

Stress Management necessary for sanity

Managing stress sounds like a serious business, but it doesn't have to be. On the lighter side of stress management are strategies such as; sweat profusely, shoot spit wads, weep loudly, shop 'til you drop, and scream a lot.

Even serious students of stress management say a given percentage of people handle stress with a sense of humor, quick denial or dancing it away.

Stress management doesn't mean getting rid of all stress or pretending it isn't there. Rather, it means making thoughtful decisions about which stress to keep, which to let go and what activities will relieve the tension your body builds in response.

Think of stress as a charge of energy intended to help you manage, adjust and control the trivial and traumatic events that come from living with happenings that make life less than satisfactory.

While stress is a very complex mind and body reaction, you can make a habit of listening to your combined stress signals.

The stress-related diseases you read about do not grab you without warning. They are the result of enduring faint symptoms such as headaches resulting from mental

over-load, backaches from carrying heavy problems, or stomach-aches from swallowing frustration and anger.

In spite of minor ailments, such as irritability, confused thinking, depression, or apathy, we tend to forge ahead not being really sick but not feeling well either.

Dr. Hans Selye, an early researcher in the stress and health connection claimed, "stress is the spice of life. Like spice, a certain amount flavors and motivates your life, but too much gags you."

Everyday brings countless opportunities for choosing to interpret situations as threatening. The school calls warning that Susan is not keeping up her homework, rumors circulate of an upcoming promotion in the department, co-workers stop talking when you enter a room and the company auditors are due next week.

To top it off the kids ate the spaghetti reserved for a warm-up dinner as an afternoon snack.

I would not suggest this as a time to look around saying "How can I make this a terrific stress management experience?" If, over the years, you've learned to agonize, fuss and fume over all the hitches that spoil

your day, you'll likely gear up to fight. On the other hand, try recalling stress management messages onto your mental monitor.

Keeping in mind that stress is a response to threats real or imagined, the monitor would say:

Does the threat really exist or is this just inconvenient and awful?

Are these situations hazardous to my work or family relationships?

Can I make a difference now?

If the answer is "no" to all three questions, don't waste energy on the stresses of that particular situation—they are not threaten-

ing your existence.

Most people stress themselves needlessly over misfortunes that appear as personal rejection, but which in fact may be tremendously trivial.

According to psychologist Dr. Donald Tubing, "We tend to use 10 dollars worth of energy on 10 cent problems." Some problems you face demand every ounce of stress energy you can muster. That's where stress management can help you sort out and throw away stress trivia and save your energy for the \$10 problem.

Home equity loans are only second mortgages

Even though new federal tax laws have generated a lot of interest in home equity loans, borrowing against your house may be a poor choice.

The new federal income tax law is phasing out deductions for interest on consumer loans, but permits the deduction of interest paid on home equity loans. Oregon lending institutions are gearing up with advertising campaigns to capitalize on the expected surge on consumer interest in home equity loans.

The home equity loan is nothing

new. It is basically a second mortgage that taps that portion of the value of the house which the owner has obtained through regular mortgage payments, the original downpayment, and any appreciation in the market value of the house.

Most lending institutions will only consider home equity loan on that portion of the equity which exceeds twenty percent of the market value of the property. Current market value is established with an outside appraisal.

Not every homeowner can qualify for a home equity loan. Families who purchased homes under a program such as those offered by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) or Veteran's Administration (VA) probably paid the minimum downpayment, which may

have been less than ten percent of the sale price of the home. Such homeowners could not seek a home equity loan until after they have paid on their mortgage for a number of years.

Also, housing values in parts of Oregon have fallen in the last several years. Homeowners in this situation should seriously evaluate whether they would be able to cover the outstanding balance of their original mortgage and the outstanding balance of the home equity loan if values continue to decline.

Lenders may be unwilling to make home equity loans in areas where housing values are falling or expected to be depressed for a long time.

Since home equity loans are a business proposition for lenders,

they tend to be conservative in their experiences when making loans. If a homeowner is not likely to be able to repay the loan, it probably won't be made.

Finally, the purpose for which the money is being borrowed may make a difference. Using the money obtained through a home equity loan to improve the value or use of the property through maintenance or remodeling is quite different than spending the money on something like a new piece of jewelry.

It is to be expected that the income tax incentives will spur home equity borrowing, but prudence should be exercised by the homeowner.

After all it would be tragic to "buy a blouse and lose the house."

You lose in the blame game

Being raised in a society that rewards us for being "good boys and girls" makes it difficult to admit we are imperfect human beings living in an imperfect world. But, of course, there is imperfection everywhere and in everything.

