engage to which we attribute a sense of the divine. List three rituals you partake in on a regular basis to remind you of the sacredness of life.
   a.  
   b.  
   c.  

3. **Embracing the Shadow**: The shadow is a symbol of our dark side, when the ego rules our lives. The shadow appears in the behaviors of prejudice, arrogance, sarcasm, and other less than desirable attributes. To embrace the shadow doesn't mean to exploit these traits, but rather to acknowledge them and work to minimize them. List three aspects of yourself that you find less than flattering. How can you begin to come to peace with these aspects of yourself?
   a.  
   b.  
   c.  

4. **Acts of Forgiveness**: Forgiveness is the antidote for unresolved anger. Every act of forgiveness is an act of unconditional love. When you forgive someone, don't expect an
apology. Forgiveness is not the same thing as restitution. Forgiveness is a means of letting go and moving on with your life. A large component of forgiveness is learning to forgive yourself as well. List three people who currently have made it to the top of your "s" list. First write down why you feel violated, and then write down how you can let it go and move on with your life—forgive and start moving freely again.

a. 

b. 

c. 

5. Living Your Joy. First, you cannot live your joy ‘till you can name it. So. name your joy! What things in life give you pleasure, real unconditional happiness, without any sense of regret afterward? Name three things that make you happy and bring a smile to your face. Unresolved stress can inhibit the feelings of joy. List your top three pleasures. When was the last time you did each one of these? How soon can you do them again?

a. 

b. 

c. 

6. Compassion in Action: Compassion in action is pure altruism. It is doing for others without any expectation of reciprocation. Putting compassion into action is putting the work of the soul above the priorities of the ego. Compassion in action begins as random acts of kindness, but doesn't end there. List three things you can do to express your compassion in action. Is it a random act of kindness? Is it a generous gesture? Or perhaps it is just being there—without feeling a sense of obligation—really being there. Next, set out to do all three of these things on your list.

a. 

b. 

c. 

Effective
Coping
Techniques

Addressing the Cause(s) of Stress
The Body: The Battlefield for the Mind's War Games

The impact of stress in every aspect of life is becoming apparent and epidemic in our global society. Stress can be defined in many ways and has many connotations. Eastern philosophy considers stress as "an absence of inner peace". In western cultures stress can be described as a loss of control. Richard Lazarus defines it as a state of anxiety produced when events and responsibilities exceed one's coping abilities. Holistically, we define it as follows: Stress is the inability to cope with a perceived (real or imagined) threat to one's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, which results in a series of physiological responses and adaptations.

In today's society threats to our physical body are infrequent. However, with massive amounts of information invading our brains, daily demands and endless expectations, we perceive stresses as real as if we were being chased by lions (it's really just five o'clock traffic)! Throw in relationships and try to find a purpose in life and our body turns into a battlefield; running back and forth between the fight and flight responses leaving unresolved tension and even disease behind as debris from the war.

Presented in this workbook are Coping Skills and Relaxation Techniques that address the cause and symptom relief of stress. Enjoy!
Effective Coping Skills

Coping skills address the *cause* of stress. The purpose of these skills is to increase awareness of problems, work toward peaceful resolution and to promote a sense of peace of mind. Here are a few options:

- Art Therapy Humor
- Therapy (Comic Relief)
- Reframing (Cognitive Reappraisal)
- Behavior Modification
- Journal Writing
- Creative Problem Solving
- Resource Management (Time and money)
- Communication skills
- Hobbies
- Dream Therapy
- Support Groups
- Information Seeking
- Prayer
- Forgiveness
- Many others

Using Coping Skills

Many of the techniques described here are fields which can be expanded to doctorate programs. You may want to find professionals in your area who you can refer to if needed. However, these simple tools can add insight to your sessions and help your clients understand the causes of their stress. Most Coping Skills help merge the conscious with the un-conscious mind as well as right and left brain. I have expanded on many of them here for you.

*ENJOY!*
Art Therapy

Many of our thoughts and emotions are hard to express in words. Not always, but often a visual picture rich in color, texture, and style can best describe how we feel. Art therapy is used to help individuals learn to express themselves and their thoughts and feelings. This exercise requires NO skill --only desire and a little imagination. Frequently drawings can communicate thoughts from the unconscious that the conscious mind can begin to decipher and understand for a more honest picture of the real you.

These drawings are not for public display or viewing. They are just for you and your clients. It may be easier to introduce this idea with "The Human Butterfly" to get comfortable. The following suggestions are used in art therapy classes. They are only suggestions. You may augment them with what you feel is comfortable.

1. With your eyes closed, draw a line on a page and then open your eyes and from what you see, finish the picture to make whatever you would like.
2. Illustrate something that describes your best attributes or what best describes who you are or draw yourself.
3. Identify one area of your body that you feel is a target organ, a recipient of your stress. From this, use your imagination to think up a mental image to cure or restore homeostasis to this part of your body and then draw this image on paper. This is best split into 2 pictures. One as the organ is and one after healing has occurred.
4. Draw a representation of your feelings of either anger or fear.
5. Draw your favorite animal.
6. Draw an image from a recent (or vivid) dream or recurring dream.
7. Draw a significant event in your life.
8. Draw a house (either one you live in or perhaps wish to live in).
9. Draw a mandala (a circular personal coat of arms with four quadrants depicting four aspects of your life that are important to you).
10. Draw whatever you like.
Interpretation: The best person qualified to interpret his or her drawing is the person who drew it. Typically, the color selection, as well as the objects drawn (house, tree, etc.) often parallel emotional expressions of one's mental/emotional health. The absence of a color does not mean a lack of something, rather the colors used express that which the unconscious mind wishes to convey at the time of the drawing. The following list suggests associations between colors and their archetypal meanings.

Red - Passionate emotional peaks (from pleasure to pain). It can represent either compassion or anger. Orange - Suggests a life change (big or small, often more positive than negative).
Yellow - Represents energy (usually a positive message).
Green & Blue - Suggests happiness and joy (blue may even mean creativity). These colors also suggest a strong sense or desire of grounding and stability in your environment.
Purple/Violet (even pink) - Suggests a highly spiritual nature, unconditional love.
Brown (and earth tone colors) - A sense of grounding and stability.
Black - Can either represent grief, despair, fear, or a sense of personal empowerment.
White - Can either mean fear, avoidance, cover-up, or hope.
Gray - Typically represents a sense of ambiguity or uncertainty about an issue.

Play with this a little yourself. It may be easiest to begin with coloring the butterfly and the personal mandala as the outline is already there. In the mandala particularly through the pathway and through the colors you use can express different quadrants of your life or your client’s life. You may discover many new things about yourself. Consider posting your picture on your frig or office wall where you can reflect on it often. Many times a first drawing leads to a second and more significant drawing. Encourage your clients to do the same. I find that children particularly enjoy this activity and is a great way to empower your clients.

ENJOY!
Exercise

The Human Butterfly

Theme: The butterfly is a symbol of transformation of rising above life's issues and problems and moving on. The word "butterfly" and "soul" are also synonymous in Greek.

Activity: Spread out some colored crayons or pastels on a table or floor area where you can easily access them. If you are doing this with others, please remember to share: Allocate about 10 to 15 minutes to color in the wings of your butterfly (see the accompanying figure). As an additional phase of the human butterfly exercise, consider writing in the butterfly wings those inner resources or muscles of the soul (e.g., humor, patience, forgiveness, creativity, optimism, etc.) that you use to effectively cope with problems. If there are inner resources that you feel you would like to have be a stronger part of who you are (to enhance your coping skills), then write those attributes on the outside of the butterfly and draw an arrow from the word into the wing of the butterfly. By doing so, you send a direct message to your unconscious mind to begin to utilize these inner resources more often.

Interpretation: If you do this exercise in a small group, take turns showing your butterfly illustration and explain to the group your best interpretation from an archetypal perspective. When viewing other's work, you cannot help but be impressed, if for no other reason, then from seeing how different and unique each butterfly is when colored.

Outside Assignments: Consider hanging your butterfly on the fridge or office wall as a means to remind you (both consciously and unconsciously) of your inner resources.
“The Human Butterfly”
(Your inner resources)
Humor Therapy
Humor Therapy
The search for the Proverbial Funny Bone can be a daily quest that reverses the stress response in the body. The word "humor" means fluid or moisture so let's get your juices flowing. Consider this! The average child laughs or giggles about 300 times a day. The typical adult laughs about 15 times a day. Research reveals that the average hospital patient never laughs at all. Listen and watch for humor around you every day. Comics, calendars, license plates, signs (especially misspelled or missing letters-like a Toyota car with just "YO" left), movies and don't forget the endless resource of the internet. Here are some exercises to strengthen your funny bones and surround yourself with smiles:

1. Make a Tickler Notebook. This assignment invites you to begin making a tickler notebook (3-ring binder works great), comprised of favorite jokes, photographs, jpg’s, cards, poems, love letters, or anything that brings a smile to your face. Keep it on hand so if you're having a bad day, you can pull it out to help regain some emotional balance. If you or anyone else is ever in the hospital make sure it's available to make sure you get your quota of 15 laughs a day. This is a great family or office project, too.

   Here's a quick example:

   The bell curve of life:
   
   At age 4, success is. . . not peeing your pants.
   At age 12, success is. . . having friends.
   At age 16, success is. . . having a driver's license.
   At age 20, success is. . . having sex.
   At age 30, success is. . . having money.
   At age 50, success is. . . having money.
   At age 60, success is. . . having sex.
   At age 70, success is. . . having a driver's license.
   At age 75, success is. . . having friends.
   At age 80, success is. . . not peeing your pants!

