

Stress: “Pressure, strain, a force that tends to distort a body, a factor that induces bodily or mental tension” Webster

Continued stress in our life can be reflected in our work, sleep patterns, eating habits, relationships, well-being and sexual activities. Stress can distort our perception of life and inhibit our ability to relax and be present. Physical pain is often caused by emotional or mental anxieties.

Anger is a natural, healthy emotional response to our being hurt, threatened, or when we experience loss of some sort. The function of our anger is to provide the body a burst of physical and emotional energy when we need it most.

- Don't bottle up your feelings/ learn to express yourself assertively
- Understand what caused the anger or strong feelings
- Own your own feelings – do no blame someone else for your personal feelings
- Express what you're feeling - do not blame someone else for your personal feelings
- Express what you're feeling/ get it out/ forgive

Coping Skills: Meditation/ Movement/ Yoga/ Qigong/ Tai Chi

Effects of Stress

<p><i>Body:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increased heart rate <input type="checkbox"/> High blood pressure <input type="checkbox"/> Tense, contracted muscles <input type="checkbox"/> Backache, headache <input type="checkbox"/> Immune system less efficient 	<p><i>Behavior:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in sleeping <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional outburst <input type="checkbox"/> Aggression, anger <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive drinking <input type="checkbox"/> Inactivity 	<p><i>Emotions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety, tension, panic <input type="checkbox"/> Depression, sadness <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness <input type="checkbox"/> Jealousy
<p><i>Thoughts:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in concentrating <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty in making decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent forgetfulness <input type="checkbox"/> Negative, self-critical thoughts <input type="checkbox"/> Rigid thoughts/ attitudes 	<p><i>Health:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Coronary heart disease/stroke <input type="checkbox"/> Stomach ulcers, IBS <input type="checkbox"/> Migraine headaches <input type="checkbox"/> Irregular menstruations <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea 	

Defining our Perfect State of Health and Wellness

Within the metaphysical world, we believe that in order to truly begin the healing process, we have to start with the mind. It also means that an individual must create new patterns of thought. What does that mean? It means that an individual must have a firm idea or memory of what a healthy mind, body, and spirit looks like, what it feels like, how you functioned when you had your previous capacity.

Many of the well-known teachers of metaphysics proclaim that what we can create in our mind, we can begin to make a physical reality! We start that process by looking at those things in our lives that define our strengths! What is it that you bring to this world?

Once you understand your strengths, begin to look at those additional important things that you want to help define you and what you represent. Look at those things that you would like in your life from a social, personal, intimate, emotional, and spiritual basis.

Once this is accomplished, write out your own *Personal State of Health and Wellness!* I have provided several examples that you can review in defining your own statement. After this is done, use the following sheet entitled *Four Basic Steps for Creative Visualization*.

Defining your Perfect State of Health and Wellness is not enough in itself; you must believe it and constantly maintain this vision of yourself in a healing process. This demands discipline and consistency of intention on your part.

Recommended reading on this subject:

- The power of Intention* by Dr. Wayne Dyer
- The Creation of Health: Emotional, Psychological, and Spiritual Responses that Promote Health and Healing* by C. Norman Shealey, M.D., Ph.D. and Caroline A. Myss, Ph.D.

My Perfect State of Health and Wellness

- 1) I am a Spiritual Being filled with love, joy, and compassion. I love who I am and feel blessed with what I have in my life. Inner peace fills my life as I find quiet time to reflect and meditate. My mind is quiet and my body is healthy as I exercise daily. Every day in every way, I get better and better. I am free to choose my life style without concern about what others might think. The essence of my Being is based
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on my internal guidance and light and not on external trappings. I am blessed with the love of those around me.

- 2) Every day in every way, I get better and better. My life is filled with love, joy, and compassion. I love who I am and feel blessed with what I have in my life. Inner peace fills my life as I find quiet time to reflect and to meditate. My mind is quiet and my body is healthy as I exercise daily. Every day in every way, I get better and better. I breathe normally and naturally and my body moves easily as I walk or bike during my daily exercise. My mind is peaceful and my body pain free as I work and enjoy my time with my wife and family. My sleep comes easily and I awake refreshed and ready to enjoy the day. My mind becomes quiet as I focus softly on my breath. I am blessed with the love of those around me. Every day in every way, I get better and better.
- 3) My life is filled with love, joy, and compassion. I love who I am and feel blessed with what I have in my life. Inner peace fills my life as I find quiet time to reflect and to meditate. My mind is quiet and my body is healthy as I exercise daily. Every day in every way, I get better and better. I breathe naturally and my body moves easily as I walk or do my daily exercise. My mind is peaceful and my body pain free as I work and enjoy my time with friends and family. My sleep comes easily and I awake refreshed and ready to enjoy the day. My mind becomes quiet as I focus softly on my breath. I am blessed with the love of those around me. Every day in every way, I get better and better.

