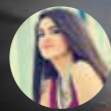




SHAKE THE STRESS AWAY

STRESS CAUSES MENTAL AND PHYSICAL DISEASES THAT CAN DRIVE A PERSON TO UNDERPERFORM IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE. VERONA ROCHAT, SENIOR EXECUTIVE COACH AND TRAINER BELIEVES THAT COMPANIES SHOULD ADDRESS THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF THEIR EMPLOYEES, IN ORDER TO HAVE HAPPY, HIGH PERFORMING, AND EFFECTIVE PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE, WHICH IN TURN CAN AFFECT PRODUCTION AND PROFIT MARGINS POSITIVELY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF A COMPANY. IN THIS EXCLUSIVE CONVERSATION, VERONA TALKS US THROUGH THE DIFFERENT METHODS ONE CAN ADOPT TO OVERCOME STRESS.



INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY
JENNY KASSIS
Features Editor



STRESS

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF STRESS?

Stress is a 21st century epidemic. A state of stress is caused as a result of any real, imagined or perceived danger to oneself - emotionally, mentally, physically, occupationally and even financially. It is the cause of so much illness, anxieties and disorders. From a business perspective, companies looking to get the best performance out of their employees, need to address this issue as it causes underperformance, emotional reactivity and bad decision making. As employees remain in a hyper vigilant, wired-up state, and in order to obtain relief, this eventually leads to certain addictions that can be noticed in excessive drinking, eating or smoking habits.

HOW DO YOU ASSIST PEOPLE IN DEALING WITH STRESS?

I have put together a stress management training course. It is different to the traditional stress management courses, which only deal with cognitive mental exercises. I offer four very different, scientifically researched methods, which involve a holistic approach - includes the mind body connection - in order to release and manage stress.

COULD YOU ELABORATE MORE ON THESE FOUR METHODS?

1) BRAIN ENTERTAINMENT

It is a scientific method to induce certain brain wave frequencies for positive change. It is used for stress release, relaxation, creativity and personal development. The beats, which can be accompanied by music, entrain the brain.

It is self-empowering because employees can download the tunes/beats on their mobiles and listen to them in order to relax whenever they feel stressed.

2) CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

This method is about thinking and imagining a positive outcome. It has been used by sports performers for many years. A team that imagines themselves doing better, will actually perform better by 20 – 30% by only using imagination; since imagination is more powerful than reality. It is used in health, business, creative arts, and education.

The fortune 100 companies in the world use brain entrainment and creative visualization to enhance their employees' intelligence, concentration, focus, as well as decision making.

3) TAPPING/ EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE (EFT)

Scientifically researched, this technique is based on meridian (energy pathways) tapping and combines Chinese acupressure and modern psychology with astounding results. It is based on the fact that mental, physical, and emotional illness can cause blockages in the energy pathways (meridians).

By stating a challenge/problem- like "I am extremely stressed," you add an "I completely accept myself."

You tap with fingertips on points on the body: on side of hand, eyebrow, side of eye, under eye, above lip, on the chin, collar bone and head, repeating this statement, you discover the stress reduces.

“Imagination is more powerful than reality.”

4) TENSION RELASING EXERCISES (TRE)
 This method was founded and developed by Dr. David Berceli. He was in the Middle East counseling people suffering from Post-Dramatic Stress Disorders (PSTD) and realized that he was talking to them without getting any results, they weren't getting better. While observing adults and children's reactions to bombardments during a war in Lebanon, he noticed a child shaking and wondered why adults don't shake as well. After conducting medical research, he came to realize that this shaking mechanism causes neurogenic tremors. Humans are genetically - physiologically, biologically and neurologically designed to experience, endure, survive, release and heal from stress and trauma, and this method can help them release the fear and shake the stress away. Therefore, Dr. Berceli developed eight simple stretch exercises that can be practiced by people from all ages, including children. These mind-body connected techniques are self-empowering and individuals can practice them by themselves, especially when they are experiencing a stressful situation.

CAN YOU GIVE US SOME QUICK TIPS TO RELEASE THE DAILY STRESS?

There are four basic tips that people can apply in their daily lives to reduce stress.

- 1 When we are stressed, the Fight or Flight response is triggered. However, people can't run away from emotional or mental stressors. Thus, they become shallow breathers, breathing into the chest only, instead of breathing right down to the belly. Learning to breathe properly through the nose and deep down into the stomach, is a must. Then as you exhale, through the mouth, set an intention to release any stress, tension or anxiety. This is called abdominal breathing.
- 2 Everyone sits in front of their computer for hours, which makes the neck bend forward in an unnatural, strained position. Whilst sitting at the desk, it is crucial, every half hour, to exercise the neck, by slowly stretching it towards the chest, backwards towards the spine, and right and left and, at the same time, taking deep breaths, inhaling and exhaling, with each movement, in order to release the stress and tight muscle tension patterns in the neck and shoulders.
- 3 Tension sits in the ankles. Therefore, one of the methods that people can adopt, while sitting at their desk, is to roll the ankles, first one way, and then the other. Additionally, they can do three shoulder rolls back and three forward.
- 4 The last tip - take 3 deep cleansing breathes, in through the nose and out through the mouth; and close the eyes on the third exhalation, then quieten the mind, by letting thoughts drift away, while listening to peaceful music for 2 - 5 minutes.

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