2. Make a list of 5 movie comedies (with the intent of seeing them again).

3. Create a new answering machine message that will bring a smile.

4. Find one new humorous thing a day.
5. **Work to improve your sense of Imagination and Creativity.** Read or write a story or poem. Spend time with young kids. Children are great resources for comedy with innocent and often insightful thoughts or at least see life from a new perspective.

6. **Learn not to take yourself too seriously.** Learn to laugh at your mistakes and your imperfections (without compromising your self-esteem)! Remind yourself to look at the big picture: See yourself as a part of the whole, not the entire whole. Wayne Dyer once said, "If you can see yourself looking at the situation 10 years from now and laughing about it, then why rob yourself of the chance to laugh during that time?" Laugh now and ease the pain!

7. **Learn to HYPEREXAGERATE things when describing a situation or telling a story.** (e.g., The traffic was so bad, they opened a drive-by maternity ward on each exit ramp.)

8. **Carry a positive attitude and use it often.** As the expression goes, "Let a smile be your umbrella..." Learn to balance your emotions - don't hang on to the negative side of life.

9. **Build your own humor library.** Start and collect CD's (e.g.Jerry Seinfeld, Jeff Foxworthy, etc) DVD's to watch (e.g. Caddy Shack, Singing in the Rain, etc.), cartoons or whatever you find that warms your heart and brings a smile to your face. Consider the Tickler Notebook.

10. **Seek out a good friend who can make you laugh or smile!** **ENJOY!**
Good Vibrations: Proverbs by First Graders

A first grade school teacher in Virginia had twenty-five students in her class. She presented each child in her classroom the first half of a well-known proverb and asked them to come up with the remainder of the proverb. It's hard to believe these were actually done by first graders. Their insight may surprise you. While reading, keep in mind that these are first graders. 6-year-olds, because the last one is a classic!

1. Don't change horses ......................... until they stop running.
2. Strike while the ......................... bug is close.
3. It's always darkest before................... Daylight Saving Time.
4. Never underestimate the power of ....... termites.
5. You can lead a horse to water but ...... how?
6. Don't bite the hand that .................... looks dirty.
7. No news is ..................................... impossible.
8. A miss is as good as a ....................... Mr.
9. You can't teach an old dog new ...... math.
10. If you lie down with dogs, you"ll... stink in the morning
11. Love all, trust................. me.
12. The pen is mightier than the ............... pigs.
13. An idle mind is......................... the best way to relax.
14. Where there's smoke there's............. pollution.
15. Happy the bride who....................... gets all the presents.
16. A penny saved is ............ not much
17. Two's company, three's................. the Musketeers
18. Don't put off till tomorrow what........ you put on to go to bed.
19. Laugh and the whole world laughs with you. cry and...... you have to blow your nose.
20. There are none so blind as.......... Stevie Wonder.
21. Children should be seen and not........ spanked or grounded.
22. If at first you don't succeed............. get new batteries.
23. You get out of something only what you ..... see in the picture on the box.
24. When the blind lead the blind......... get out of the way.
And the WINNER and last one!
25. Better late than pregnant
Reframing

Reframing involves seeing a bigger, clearer perspective. Anger and fear that arise from encountering a stressful situation can narrow our focus of the bigger picture. Although the initial aspects of dealing with these situations involves some degree of grieving, the secret to coping with stress is to change the threatening perception to a non-threatening perception. The worksheet that follows will allow you or your client to write down situations and then describe possible Reframed Perspectives. Affirmations from the Nelson Report and other sources are examples of Reframing.

1. The first step to reframing a situation is an awareness of your thoughts and feelings. See the patterns of stress and your emotions attached to them. You may need to ask a trusted friend for validation of your perceptions.

2. Now allow yourself to grieve the situation for what it is, then (when ready) try to come up with 3 or 4 things for which you are grateful. Ask yourself what can be learned from this situation? Every situation (good, bad, and ugly) offers a valuable life lesson. See if you can glean something good from it.

3. Negative thoughts about a situation act like a mirror image to our own thoughts about ourselves, and they can have an immensely negative impact on our self-esteem. Another step in the reframing process is to take an inventory of your personal strengths. By doing so, you begin to focus on your positive attributes rather than aspects that contribute to low self-esteem.

4. To cultivate a positive mind frame in non-stressful times so that you have it to use during stressful times, place a short list of positive affirmations on your bathroom mirror or computer screen.
Exercise

Refraining: Seeing a Bigger, Clearer Perspective

Anger and fear that arise from encountering a stressful situation can narrow our focus of the bigger picture. Although the initial aspects of dealing with these situations involves some degree of grieving, the secret to coping with stress is to change the threatening perception to a non-threatening perception. This worksheet invites you to identify three stressors and, if necessary, draft a new "reframed" perspective (not a rationalization) that allows you to get out of the rut of a myopic view and start moving on with your life.

1. Situation: ______________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Reframed Perspective _____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

1. Situation: ______________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Reframed Perspective _____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

1. Situation: ______________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Reframed Perspective _____________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
Exercise

1,000 Things Went Right Today! ®

In a stress-filled world, it becomes easy to start focusing on the negative things in life. Pretty soon you begin to attract more negative things in your life. Breaking free from this thought process isn't easy, but neither is it impossible. There is an expression, coined by Ilan Shamir, which states, "A thousand things went right today." The concept behind this expression suggests that by beginning to look for the positive things in life, you will start attracting these as well and let's face it, we can all use more positive things in our lives. Rather than taxing your mind to come up with 1,000 things, or even 100, try starting with 10 things that went right today, and then see if you can begin to include this frame of mind at the midpoint of each day to keep you on course. Remember, in a world of negativity, it takes work to be happy!

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
4. __________________________________________
5. __________________________________________
6. __________________________________________
7. __________________________________________
8. __________________________________________
9. __________________________________________
10. _________________________________________

After having written down these things, is there any lesson that comes to mind that you can learn from this experience?

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________

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Behavior Modification

"How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb? One, but the light bulb has really got to want to change." --Anonymous

At one time or another, everyone has considered a plan of action for self-improvement. Beach season and New Years are probably the most popular. The reason change is so difficult is that there are so many variables to manipulate: social, physiological, environmental elements all play their part. Fortunately, we have the info grid on the EPFX to help deal with what needs to be addressed first. Behavior as a component of personality can be separated into 3 topics. First are values. Values are those aspects that give meaning to our lives. They are intangible concepts of importance such as time, joy, honesty, education, privacy, creativity and wealth to name a few. Often stresses come from a situation that violates one of our core values. Secondly, attitudes are beliefs based on our values, often expressed as opinions. They can be either positive or negative. Negative attitudes are associated with a perceived stress. Last, the behavior itself. A behavior is any action that is based on a conscious or unconscious thought. Behaviors are thought to be physical manifestations of an attitude based on a specific value. There are five basic steps to behavior modification:

1. Awareness - you realize that you behave in a certain way that is less than ideal.
2. Desire to change - after you recognize poor behavior you have to want to change it.
4. Behavior substitution - an old behavior is actually replaced with a better behavior.
5. Evaluation - take a step back and see if the new behavior brought desired changes.

There are many behavioral theories including self-monitoring, classical conditioning, operant conditioning and modeling. The bookstore shelves are lined with self-help guides to change behavior. I recommend that you choose several and have them available for check out from your library.

ENJOY!
Healthy Boundaries

We are living in an age in which the average person has very poor boundaries in his or her life. Technology may be a factor, but it's not the only reason. People bring their work home, while at the same time problems from home invade their professional lives. It seems that almost every one has poor financial boundaries, with the average person carrying well over $5,000 annually in credit card debt. People think nothing of bringing their cell phones into restaurants and movie theaters, and what begins as just an hour in front of the television ends up being a whole evening. Poor personal boundaries result in feelings of being overwhelmed, annoyed, and victimized — all of which contribute to a critical mass of stress.

First, healthy boundaries require an insight about what's appropriate in each and every setting in which you find yourself, in essence, creating the boundaries you need and want to maintain a sense of personal balance. Next, healthy boundaries require courage to assert your boundaries so that they are not violated. Finally, healthy boundaries require willpower and discipline to honor what you yourself have established, in order to give you better structure and stability in your life.

I. List four areas in your life that you feel have weak boundaries (or perhaps no boundaries). Examples might include finances, alcohol, technology, or television watching.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

II. Now, please list four boundaries that you would like to create in your life to bring about a sense of balance. Then add a few words about what you can do to have these boundaries honored.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 

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Exercise

Giving Your Self-Esteem A Healthy Boost

Self-esteem is thought to be comprised of five components: Uniqueness, Empowerment, Role Models, Connectedness, and Calculated Risk-Taking. With this in mind, let's take a look at your level of self-esteem with respect to these five areas. Try to answer the following questions as best you can.