Four Basic Steps for Creative Visualization

1. Set Your Goal:

Decide on something you want very much to have in your life! It can be on any level - a different job, a relationship, a house, improved health, increased prosperity, or a happier state of mind. At first, choose a goal that is fairly easy to believe in and realize in the near future. In this gradual manner you won't have as much negative resistance from yourself, and you can maximize your feelings of success as you as you learn to manifest your goal. As you practice with this concept, you can gradually take on more difficult or challenging issues.

2. Create a Clear Image or Picture:

Create an image or mental picture of the object or situation you wish to possess. Think of it in the present tense as already existing in your life. Picture yourself as clearly as

you can in the situation and include as many details as you can. Gradually expand the depth of the vision to the point of being able to almost experience it physically.

3. Focus on the Image Often:

Bring your mental picture to mind often, both in quiet meditation and casually throughout the day. In this way it becomes an integrated part of your life. It becomes more of a reality for you and you can project your desired end result more successfully. Focus on it clearly in a light gentle way. It's important not to strive too hard for it or to exert an excessive amount of energy in it. Instead simply make this image a normal part of your life.

4. Give the Image Positive Energy:

As you focus on your goal, think about it in a positive encouraging way. Make strong positive statements to yourself - your goal already exists or it is now coming to you. See yourself as worthy or deserving of receiving the object or achieving the condition. These positive statements are called "affirmations". While you are using affirmations, try to suspend any doubts or disbelief you may have, at least for the moment. Practice getting the feeling that what you desire is very real and possible.

Continue to work with this process until you achieve your goal or no longer desire to do so. Remember that goals often change before they are realized which is a perfectly natural part of the human process of growth and change. Don't try to prolong creating an image for which you no longer have energy. If you lose interest, it may simply mean it's time to take a new look at what you want. If you find a goal has changed for you, be sure to acknowledge you are no longer focusing on it. End the thought process on the old and begin to clearly visualize the new goal. When you achieve a goal, acknowledge consciously to yourself that it has been completed. Be grateful for your personal achievements in reaching your desired goals and objectives.

Progressive Muscle - Relaxation Technique

This relaxation exercise involves tightening each muscle group in your body, holding for 5 seconds, and then gradually releasing and relaxing for 10-15 seconds. It takes about 20 minutes to perform, and can bring tremendous benefits if you fit it into your daily routine.

1. Sit or lie down quietly in a comfortable position, with no distractions or possibilities of interruption. Begin by thinking slow, relaxing thoughts. Bring to

mind any comfortable image you can imagine, such as lying by a stream in a beautiful forest. Take three deep breaths and focus on the tension in your body.

2. Go through each of the muscle groups, in the suggested order, beginning with the hands and then working up the hands and then working up the body and back down to the feet. With practice you will soon be familiar with the sequence. Tense the muscles as tightly as you can. Hold for 5 seconds and then gradually release.
3. As you release the muscles, relax and feel the tension drain away. Imagine the blood circulating in the different muscle groups. Concentrate on the feelings in the muscles as they go from tight to loose. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation. Perform the tightening and relaxing of each muscle group twice before moving on.

Learning to Relax!

When you are stressed your body goes into a high state of physical arousal. Your body systems speed up, your muscles tense, your heart beats faster, and your breathing becomes quick and shallow. This physical reaction of the body can produce secondary symptoms such as headaches, back pain, tension, or anxiety. When you feel these symptoms starting, use either of the two exercises listed next:

3- Minute Relaxation Routine:

1. Select a key word such as relax, calm, peace, or let go.
2. Concentrate on relaxing using your Key word. Tune in to your breathing and take in one deep breath and hold it.
3. While you are holding your breathe, tense up a group of muscles, such as the muscles in your face, arms, or legs.
4. As you breathe out, relax the tense muscles and let go. Continue using your key word as you drop your shoulders. Feel all your tension slip away. Do this exercise several times.

Relaxed Breathing:

This exercise is meant to help you become more aware of your breathing.

1. Find a quiet location where you can sit down in a comfortable position. First, test your breathing. Close your eyes. Put one hand on your chest one hand on your stomach. Concentrate on breathing slowly in and out.
2. If you are feeling calm and breathing from your stomach, you should feel your stomach hand gently rise and fall. However, if your chest hand is moving and not your stomach hand, this means that you are breathing from your chest. This is a sign of stress!
3. Correct this thoracic breathing by focusing your eyes straight ahead and breathing through your nose only. Do this without making any noise. If you can hear your breathing, you are doing it too forcefully.
4. Breathe in deeply and slowly. Pause between the “in” and “out” breath and say your key word to yourself - such as Relax, Peace, etc.