Despite being citizens of a nation that prides itself on independence and self-direction, many react to imperfection in themselves and others in the workplace and at home by seeking someone or something to blame when things go wrong.

The way individuals deal with bad experiences or decisions substantially affects how they resolve problem situations, and also how supportive family members and co-workers will be able to be.

It is easy to fall back on the habit

of looking for scapegoats to blame for poor choices or misfortunes. But scapegoating destroys rather than strengthens the support needed from family members and co-workers.

While striving to be perfect, blame is heaped on spouses, children, teachers, bosses or government depending on who is handy. You can blame the world for not treating you right and it doesn't care, but blaming those close to you hurts them. They are never endeared to you through blame.

Changes such as lay-offs, new job descriptions, failing markets, ecological restrictions and economic instability are felt by rural and urban families alike. But few escape frustration and aggravation through playing the blame game.

Politicians loudly and constantly blame one another for governmental actions, business blames the economy or consumer, and employers blame employees while employees blame the boss. In families, someone catches the blame for imperfect housekeeping, childrearing practices or money mismanagement. The blamed may sink into feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy, which in turn breeds resentment and uncooperative behavior.

People who blame others for problems are trying to avoid responsibility for their own decisions, actions, and future consequences.

Why participate in the blame game?

It goes back to childhood, Remember what happened.

Pollinization may be necessary to set fruit

Fruit trees sometimes fail to set fruit in spring for a variety of reasons, including late frosts, absence of bees or lack of a nearby pollinating tree. If the weather and bees cooperate and a backyard fruit tree still fails to bear fruit, lack of a pollinizer may be the problem.

All sweet cherries and most varieties of apples and pears grown in Oregon won't set fruit unless they receive pollen from a pollen-compatible variety planted nearby.

The pollen of three commonly grown sweet cherry varieties—Bing, Lambert and Royal Ann—will not cause fruit to set on each other. A fourth variety, such as Sam or Van, is needed to pollinize any of the other three.

Apple varieties that don't set fruit when self-pollinated do have pollen that will set fruit on other varieties. For example, delicious, which doesn't set fruit with its own pollen, will set fruit on Golden

delicious.

In contrast, Gravenstein, which requires an early-blooming pollinizer such as Lodi, does not produce good pollen for other apple varieties. McIntosh is self-unfruitful, but will pollinize other early-blooming varieties such as Gravenstein. Some varieties such as Rome Beauty and Newtown are self-fruitful.

Bartlett pears may set a few seedless pears without cross pollination. However, they will set more if pollinized by Anjou. Bosc and Comice pear trees will pollinize each other with satisfactory results.

There are several ways to make sure a cross-pollinating variety is on hand. One is to plant pollen-compatible trees when starting the home orchard. The trees should be within 100 feet of one another to insure adequate pollinization. If space for more than one tree is not available, the pollinizer can be grafted to the main variety.

The important point to remember is that the bloom period of the pollinizer variety must overlap that of the main variety.

If no pollinizing varieties are nearby, cut a bouquet of blooms

from another variety and place it in a pail of water beside the tree. Since bees fly at temperatures above 65 degrees F, check the temperature to make sure bees will be available to give the desired results.

OSU makes publication changes

There's a new way to order popular Oregon State University Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station publications.

Mail orders should now be sent to "Agricultural Communications Publications Orders, Oregon State University, Corvallis 97331-2119." Orders also will be accepted by calling 754-2513 between 8 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The publications are also available through county offices of the Extension Service.

The OSU Extension Service annually distributes nearly three-quarter million copies of publications dealing with such topics as nutrition, food preservation, home gardening, fertilizer recommendations, small woodland management, energy conservation and beach safety. Extension has more than 2,000 current titles at any given time.

The change, which takes advantage of new computer technology, was made to increase efficiency

and to save money.

Revisions have also been made in the postage and handling fees for charge publications. When ordering priced publications, consumers are asked to include 25 cents for shipping and handling with orders up to \$2.50. For orders over \$2.50, add 15 percent for shipping and handling.

Although many publications are available without charge and may be ordered in quantities of up to six without shipping and handling fees, others are now priced in keeping with a 1982 policy established by the Oregon Legislature, directing the Extension Service to recover some of the publishing costs.

Even though orders now go to Agricultural Communications, people wishing to pick up Extension or Experiment publications may do so at the Bulletin Mailing Office in the Industrial Building on the OSU campus.

Mulches help soils produce well

A layer of mulch in the home garden is just the thing to keep garden soil in good condition for growing vegetables.

Mulch insulates soil and will keep warmth in the soil even if the weather turns cold for a brief period.