1. **Uniqueness:** List five characteristics or personal attributes that make you feel special and unique (e.g., sense of humor, being a good cook, a passion for travel):
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

2. **Empowerment:** List five areas or aspects of your life in which you feel you are empowered:
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

3. **Mentors and role models:** Name five people (heroes, mentors, or role models) who have one or more characteristics that you admire and wish to emulate or enhance as a part of your own personality. Please describe the person and what trait or traits.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

4. **Social support groups:** Friends and family are now thought to be crucial to one's health status. To have a sense of belonging is very important in one's life. Who (or what) gives you a sense of belonging? Please describe each in a sentence.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

5. **Calculated Risk-Taking:** List five good risks that you have taken in the past year that you feel have augmented your sense of self-worth and courage.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

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Journal Writing
In a world of microchips and video games, we are writing less and less. Many experts from psychoanalysts to spiritual leaders recommend keeping a journal. Sociologists worry that future generations will look back on this time period, the high-tech information age, and never really know what individuals were actually feeling and thinking because there are so few written entries.

Writing about life and its challenges will help future generations keep from making the same mistakes as well as cathartic for the person writing. But where to start and what to write? Most of us don't have time or interest in a life long travel log. There are a number of exercises that can be therapeutic to your clients and yourself - much more meaningful than a travel log.

Here are a few themes:

1. **Unwritten letters.** Many times we wish to communicate with someone but for a variety of reasons we part ways with unresolved feelings. This can lead to festering wounds. This journal entry concerns the theme of resolution. Letters can be written to those who have passed away, to yourself, to your unborn child or to anyone for any reason.

2. **The Vision Quest.** This is a thought provoking entry which involves three phases. First, Severance - the separation from old ways. Next, Threshold - the actual quest or search for understanding, vision and inner inventory. Last, Incorporation - a return from the journey to the community with new insight and knowledge.

3. **Sweet Forgiveness.** Unresolved anger is a toxin we as practitioners see every day. This exercise is designed to help clients fully explore resentment and animosity that can block the healing process spiritually and physically. Forgiveness is not a surrender of your self-esteem, nor is it a compromise of your integrity. When you can truly forgive you let go of feelings of control or slavery and become free to move on with your life.

4. **The Seed, The Seashell and The Stone.** These are entries where you use an object to inspire introspection into ones life or personality. The Seed is the gift of life. It can become many different things. Use the seed as a metaphor for an intention which you would like to come into your life.
"An infinity of forest lies dormant within the dreams of one acorn"
-- Wayne Dyer.

The Seashell is a home to many sea creatures and represents protection. Use this exercise to describe your need for security, list strengths and weaknesses.

The Stone is an exercise where you look into and describe a gem (e.g. azurite, quartz, citruline, etc). This often ends as a description of yourself or your perceptions in life.

These exercises should be fun, cathartic and insightful.

ENJOY!
Exercise Journal Writing: Sweet Forgiveness

You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist. — Indira Gandhi

Every act of forgiveness is an act of unconditional love. If unresolved anger is a toxin to the spirit, forgiveness is the antidote, and where anger is a roadblock, forgiveness is a ladder to climb above and transcend the experience. For forgiveness to be complete and unconditional, you must be willing to let go of all feelings of anger, resentment, and animosity. Sweet forgiveness cannot hold any taste of bitterness, as they are mutually exclusive. Victimization is a common feeling when one encounters stressors in the form of another person's behaviors. When we sense that our human rights have been violated, feelings of rage can quickly turn into feelings of resentment. Left unresolved, these toxic thoughts can taint the way we treat others and ourselves. To forgive those who we feel have wronged us is not an easy task. Often it's a process, and at times, a very long process at that. Yet turning the other cheek does not mean you have to let people walk all over you. Forgiveness is not a surrender of your self-esteem, nor is it a compromise of your integrity. When you can truly forgive the behavior of those whom you feel violated by, you let go of the feelings of control and become free to move on with your life. Resentment and grudges can become roadblocks on the human path. Forgiveness turns a hardened heart into an open passageway to progress on life's journey. Think for a moment of someone who might have violated your humanness Is it time to let go of some toxic thoughts and initiate a sense of forgiveness?

To begin this journal entry, write the name of that person or those persons toward whom you feel some level of resentment. Beside each name write down what action or behavior it was that offended you and why you feel so violated. What feelings arise in you when you see this person, or even hear his or her name? Next, make a note of how long you have felt this way toward this person. Finally, search your soul for a way to forgive the people on your list, even if it means just to acknowledge their human spirit. Then practice the act of forgiveness as best you can and let the feelings of resentment go.

Creative Problem Solving
A problem is a perception of a stress and/or a mental block. Which of the following mental blocks sometimes prevents you from getting and using ideas?

"The right answer" "That's not logical"
"Be practical" "Follow the rules"
"Avoid ambiguity" "To err is wrong"
"Play is frivolous" "That's not my area"
"Don't be foolish" "I'm not creative"

These type of thoughts stifle the creative process and allow pride or ego to shade the problem instead of coming up with fun and new ways to look at challenges. Letting go of mental blocks will allow you to bring everything you need into your field to solve any problem. Remember what Dr. Ty Talcott said in Mexico several years ago, "Do some stuff. If that doesn't work, do some more stuff. If that doesn't work, do different stuff until you find something that works. Then do that stuff some more." Short and simple ways to get through the problem. Perfect!

For every creative process there are four different phases or personalities: The Explorer, The Artist, The Judge and The Warrior. Take a moment to see which one fits you the best. Many clients who have job stress are not in a job that fits their creative personality (e.g. An artist trying to do the Judge's job or an Explorer trying to implement ideas like a warrior. )

It is very difficult to enjoy work in those circumstances because the Artist keeps coming up with more ideas instead of choosing one and the Explorer is looking for ways to change when he’s suppose to be implementing what has already been decided. If you own your own business then you need to find a way to become all four or get help in the areas that are difficult for you.

Now it's time to put your new knowledge into action. Try the exercise "Creative Problem Solving". You may want to start with a crazy, wild or unrelated issue to warm up the creative juices or write down your problem and trade with someone else and solve each other's problems. Trading is fun in group settings like work, families or your next community meeting. You'll be amazed at the results and how easy it can be to get over your most stubborn mental blocks.

**ENJOY!**
Exercise

The Roles of Creativity

Roger von Oech is right when he states that many hats worn in the creative process! Reviewing these four specific roles, take some time to examine how you can integrate these creative aspects into your repertoire of skills. If you are like most people, you tend to see yourself as wearing only one of these hats, rather than all four. This is OK when projects or problems require more than one person to contribute their talents. For now, let's assume that you can wear all four hats.

1. **The Explorer:** To help you think outside the box, make a list of ten new places you can explore to find new ideas for any creative project. Next, make a list of five new resources to explore for any creative project.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

2. **The Artist:** Inside each and every one of us is an artist begging to play. Make a list of five new ways to engage in the art of play!
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

3. **The Judge:** How good are your judgmental skills? Are they too good? Are you the kind of person who judges first and asks questions later?

4. **The Warrior:** The warrior is the "legman" in the creative process. A great idea without someone to market it and implement it is not really a great idea. How good are your warrior skills? What can you do to improve them?
Exercise
Creative Problem Solving

There are many good ways to solve a problem! All you need do is spend some time working at it from different directions until a number of viable solutions surface, and then choose the best one. The following is a time tested strategic plan for creatively trying to solve problems and come to a sense of resolution,

The Problem: ____________________________________________________________

1. **Define/describe the Problem** (please be as specific as you can):
   ____________________________________________________________

2. **Generating Great Ideas** (Come up with at least four viable ideas and one zany (x) one to bring out the play factor)
   a. __________________________________________________________
   b. __________________________________________________________
   c. __________________________________________________________
   d. __________________________________________________________
   (x) __________________________________________________________

3. **Idea Selection and Refinement**: (Pick the best idea from above and explain why you think this is the best idea)
   __________________________________________________________

4. **Idea Implementation** (Explain how you will put this idea into action. Make a brief outline – four specific points of your action plan to make this happen)
   a. __________________________________________________________
   b. __________________________________________________________
   c. __________________________________________________________
   d. __________________________________________________________

5. **Evaluation and Analysis of "Action Plan"** (How did the idea work? What if any are some ways to improve on this idea should you decide to use it again?)
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

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Time Management

Time management for many of us is an illusion we chase like a dog chasing their tail-never getting done what we want to and perpetually running in circles trying to make ends meet. Project after project takes twice as much time as we think and frustration from energy parasites (people or distractions) take us off course from our purpose in life.

Take a few minutes to explore the exercises on Time Management for yourself. Make copies for clients as needed. Especially watch for those with adrenal fatigue, care giving professions, weight issues (this is often related to control issues) or co-dependent behavior. The Art of Subtracting is particularly hard but beneficial for a lot of people.

We tend to hold on to objects often because of a feeling of lack of abundance in our lives. If we have everything we "need" then letting go of energetic debris is the most exhilarating and freeing experience possible. Watch how these simple exercises rejuvenate your life and get you back on track with what you were meant to do-and stay there!

ENJOY!
The Time-Crunch Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions as you are (not how you would like to be) regarding your time management skills. 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often. Add up the numbers you circled and check the questionnaire key to determine your level of time management skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I tend to procrastinate with projects and responsibilities</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My bedtime varies upon the workload I have each day</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am the kind of person who leaves things till the last minute</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I forget to make or refer to &quot;to do&quot; lists to keep me organize</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I spend more than two hours watching television each night</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I tend to have multiple projects going on at the same time</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I tend to put work ahead of family and friends</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My life seems to be full of endless interruptions and distractions</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I tend to spend a lot of time on the phone talking to friends</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Multi-tasking is my middle name. I am a great multi-tasker</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My biggest problem with time management is prioritization</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I am a perfectionist when it comes to getting things done</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I never seem to have enough time for my personal life</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I tend to set unrealistic goals to accomplish tasks</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I reward myself before getting things done on time</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I just never have enough hours in the day to get things done when I can do it better myself</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I can spend untold hours distracted while surfing the Internet</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I tend not to trust other to get things done when I can do it better myself</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. If I am completely honest, I tend to be a workaholic</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I have been known to skip meals in order to complete projects</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I will clean my room, garage, or kitchen before I really get to work on projects</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I will often help friends with their work before doing my own</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I tend to spend time on less important but more satisfying things at the cost of being efficient</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I end up wasting a lot of time with technology and gadgets</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I often find it hard to get motivated to get things done</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Questionnaire Key**

- 75-51 points = poor time management skills (time to reevaluate your life skills)
- 26-50 points = fair time management skills (time to pull in the reins a bit)
- 0-25 points = excellent time management skills (keep doing what you are doing!)

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Time Management Idea Exchange

Read through the following questions and list the best answers that come to mind.

1. List five (5) reasons why people don't manage their time effectively. Which ones apply to your current lifestyle?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

2. Explain your feelings of stress when your time isn't managed as well as you'd like it to be.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

3. List the most beneficial time management techniques that you find helpful to effectively manage your time and keep on schedule, and then explain why.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 
   d. 
   e. 

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4. Think up five (5) new ways to manage your time more effectively (consider including ways to deal with the flood of technology, e.g., cell phones, etc.).

a. 

b. 

c. 

d. 

e. 

5. Select one idea from question 3 or 4 that you like and outline the steps you can take to implement this technique?

a. 

b. 

c. 

d. 

e. 

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Lacking some motivation to get some things done? One way to fan the fires of inspiration is to provide some incentives to accomplish big or arduous tasks by giving yourself a reward. While the real reward is the accomplishment of the deed, a little incentive may be just the thing needed to get it done on time. Remember, not all rewards have to be material possessions. A phone call to a close friend at the end of the day can be as rewarding as a vacation to Tahiti in some cases. Remember, rewards are meant to decrease stress, not increase it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal to Accomplish:</th>
<th>Incentive/Reward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise

Practicing the Art of Subtraction

Does your life feel cluttered with too much stuff? Are your garage and basement filled with "stuff that you haven't used (or seen) in years? Are there people in your life who are so emotionally needy that when you see them, you want to run and hide? Are there things in your life that at first seemed to simplify things and now they seem to be complicating things? If so, you might want to consider engaging in the Art of Subtraction (also known as "editing your life").

I. Clutter! Walk through your house or apartment and make a list of five things that fall in the category of personal clutter (this can include equipment, clothes, books, or anything lying on the floor). Once you have made this list, collect the things and consider giving them away to Good Will or some other charitable organization.

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________

II. People! Are there people in your life who take up time rather than contribute to your quality of life? Take inventory if you have any "friends" who seem to be a drain of your emotional energy. The next question to ask yourself is this: Do you drain other people's energy? Do you give as well as take in your relationships and friendships?

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________

III. Simplicity vs. Complexity: We tend to bring things into our lives out of both interest and fear. What things are in your life right now that may have begun out of interest, but now you are ready to let go of? Another way to phrase this question is to ask yourself: What things in your life tend to add complexity rather than simplicity? Once you have identified three things, begin to ask yourself what you can do to subtract these things to bring your life back into balance.

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________

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Subtle Energy System "Vitamins"

Donna Eden is a renowned energy healer with a gift for not only observing subtle energies, but also teaching others how to regulate their subtle energy for enhanced health and well-being. Integrating the flow of energy through the human aura, chakras and meridians, Donna combines a variety of self-help techniques so that, in her words "You keep your energies humming and vibrant." The following are ideas and suggestions that Donna teaches in her energy medicine workshops, exercises that she calls energy system vitamins. She recommends that you do this short routine daily.

1. **Three Body Taps:** There are various acupuncture/acupressure points that, when stimulated, will help direct the flow of energy, and thus increase your vitality and help boost your immune system.
   - **Chest bone Tap:** Known to acupuncturists as K27 (from points on the kidney meridian) gently tap on the top of your chest bone just below where the two clavicles meet for about 15-20 seconds.
   - **Thymus gland tap:** Your thymus gland (an important gland of the immune system) resides between your throat and your heart, but the point to tap is in the center of your chest bone about 2 inches below K 27. Once you have found this point, tap on it with your fingertips for about 15 to 20 seconds.
   - **Spleen points tap:** The spleen is also an essential organ to your immune system. The spleen points are located on the rib cage, directly below your nipples. Once you have found these two points, tap vigorously with your fingers for about 15 to 20 seconds.

2. **Cross Crawl Movements:** To do the cross crawl, first you must understand that the left side of the brain controls the right side of the body, and vice versa. Many people's energies are not vibrant or harmonized due to stagnation from the lack of neural energy from right to left or left to the right sides of the brain. Poor energy movement is referred to as a homo-lateral pattern and this will affect thought processes, coordination and vitality. Sitting or standing, raise your right knee and your left arm (you can touch knee to elbow if you'd like). Follow this by raising your left knee and your right arm. Twist your torso so that your arms cross the mid-point of your body. Try this movement pattern for about 30-60 seconds.

3. **The Crown Pull:** Placing your hand on top of your forehead and crown of the head, imagine that your fingers are pulling from the center down to your ears, in a motion starting from the front of your head and working to the back of your skull. The purpose of this exercise is to move stagnant energy from the top of your head and it helps to open the crown chakra. This exercise can be helpful in relieving headaches, too.

4. **Zip up:** The central meridian (in the front of your body) can easily become congested, open, or exposed to others' energy. This technique invites you to close your auric field as a means of health and protection. Start by tapping the K27 point again and then reach down to the top of your thighs with your right (or left) hand, take a deep breath, and pull up as if you were pulling up a zipper, clear up to your chin. Repeat this three times. By pulling up, you trace the directional flow of the central meridian and strengthen the flow of energy. This technique is recommended before making speeches or dealing with someone who is very angry.

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Prayer
Small word, big topic. There has been much study recently on the impact of prayer both for the person praying and for the person on whose behalf the prayer is offered (obviously it can be the same person, too). Several presenters spoke of this at the most recent ISSSEEM Conference (International Society for the Study of Subtle Energies and Energy Medicine). Dr. Larry Dossey was a keynote speaker who addressed this topic extensively. Science is developing ways to prove that prayer has a physiological as well as spiritual impact for all who choose to incorporate it into their lives.

Perfection in this field would require that one always have a prayer in his/her heart metaphorically speaking. But what is a prayer? Is it just a wish for divine intervention to magically take away all our worries? The most effective prayers seem to be backed with faith and a strong intention that is not attached to outcome.

Prayer is a skill that can be practiced, used and refined. The words don't need to be eloquent. The time of day or what you wear do not matter. You and your desire to communicate with divinity is all that is needed. Experience "The Healing Power of Prayer" on the next page and ENJOY! . . . peace.
Exercise

The Healing Power of Prayer

Regardless of one's religious background or lack thereof, prayer is a commonly used coping technique that is used in times of duress. To seek help in times of need is considered a savvy strategy for overcoming problems, no matter what size. Although prayer can be a very personal behavior, we now know that there are certain steps to ensure a clear transmission for divine intercession. Consider using the following outline as a personal template to refine the healing power of your prayers.

Intention: __________________________

1. **Present Tense:** State your prayerful intention in the present tense below.

2. **Focused Concentration:** Clear your mind by using the space below to write down any distracting negative thoughts as a means of releasing them.

3. **Positive Thoughts & Intentions:** State your intention in the most positive way below:

4. **Emotional Vibration:** Call to mind the most favorable emotions you can feel. If it helps, write down the experience and feeling to help recreate this feeling now.

5. **Detached Outcomes:** Below, write any fears, anxieties, or desires that need to be released to make the prayer fly.

6. **Attitude of Gratitude:** Take a moment to write a few words of thanks here for that which you are grateful for as this happens.

Meditation & Guided Visualization Exercises
Exercise

THE ART OF CALM: Relaxation Through The Five Senses

Please list 10 ideas for relaxation for each of the five senses. Note that a sixth category, the divine sense, was added for any ideas that might be a combination of these or perhaps something beyond the five senses (e.g., watching a child being born). Describe each in a few words to a sentence. Be as specific as possible, and be creative!

The Sense of Sight
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________

The Sense of Sound
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________

The Sense of Smell
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________

The “Divine” Sense
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________

The Sense of Taste
1. ______________________________
2. ______________________________
3. ______________________________
4. ______________________________
5. ______________________________
6. ______________________________
7. ______________________________
8. ______________________________
9. ______________________________
10. ______________________________

Relaxation Survival Kit

A *Relaxation Survival Kit* is like your personal first-aid kit for stress. Keep it well stocked with things that nurture or sustain your personal sense of homeostasis, in this case, homeostasis that comes from pleasing one or all of the five senses. Just like a first-aid kit, please be sure to replace any items that have been used —like chocolate (taste), so that in the event of another personal disaster or day from hell, you can pull out your kit and put yourself back on the path toward inner peace. To start this process, begin by making a list of the items you wish to include in your relaxation kit, and then use this list as a means of keeping inventory.

Sight
1. 
2. 

Sound
1. 
2. 

Taste
1. 
2. 