A mulch's insulating action on soil also helps reduce soil temperature and surface moisture evaporation during hot weather, and mulch helps control weeds.

Mulching materials may consist of plastic film or organic mulches.

Clear plastic film mulch allows sunlight to enter the soil, which may cause soil temperature increases of 10 degrees or more. High soil temperatures increase water requirements of plants and increase moisture loss due to evaporation.

In general, clear plastic is not recommended unless an organic mulch such as bark is applied over it to eliminate sunlight.

Because black plastic film excludes sunlight, it does not cause as large a temperature increase as does the clear film. Exclusion of light by the black film also prevents weeds from growing underneath it. Before applying plastic film mulch, make sure the soil is damp. Dry soil should not be mulched.

Organic materials having small

particle size, such as sawdust, should only be applied to a depth of one to two inches to avoid excessive compaction and allow air exchange between the soil and atmosphere.

Mulch should be applied evenly.

Lawn clippings may be used as mulch after they have dried out. Do not use grass clippings from a lawn that has been treated with a weedkiller.

Most wood sawdusts make good

mulches. Red cedar sawdust, however, should not be used as a mulch because it contains materials that are toxic to some plants.

Bark chips are one of the most desirable organic mulching materials. They are long-lasting, not easily compacted and attractive.

Other mulches like peat moss or compost are good but must be purchased or made by the homeowner.

If you have your health, you have everything

"Have Your Health and Have Everything," is the slogan of Older Americans Month, during May.

The slogan is meant to emphasize that most Americans, through their every day lifestyle choices, hold a significant key to their health.

Today the leading cause of disability and death among adults age 65 and older are heart disease, cancer, stroke, cirrhosis of the liver, and accidents.

Of course, genetic and biological factors play a role in these health problems. However, the Surgeon General reports that 50 percent of all deaths can be attributed to unhealthy lifestyle practices such as: smoking, poor diet, overweight, lack of exercise, ignoring safety

hazards, poor management of daily stress, and misuse or abuse of medications and alcohol.

Everyone, regardless of age or physical ability can experience health benefits by improving their lifestyle and health habits.

Positive lifestyle changes in later life reduce the risk of disease, help control existing chronic health conditions, improve physical and mental functioning, and increase independence.

With the warmer weather, think about beginning an exercise program. Exercise at least three times a week under the guidance of your doctor.

Exercise can help you sleep better, and maintain higher energy

cells of humans and animals. It is not found in vegetable foods.

Many people think of cholesterol in relation to high levels in the blood and the problems with heart disease that stem from this condition. For good health the blood cholesterol should be at a moderate level. Current target levels are about 180 mg. of cholesterol per 100 ml. of blood.

Keeping blood cholesterol at a moderate level is not just a matter of controlling how much cholesterol you eat. You may have inherited a high blood cholesterol level. Or you may not be getting enough exercise. Also, the amount of fiber in your diet can affect your blood cholesterol level.

If your blood cholesterol level is too high you need to change some habits. Be sure to exercise regularly, at least three times a week. Select low-fat foods like skim milk, lean meat, fish and poultry, fruits and vegetables, and bread and cereals. Use low-fat cooking methods such as broiling, baking or boiling. And, limit consumption of high-cholesterol foods like egg yolk to once or twice a week.

Select a variety of foods and each moderate amounts. This will prevent overweight.

Proper lawn cutting essential for productive growth

Cutting the grass properly on most home lawns doesn't require a college degree in landscaping, but there are some lawn trimming dos and don'ts that the homeowner ought to be aware of.

"How short the lawn-grass is cut and how frequently the lawn is mowed are very important.

If the grass is cut too often or too short, the individual grass plants may become weakened and die. The lawn may go into shock if the grass is allowed to grow to a height

of six or seven inches and then cut back to a height of two inches. This happens because the major food producing portion of the plant has been removed.

Letting lawn grass become very tall before cutting also makes removal of grass clippings necessary. A large buildup of grass clippings left on a lawn will smother it and encourage the buildup of grass plant diseases.

Trim the lawn often enough that no more than one-third to one-half of the grass plant is removed by the mower. Mowing a lawn about once a week usually satisfies this requirement.

**Don't forget
4-H Camp**

levels and improve coordination and balance. Also, exercise can help decrease pain associated with arthritis, reduce anxiety, improve intellectual functioning, and increase life satisfaction.

It may not be easy to change lifestyle habits and behavior. Find something to motivate you. Get support. And finally, reward yourself.

Optimal health requires attending to your whole person—your body, mind and spirit. Remember, you are never too old to change. Developing your potential, staying active, trying new things and setting new goals is not just for the young.