Touch
1. 
2. 

Smell
1. 
2. 

Additional Items
1. 
2. 

Relaxation

_That the birds fly overhead, this you cannot stop. That they build a nest in your hair, this you can prevent._

---Ancient Chinese Proverb

Stress is part of everyone's life nearly everyday. There is a healthy level of stress. If we had none at all mankind would likely never make any progress individually or collectively. Too much stress wears down the body, mind and spirit. Stress must be balanced.

An often-asked question about relaxation techniques is this: Isn't sleeping as good or better than meditation, yoga, or an other relaxation technique? The simple answer is NO! Sleeping does not produce the same effects, because during sleep the unconscious mind is continuously working to resolve issues of the previous day. Stress-based emotions left unresolved tend to show up in a variety of ways while sleeping, including high blood pressure, muscle tension, and TMJ disorder to name a few. What makes each relaxation technique unique when compared with nocturnal sleep is the "conscious intention" to relax. The act of sleep is involuntary, whereas these techniques are voluntary, meaning that there is a conscious and unconscious effort to achieve homeostasis. By doing so, both the unconscious and conscious minds work in unison for the integration and balance of mind, body, spirit, and emotions.

The origins of relaxation techniques span many cultures and times. Out of the old techniques new ones are adding depth and strength. Some methods are best used right in the moment facing stress head on. Others are better postponed to later in the day. However, all of them are preventative in nature and prevent stress from permanently disrupting homeostasis. Read through and try them a few at a time. Some you may like right away. Others may take some getting used to. Once they become part of you and your client's tool kit in managing stress you will learn to love and appreciate them as I have.
Effective Relaxation Techniques

Relaxation techniques address the symptoms of stress. They help restore and maintain homeostasis and are especially beneficial to the immune system. Nearly every relaxation technique is useful in the effort to decrease chronic pain. Physical relaxation is the perfect antidote for all stress. Most, if not all, techniques for physical relaxation help to minimize the symptoms of chronic pain.

Here is a shortened list:

- Relaxation through the 5 senses
- Diaphragmatic Breathing
- Meditation (Centering)
- Hatha Yoga
- Mental Imagery
- Guided Visualization
- Massage Therapy (body work)
- Aromatherapy
- Tai Chi
- Progressive Muscular Relaxation
- Autogenic Training
- Biofeedback
- Nutrition
- Physical Exercise
- Pet Therapy
- Many others
Relaxation through the 5 senses

Sense of Sight
Humans are visual animals. About 70% of our sensory information is processed through our eyes. Using the sense of sight for relaxation may seem easily achieved-just close your eyes and stress levels should drop dramatically. Perhaps this is why, when people chose to relax by using diaphragmatic breathing, listening to music, or receiving a massage, they close their eyes rather than keep them open. Also, a calming image or photograph can be used to replace a stressful scene. When asked to name a calming image, most people turn to nature: mountain vistas, ocean beach and lush forests. The grandeur of nature brings all problems into perspective. Using the sense of sight to promote relaxation does all these things.

Sense of Sound
Another 20% of sensory information is garnered by the ears. The remaining 10% is taken by the other 3 senses. Sounds can either rile one's nerves or tame the wildest of beasts. Like all information we process, one's perception makes the difference between tranquility and annoyance. Music that includes ocean waves, rainfall or dolphin songs can be particularly calming when added to soothing melodies. Personal preference of music styles is one we often sell short. Exposure to a wide variety of instruments and styles can help people identify what is relaxing to them.

Sense of Smell
Fragrances have long been held in esteem by people the world over as a means to lift one's spirits and calm one's mind. Flower essences, spices and herbs are all part of aromatherapy. Also, almost everyone's attention is swayed by a wide selection of food smells.

Sense of Taste
It has been said that 80% of taste is smell as anyone with a cold might tell you. The tongue's taste buds are divided into four specific regions: sweet, bitter, salty, and sour. (Japanese include a fifth one - astringent). According to Ayurvedic Medicine, if your meals include all of these flavors then you have a balanced diet. For some, taste also includes the feel of the morsels of food. It would be fair to say that taste involves a little bit of touch as well.
Sense of Touch
Skin is the largest organ of your body, and with so many neural endings at the periphery of muscle and skin, the sense of touch is by far the most delicate sense. Muscle massage in all its many forms is not the only means to relax through the power of touch. Hot baths, saunas, petting furry cats and dogs, kneading bread, and walking barefoot in the cool grass are just a few ways that touch exalts the human spirit to deeper levels of relaxation.

The Divine Sense
There are some experiences that cannot simply be summed up by one of the five senses. In fact, many experiences involve a synergistic effect of two or more sensory cues that tip the scales toward utter delight. Then there are some events that rise above the five senses to simply delight the human spirit at the soul level -- the feeling that you have touched the face of God. Each of these experiences will vary from person to person, but the one quality they share is that they bring the individual out of his or her personal experience to become one with something greater than the self.

Now that you have a feel for your senses, make a list of things that are relaxing to each of them. Then from your list make a relaxation kit with two or more items from each sense. Keep it in a convenient location where you can enjoy it when you feel stress creeping up on you.
ENJOY!
Exercise

Healing Water Meditation

Introduction: New scientific discoveries reveal that water has the ability to hold intention and memory. As such, it can be a powerful means to deliver healing intentions. This meditation is based on the premise of mindfulness of water's tremendous healing potential.

1. Begin this meditation by filling a cup or glass with fresh water. Place it by your side or in front of you. As you sit, sit with your back straight. Sit quietly and clear your mind of any and all random thoughts and nagging chitchat, coming to a still place of peace.

2. Then, focus on your breathing to still both your mind and body. Take several (five) slow, deep breaths. Feel a deep sense of relaxation with each exhalation.

3. Now, slowly reach for the glass of water and hold the glass in both hands, so that your hands surround the water. Taking another slow, deep breath, pause for a moment to reflect on the source of water in your glass. Let your mind flow backward toward the original source from where this water came. Allow your mind to travel to the source, a mountain stream, a deep well, an underground aquifer, and raindrops.

4. Slowly, shift your focus from the source of the water to the many purposes of water; the gift of life. Water is used to cleanse and purify. It is used to hydrate and bring balance to that which craves balance. Water is a nutrient and is used as a source of sustenance, allowing life to flourish. Water is a symbol of the divine, and it is used to anoint and bless the vibration of divine spirit into dense matter. Think of all these and any other uses for this precious gift.

5. Holding the glass in both hands, bring the glass to your face and look at the water, first the surface, and then deep into the water. As room temperature, water is liquid, yet water can take many forms in the continuum of matter. Just as the glass holds water, so too does the water become a container to hold things. Water also amplifies our thoughts, feelings, and intentions.

6. In this meditation, allow the water in your hands to hold a special intention from your heart. Bring to your heart and mind a thought, prayer, or intention that surfaces regularly to your consciousness. Then allow this healing intention (personal or global) to float on the surface of the water and then slowly dissolve into the water, like a drop of blue coloring, so that soon the entire glass of water holds this intention in every molecule.

7. Still holding the glass in both hands, bring the glass to your lips and slowly sip from the edge, taking some of this water into your body. As you do this, feel the water move over your tongue, through your mouth and gently pass down your throat. Although you cannot see it, use your mind's eye to follow these drops of water into the heart of every cell in your body, replenishing the fluid that bathes your DNA.

8. When you are through with the mindfulness of this experience, slowly get up and walk outside and pour half of the remaining glass of water on the earthen soil, and as you do this, once again repeat the intention of your heart. Finally, place the glass of water in the sun to evaporate so that your healing intention may be carried by the four winds to be made manifest for the highest good of all concerned.

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Exercise

Crystal Cave Meditation

Meditation Script: There is an ancient proverb that says, "When the student is ready, the teacher will come." In truth, we are both the student and the teacher. To be "ready" means to quiet the mind. More specifically, it means to still the voice of the ego, so that the wisdom from the teacher can make itself be known. Seeking counsel from your intuition, the collective unconscious, or your higher self need not be a complicated process. It's simply an exercise in discipline and patience. The following exercise is a tool to be used when trying to gain clarity on an issue or become more grounded with any decision-making process. The crystal cave represents a magical metaphor of that "still place" in your mind, where the teacher's wisdom can be heard clearly above the static noise of the conscious mind. To begin this exercise, first focus your awareness on your breathing: Feel the air come into your nose or mouth and travel down deep into your lungs. Feel your stomach extend out, then return, as you exhale. As you repeat this cycle of slow, deep breathing, become aware of how relaxed your body is with each exhalation. Now, take a very slow deep breath, as slow and as deep as you possibly can. Comfortably slow, comfortably deep. Then, follow that with one more breath, even slower and even deeper breath than before. As you continue breathing comfortably...

1. Imagine that you are standing at the bottom of a short set of marble stairs, about 10 steps in all. At the bottom, where you are, it is somewhat dark, but at the top of the stairs you see a brilliant radiant light reaching down toward you. As you look up, you are immediately attracted toward the light, and...

2. You feel compelled to walk up the stairs, toward the light. But because the steps are rather large, you find that you can only take one step at a time. As you walk up the first step, you begin to feel a sense of inner peace within yourself, that you have not felt for a long time. All judgments about yourself are suspended and you begin to accept yourself for ALL that you are. Now, take a slow deep breath and exhale, and feel yourself step up to the next level.

3. As you move up toward the second step, you begin to feel a sense of inner peace between you and all of your family members. Whatever differences may exist, allow yourself to realize that they are unimportant now. So leave whatever frustrations you may have behind, as you progress up the next step. Once again, take a slow deep breath, and as you exhale feel yourself step up to the next level.

4. On the third step, you begin to gain a sense of peace and resolution among all your friends and acquaintances. On this step, there is no resentment, no animosity — only compassion for everyone you have ever met, and this feels so good. Once again, leave whatever frustrations you have behind as you progress up the next step. And as you do this, take a slow comfortable deep breath, and as you exhale, confidently feel yourself move up to the next level.
5. The fourth step brings a sense of calm and serenity within you, and your higher self. As you continue up the stairs, you begin to notice that you feel yourself becoming much lighter. With each step toward the light, you feel your body become lighter, and more relaxed. With this sense of lightness and peace, you almost feel yourself floating up the remaining steps — toward the top.

6. And as you appear on the top step, you now find yourself surrounded in a brilliant golden-white light. Almost immediately, you feel yourself floating, up into the light. Each cell in your body radiates with this brilliant golden-white light, and this feels wonderful. In a moment's recognition, you immediately sense that you cannot distinguish yourself from the light. And once again, you feel an incredible sense of love, support, and nurturing from this source of radiance. Take a nice slow deep breath and breathe this light into your body.

7. And now, surrounded in light, you feel yourself floating down a hall of crystal glass, and the light which resides in you, and all around you, shines through the crystal glass, so that tiny rainbows appear everywhere — brilliant reds, deep oranges, bright yellows, lush greens, azure blues, and intense purples. The colors of these rainbows make you smile and you feel a sense of warmth, wonder, and awe as you float effortlessly through this hall toward what appears to be an opening into a crystal cave.

8. As you continue to float peacefully through this hall of crystal glass, you come upon a large room, and you notice that it too, is constructed of crystal glass prisms, each filled with tiny rainbows slowly dancing all around the room. As various colors of the rainbow filter through the glass crystal, you see an area off to the left which has a sunken floor. You are drawn immediately to this area, and you soon find yourself sitting on a comfortable cushioned step, once again surrounded in the beauty of warm, dancing light all around you.

9. As quick as the mind can travel, you find yourself transported to this room in search of an answer. Deep in your heart, there is a question, begging to be asked. There is some morsel of wisdom you yearn to have, to help you on your quest for self-improvement. This is why you have come here. Take a slow deep breath and again feel a sense of warmth and comfort as you exhale.

10. Now, take a moment to look around the room. Intuitively, you feel the presence of someone nearby. As you gaze around, you notice, there sitting next to you is a wise and friendly sage. It may be someone you fondly recognize immediately (male or female), or it may be someone you have never seen before, yet know and trust deep in your heart. Look into the sage's face and deep into the eyes, and as you do, notice that you feel an immediate sense of recognition, an immediate sense of comfort, and compassion coming from within this person directly toward you.

11. After you exchange smiles, you remember the question, the question to which you seek an answer. The essence of wisdom on the face of this sage radiates through to your mind. All you need do is think the question, and your voice will be heard. Now once again, take a slow deep breath and find peace and comfort in the stillness. Then, listen
very carefully for the answer. It will come as one of your own thoughts. Yet, at a deep level you will know that this insight has come from a place beyond the limits of your conscious mind. Sometimes, the answer comes quickly. Other times it is planted as a seed to germinate and grow at the most appropriate time of receptivity. With the questions now posed, trust that the wisdom you seek is both accepted and understood at the deepest level. Please take a moment to quiet your mind now, and listen for the answer.

12. Now, when you feel ready, thank this person with a thought, a smile or perhaps even a wink, and as you do, you then find yourself floating on a beam of light back through the hall of prism glass with multicolored rainbows. You enter through the passage of brilliant golden-white light and you come to the place where you now sit or lie.

13. Take a deep breath and relax, contemplating the message you have received.
   Take one more slow comfortable deep breath and as you exhale….
   • Bring yourself back to the awareness of the room in which you now find yourself.
   • Become aware of the time of day, the day of the week, and perhaps what you have planned after you have completed this relaxation session.

14. When you feel ready, open your eyes to a soft gaze in front of you. If you wish, begin to slowly stretch your neck and shoulders, and then think to yourself about how great this sense of peace from the wisdom you have gained feels throughout your mind and body. And with confidence, you are ready to begin a new day.

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Imagery Script: Imagine, if you will, that the energy that you burn all day long, is not just physical energy (such as calories). It's mental and emotional energy, as well. Imagine, that this source of energy which invigorates every cell, resides in the CENTER of your body. The Japanese call this reservoir of energy the Hara. The Chinese refer to it as the "Dantein." Although it cannot be measured by Western science at this time, this energy is essential to your well-being.

Take a moment now to locate the center of your body, and feel where this is, your center of gravity, the center of your entire body, And as you begin to focus on this area, realize that this is about an inch or two below your belly button.

It is believed that when this energy is too excessive (perhaps from a flurry of thoughts or unresolved emotions) you begin to feel frantic and overwhelmed; sometimes just plain exhausted.

The body flame meditation, like the breathing cloud exercise, is a way to help clear your mind of excess thoughts and excess energy and return your mind-body to a profound sense of inner peace. As you do this meditation, and as with all meditations, call to mind the power of your five senses, call to mind the power of your imagination and memory, to draw forth the power of this visualization,

To begin this meditation, the best position is to lie comfortably flat on your back, keeping your spine aligned from your head straight down to your hips. If you choose to sit, this will work, as well.

Next, concentrate on your breathing by making each breath comfortably slow, and comfortably deep. If your mind should happen to wander, gently guide it back to the focus of your breathing.

If your eyes are not already closed, go ahead and close your eyes and once again, locate the center of your body; then, using your mind's eye, call to mind an image of a flame hovering over this part of your body.

Metaphorically speaking, this flame is a symbol of your state of relaxation. It feeds off your body's energy. When your body has an abundance of energy: perhaps nervous thoughts or negative feelings, this flame will be quite tall. Perhaps even like a blowtorch.

When you are completely relaxed, your flame will be quite small. This small flame is called the "maintenance flame." It's like that which you would see as a pilot light in a gas stove. This is the desired size for complete relaxation.

So now, focus with your mind’s eye, and take a look at the size of YOUR body's flame.
See its size relative to your body's level of energy. So, what does your flame look like? — How big or small does it seem to you right now?

As you place all of your attention on the flame of your body, look at its color. Your body flame may be an intense brilliant yellow/white color. As you look at this image, what color does your flame hold?

Once again with your mind's eye, take a look at the shape of your body's flame. Direct your attention to the base of the flame and notice, is the bottom round or oval shaped? How does it appear to you?

Then as you focus your eyes toward the tip of the flame, notice that it comes to a jagged point.

You may even notice that your flame dances around a bit or perhaps it remains still. As you look at this flame, feel it feed off the excess energy in your body, and let it burn off any excess energy that you wish to release to return to a complete sense of relaxation.

Take a deep breath and let your flame burn off any excess energy you feel detracts from your ability to relax.

Once again, if you find your mind is distracted by wandering thoughts that pull your attention away from the image of the flame, gently redirect your attention back to this image, and then allow your mind to send these thoughts and feelings from your head to your body's center and up through the flame.

As you continue to watch this image of the flame, feel your body slowly become more calm and relaxed. And to help this out, take a nice slow, comfortable deep breath. And as you exhale, feel a greater sense of calm throughout your body.

And now look once again at the image of your flame, as your body becomes more tranquil, notice the flame decrease in height. Soon you will notice that your flame decreases in size; to about a quarter to one half inch tall.

As you focus on the image of your body flame, once again notice the color, shape and size. And, as you see the flame decrease in size, feel your body relax, as you draw your attention to the relaxation effect of the maintenance flame.

Now. There are times when this flame can be used to aid in the healing process of your physical body. By placing the flame over a specific part of your body, and area that is sore or experiencing pain, allow the flame to feed off the excess energy of this area, and restore a sense of peace to the organ or physiological system that is yearning wholeness.
Now, please take several slow deep breaths and as you exhale, allow your body flame to return to a sense of peace in this area (Pause) and as you do this, feel peace reside here. When you feel ready, then slowly return the image of the flame back to the center of your body.

Now, continue to focus your mind's eye on your body flame. When you feel completely relaxed, with your flame very small, notice how still it is. Then, when you feel you are at a point of complete relaxation, slowly allow this image to fade from your mind, but retain this feeling of relaxation, knowing that your mind is now clear with fewer and fewer distractions.

To augment this relaxation process, please take one more slow, deep breath and then slowly... Bring yourself back to the awareness of the room you are in. Become aware of the time of day. She day of the week and what you have planned after you have completed this relaxation session. When you feel ready, very slowly open your eyes to a soft gaze in front of you. If you would like, go ahead and stretch your arms and shoulders. Notice that although you feel relaxed, you don't feel tired or sleepy. You feel fully energized and revitalized, ready to do whatever you have planned for the rest of the day.

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3 SHORT GUIDED VISUALIZATIONS (10-15 MINS)

A Point of Light in Space

This guided imagery is called a point of light in space. As with all types of guided imagery, please adapt and embellish all suggestions you hear to best promote a sense of rest and relaxation. To begin...

Close your eyes and begin to focus on your breathing. Feel the air come into your nose or mouth, down into your lungs and as you inhale, feel your stomach area extend out comfortably. Then when you begin to exhale, feel a deep sense of relaxation, for there is no work, no effort as you release the air from your lungs. This is the most relaxed part of breathing. The exhalation phase of the breath cycle requires no work, no effort, it happens all by itself. Please repeat this cycle of comfortably deep breathing two more times. Inhale (pause 5 seconds) Exhale. Inhale (pause 5 seconds) Exhale.

Now, with your mind's eye, imagine a vast area of dark empty space in front of you. As you look at this dark empty space, off in the distance you see a small point of light. A brilliant, golden-white light. Allow your thoughts to slowly bring this point of light closer to you. Think to yourself of the stillness that surrounds the light. The stillness represents the quiet solitude that the mind craves after a busy day of sensory overload. The point of light represents only that which is essential to focus on for your higher good. All other thoughts are unimportant at this time. Once again, focus on the small point of light. Although this point of light is small, it's bright and vibrant. This light is a symbolic representation of yourself; yourself at complete homeostasis.

As you focus on this point of light, take a slow comfortable deep breath —as slow and comfortably deep as you can (pause). As you exhale, place all of your attention, all of your concentration on this point of light. If your mind should happen to wander, and most likely it will, simply direct all thoughts back to this point of light in a calm sea of still darkness.

As you focus on this point of light, think to yourself that in the course of a busy day you are constantly being bombarded with sensory stimulation and an abundance of information. Although the mind seeks stimulation, the mind also craves time to unwind and relax. Balance is essential. While it may be impossible to have no thoughts in your mind, it is possible to focus solely on just one thought. Right now, the only thought you need to focus on is this beautiful point of light. As you focus on this single point of brilliant light, take one more, slow, deep breath. As you exhale, feel whatever tensions or excess energy you carry in your mind dissipate, thus allowing for a deeper sense of relaxation to mind, body and spirit.

Take one more slow deep breath, and this time as you exhale, slowly allow this image of the brilliant point of light to fade from your mind's eye, yet retain this deep sense of relaxation and calm it has instilled. And as you do this, begin to place all of your mention on your breathing. Inhale and as you do, feel your stomach begin to extend out,
then slowly come back in as you exhale. In this exhalation process, become aware of a deep sense of complete relaxation. Although you feel relaxed, you don't feel sleepy or tired. You feel refreshed and renewed. As you become aware of this energizing sensation, begin to open your eyes to a soft gaze in front of you and slowly bring yourself back to the awareness of the room you are now in feeling refreshed and renewed.

**Gentle Falling Snow**

Picture this: You are sitting by a large picture window in a warm log cabin house on a brisk winter's day. You have the entire place to yourself and the solitude feels invigorating. There is a log fire in the wood stove radiating abundant heat. Both the sounds of crackling wood and the scent of pine arouses your senses and for a moment, you close your eyes and take a slow deep breath; a sigh that refreshes. As you exhale, you feel a wonderful sense of relaxation permeate your entire body from head to toe and it feels great. Consciously, you take another slow deep breath in through your nose. As you exhale through your mouth, you become aware of the glorious stillness that surrounds you in this cabin.

From where you are seated, look out the window and as you do, you see falling snow. Snow that falls gently to the ground in large flakes. Everything outside is covered in white fluffy snow; the ground, the pine trees, the aspens, in fact all the trees for as far as you can see are covered in snow. As you look closely at the snowflakes descending from on high toward the ground, you sense a calmness both indoors and outdoors. Other than snow falling, everything is still. Everything is quiet. This stillness you observe is a reflection of the tranquility you feel within yourself.

This stillness is so inviting that you slowly move off the couch and stand up. As you walk toward the cabin door, you put on your warm winter coat, hat and gloves. Then, slowly you open the door and simply stand in the doorframe to observe the endless dance of millions of snowflakes floating gently— almost in slow motion, from the sky down to the snow covered ground.

Listen closely. What do you hear? The sound of snowflakes is so soft, so gentle the sound is barely audible. If you listen very carefully, you will hear the barely audible sounds of falling snow. Your ability to focus on this sound, to the exclusion of all other thoughts, sets your mind at ease, like a broom that gently sweeps the floor of any remnants needed to be cleaned. The snow-covered ground is a symbol of your mind, clean, clear and still. Take a slow deep breath of this clean, fresh air and feel a deeper sense of calmness all throughout your entire body.

As you step back inside and close the door, you kick off your shoes, take off this jacket, hat and gloves and return to the couch by the picture window.
As you close your eyes to focus on the sounds of stillness, take one final slow deep breath and bring that stillness into the center of your heart space.

Now, slowly allow this image to fade from your mind's eye, but retain the sense of tranquility it inspired. Make yourself aware of your surroundings: the room, the building, the time of day, and perhaps what you will do after this relaxation session. Although you feel relaxed, you don't feel tired. You feel rested and rejuvenated. Begin to make yourself aware of your body. Stretch your arms and shoulders. When you feel ready, open your eyes to a soft gaze in front and as you do retain this sense of calm comfort all throughout your mind, body and spirit all day long.

A Walk On A Secluded Beach

The ocean, from the warm turquoise waters to the cool gentle breezes and warm sand, has served humanity for thousands of years as a metaphor for cleansing the mind and relaxing the body. Sitting or walking along a deserted beach and focusing on the gentle rhythm of the ocean surf serves as a primal desire for relaxation, it is this image that we wish to recreate in the mind's eye for the same purpose right now.

The time of day is moments before sunrise, or if you wish, sunset. The temperature is comfortable warm, yet there is a gentle breeze in the air. The sky contains a few clouds, but only enough to enhance the spectacle of reflecting the sun's rays in concert with the rotation of the earth. While there may be birds off in the distance you notice that the only sounds you hear are those of the ocean waves in perfect rhythm with your relaxed breathing: inhalation (pause) and exhalation.

As you stop for a moment and look out to the horizon, the vastness of all you see in front of you shrinks any and all problems, concerns and issues you may have at this time to their proper proportion. The immensity, as well as the beauty of the view you hold in your eyes is exhilarating. Stop for a moment and take a comfortable slow deep breath. Just as the ocean's waves clean the shoreline so too, does each exhalation cleanse your mind and body of any thoughts, attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and feelings that, at one time, may have served you, but now they only hold you back. Using the ocean surf as a metaphor for peace and relaxation, breath several times for the next several minutes in rhythm with the ocean's tide to instill a deep sense of peace and relaxation in both your mind and your body.

Inhale .....(pause 5 seconds) ... Exhale

Inhale.....(pause 5 seconds) ... Exhale

Inhale.....(pause 5 seconds) ... Exhale

Inhale .....(pause 5 seconds') ... Exhale
And one more time, Inhale (pause five seconds) Exhale,

As you exhale, take a moment to look down in the sand. As you do, you notice a seashell that catches your attention. You bend down to pick it up and feel the soft texture of the repeated eons of surf on each side of this shell. With a smile of recognition that we too will become soft to the touch with the repeated surf of time, you place this shell in your pocket as a reminder of your own journey of personal growth.

Now, slowly allow this image to fade from your mind but retain all sensations of relaxation. As you do this return all thoughts back to your breathing each breath comfortably calm and relaxed.

Make yourself aware of your surroundings. Remember, although you feel relaxed, you don't feel tired or sleepy. You feel rested and rejuvenated. Begin to make yourself aware of your body. Stretch your arms and shoulders. When you feel ready, open your eyes to a soft gaze in front and bring yourself back to the awareness.
Muscle Re-education Techniques
Hatha Yoga

The main teaching of yoga is that man's nature is divine.
--Swami Rama
Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means union of mind, body and spirit. Hatha yoga is the path of physical balance and is particularly beneficial in managing lower back pain. Early morning is the preferred time for conscious awareness. But evening is the time when the body is more limber. Find a time that is best suited to your own schedule. As a relaxation technique, it is best employed to unleash the stress and frustration that for whatever reason has to be resolved. The use of individual asanas (positions) to stretch various muscle groups during waking hours might be the best course of action when you feel muscles begin to tense. Those who teach Hatha Yoga recognize that the union of mind, body, and spirit is solidified by self-acceptance, self-love, and the absence of anger and fear in one's life. The inner peace derived from practicing yoga is credited with keeping people emotionally well balanced during unexpected encounters with stress. ENJOY!
**Massage Therapy and Body Work**

Of all the relaxation techniques available for reducing symptoms of stress, one requires special assistance; the muscle massage. There is a description of self massage included here but an extra set of hands is a virtual necessity to get the full relaxation effect. Muscle tension is the premiere symptom of the stress response and massage therapy is the best technique to diminish it. But massage therapy has a more profound effect than manipulation of tissue.

In a very "touch-conscious" society, professional physical contact can nurture a sense of connectedness otherwise missing in our lives. In its own way, muscle massage creates harmony among the body, mind, and spirit. There are many styles and types of massage and each practitioner is unique. As popularity has grown in this field, it's becoming easier to find a person with whom you feel comfortable. It is the most relaxing journey on which you will ever embark.

Other touch therapies include aromatherapy, hydrotherapy, pet therapy, and therapeutic touch. The list is growing even as I write as the need for relief from stress rises in more and more people.

*ENJOY!*

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**T'ai Chi Ch'uan**

*Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.*  
--- *T'ai Chi Saying*

There is a life force or subtle energy that surrounds and permeates us all, which the Chinese call Chi. To harmonize with the universe, to move in unison with this energy, to move as freely as running water is to be at peace or one with the universe. This harmony of energy promotes tranquility and inner peace. This is the essence of T'ai Chi Ch'uan: a harmony and balance with the vital life force of the natural world itself. T'ai Chi is the softest of the martial arts and is called "moving meditation". Most health clubs and gyms now offer T'ai Chi classes and experiencing it for yourself will teach you more than all the research I can provide.

*ENJOY!*
Exercise

Self-Massage

Ideally, the best massage you can receive is one that is performed by a licensed massage therapist who is both trained and experienced in many types of bodywork. Sadly, the muscles that produce the greatest amount of stress and tension are located on the backside of your body—the hardest parts to reach! Fear not, however, because help is on the way, even if it’s from your own set of hands. The following is a description of a few strategic areas that are prone for muscle tension and ways to relieve this with your own hands, beginning with the head, neck and shoulders and continuing with the hands, legs and feet.

HEAD: The temples, scalp and eyes can be the target of significant muscle tension. Begin by taking your hands along the sides of each of your temples and with your fingertips, start to make small circles along the sides of your head above your eyes. After a series of 5-10 circles moving in a clock-wise direction, apply a bit more gentle pressure and reverse direction, going counter-clockwise. Next, using your non-dominant hand, extend your reach over the crown of your head and begin to knead the scalp in a clockwise direction, starting with gentle pressure on the right side of the head, then moving toward the back of the head and finally working the left side of your head. Feel free to exchange hands, switching to the dominant hand. Then, place both hands over the crown of your head and with your fingertips; massage the scalp with gentle pressure until you feel a slight tingling in your scalp. Be sure to take a slow deep breath to promote good blood circulation. Relax your hands then reverse direction and repeat. When finished, close your eyes and take several comfortably slow deep breaths.

FACE: Your face repeatedly uses hundreds of muscles in the course of a day. A soft touch to these muscles always feels great. Begin by using the tips of your index and middle fingers of each hand by making small circles under and around each eye. Then progress by making small circles, first around the forehead, then around the cheek bones and finally moving down the sides of the jaw and chin, continuing with small circles with the finger tips for several moments. Relax your hands by your sides and take three slow deep breaths.

NECK: In the age of laptops and desktop computers, it is not uncommon to experience stiff necks, aching shoulders and even headaches. As the midpoint between the head and shoulders, the neck deserves undue attention and muscular relief. Begin with both hands resting along side the neck, and then leaning your head to the left support your neck with your left hand and begin to knead the right side of your neck with your right hand. After several moments, lean your head to the right side and knead the left side of your neck with the opposite hand. Next, using the fingertips of each hand, gently make small circles along the sides of the neck. Then taking your dominant hand, begin to knead the muscles of the back of neck, reaching from the base of the neck, slowly moving up toward the crown of the head, with the palm of your hand resting on the crown. Change hands when needed and repeat.
SHOULDERS: Continuing where the neck and shoulders meet, place your wrists along side your neck with your hands cupping the point where the neck and shoulder join. From here, begin a gentle kneading action at the center of your upper shoulders by applying gentle pressure along the sides of the spinal column. Then, with your non-dominant hand, reach to the back of your dominant shoulder and continue the kneading action with your fingertips, again along side the spinal column. Finally, work your way over to where the shoulder and arm connect by kneading the deltoid muscles. Relax your non-dominant arm and take a few deep breaths. Then, using your dominant hand repeat this process on the opposite side to your non-dominant shoulder.

HANDS: Your hands may not seem like the place to hold much tension, but given all the work they do, from typing at the computer keyboard to hundreds of other daily tasks, the hands also deserve significant attention. With your dominant hand, begin by making strong stroked motions from the base of the palm of your non-dominant hand toward where the fingers connect to the hand. Then work your thumb and fingers along the sides of each of the fingers in your dominant hand. Finally, take the fingers of your dominant hand and stroke the backside of your non-dominant hand from the wrist to where the fingers attach. After several moments, release and relax both hands. Take a few comfortably slow, deep breaths, then repeat this process using the opposite hand to massage your dominant hand.

LEGS: Hold the left side of your left leg with your left hand. Then, using the palm of the right hand, apply gentle pressure with your thumb on the top of your left leg from the mid thigh to the knee. Continue this stroking action along the inside of the upper leg as well for a few moments. Next using both hands on the left leg, with your thumbs on the top (or sides) and the finger tips underneath, alternate kneading the hamstrings with first the right hand, and then the left. Relax and take a few slow deep breaths. Then with one hand, reach for your calf muscle and knead this with your hand, squeezing and releasing the calf muscle between your thumb and fingertips. After several moments, release, relax your leg and take several slow deep breaths. Then, repeat this technique with the opposite leg.

FEET: Considering all the work the feet do, from standing and walking to supporting your entire frame, both feet deserve much needed comfort. Begin by placing your right foot on your left knee (or extending your reach to your right foot). Using both thumbs, begin to stroke the sole of the foot, in the direction from the heel to the balls of the foot. After several moments take a slow deep breath and repeat. With your fingertips, begin to work the area where the toes connect to the foot. Next, cup the heel of your foot with your left hand. With the fingers of your right hand knead the tops of your feet, including the toes. Relax your foot back on the floor, rest your hands and then repeat this procedure with the other foot.
**Progressive Muscular Relaxation**

The body's muscles respond to thoughts of perceived threats with tension or contraction. Muscle tension is the body's most common symptom of stress. Residual tension left behind on a daily basis can lead to serious pain and distort or disalign the posture of the body affecting joints, spine, nerves and muscles. Dr. Edmund Jacobson discovered that his patients were largely unaware of the muscle tension and especially it's residual effects. He understood that the body cannot be tensed and relaxed at the same time. In an effort to teach his patients how to relax, he created a simple technique to increase physical neuromuscular awareness called Progressive Muscular Relaxation. In this exercise, you are led through a series of contractions and relaxations in each muscle group releasing tension as you go through the body usually from toe to head. This exercise is included on the CD. I use this technique almost as much as Diaphragmatic breathing and both myself and my clients love the results.

**ENJOY!**
**Autogenic Training**

The word *autogenic* means self-regulation or self-generation. It can also refer to a procedure or action that is self-produced. It implies that individuals have the ability to regulate their physiological systems -- the power to actually control various bodily functions. Until recently, this was thought to be controlled totally by the Autonomic Nervous System. During physical arousal heart rate, blood pressure, etc all increase in an effort to prepare the body to fight or flee. This is great when there is a possible physical threat. However, it becomes a liability when the threat is to the ego or identity. So when mental, emotional, or spiritual concerns threaten the psyche or ego, the body's response needs to be "retrained". The purpose of autogenic training is to reprogram the mind so as to override the stress response when physical arousal is not appropriate. This technique involves giving conscious messages to various body parts (usually hands or feet) to feel warm and heavy. The effects are thought to result from vasodilation to the specified body regions intended for warmth and heaviness.

In their work with patients who mastered autogenic technique, Schultz and Luthe (1995) concluded that it is most effective when these factors are taken into consideration:

1. The individual should be highly motivated and receptive to instructions.
2. The individual should possess a strong sense of self-direction and control.
3. The individual should position themselves comfortably.
4. The individual should maintain a strong sense of concentration and body awareness.
5. The individual should minimize sensory reception through the 5 senses.
6. The individual should focus on internal physiological processes.

In summary, this exercise begins with diaphragmatic breathing; each breath becoming slower and deeper until quiet and relaxed. Now become aware of your heartbeat. Listen and feel your heart beating in your chest. As you are in a relaxed state, realize that the core of your body or stomach area receives 80% of the blood supply in your body. Be aware of the warmth in your abdomen. On your next inhalation, allow the blood to move from the body's core up to your shoulders and down toward your arms and hands. Feel the cascade of warmth flow like a waterfall past your shoulders, elbow, wrists and into the space of each finger.
Focus all your attention on the space at the end of your smallest finger. Repeat this image into each finger and finally thumb. Feel the heaviness and warmth. With every breath you take, allow the flow of blood move from your core to your arms and hands. Notice how your hands become more and more heavy. Gage how your body feels and how relaxed you are. Now, take one more slow, deep breath, and as you exhale allow the flow of blood to return to your stomach area. Reverse the flow of blood from your arms to your abdomen. Notice how much lighter your hands and arms feel.

This can be repeated with the lower extremities to warm legs and feet. Hand warming is usually easiest to teach first because we generally have much more awareness in our hands. This exercise is fun for children to learn as well as adults. Many biofeedback sources have disposable thermometers that allow yours clients to see their hands warm up by the end of the exercise. It feels as if it absolutely reverses the stress response when practiced on a regular basis and is very empowering. I use this extensively in my practice - but maybe that's because I live in Montana!

ENJOY!

**Biofeedback, nutrition and exercise** should already fall within your areas of expertise. If you're not using these ideas as part of your stress management tool kit, I encourage you to do so.

The Stress Management Essentials workbook is designed to be easy to use and implement in our sessions. This workbook is a summary of thousands of pages of research and many days of the course itself. It will help you and your clients understand how to work through and lower stress everyday.

**There will be no doubt in your practice that you and your equipment reduce stress.**

ENJOY!!
Stress & Disease Reading List
(Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) Reading List)

Emoto, M., Messages From Water (Vol's 1, 2, & 3) 2004, 2005

* Highly recommended for your personal/professional library