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NEWSLETTER

THE

“Stressed Out” by Amy Remmele

Many people take anti-anxiety medication and much of the time this can be helpful. There are, however, several behaviors you can try that may eliminate or reduce the need for these medications, and will definitely improve the situation regardless of your decision about medication. It is wise to take the first step of having your medical doctor check you out. He or she can determine if there is something going on physically that would give you some natural “warning” anxiety, signaling a medical condition. If you have been cleared medically, though, then it is probably time to try some of these regimens that can reduce anxiety.

Make a list of those things in your life that cause you to worry. Be specific. Don’t just write “work,” for example, but write “the person at work who bullies me.” Then make a list of those things that you are grateful for and happy about. Be specific with this list as well, making sure to list even minor things, such as the flowers in the back yard. Now, separate your first list, the list of concerns, into two types, those things you can change and those you cannot change. It can be very self-empowering to take action on those things that can be changed and to remind

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yourself that there is no point in taking useless action, or especially expending useless worry,

MARCH 2010

on others. Even with those things in life that we cannot affect, there are usually some things that we can do to make ourselves feel better about them. Learning new coping skills can be essential. Heeding this advice, sometimes with help from a good support system or professional, can be the solution to some anxiety-producing worries. This form of thinking can help you to avoid putting off actions you can take on those changeable things that cause mental rumination and stress.

I recommend to anxious people that they get back in touch with deep diaphragmatic, “belly” breathing. If you want to know what this looks like, watch a puppy or a baby. It is the natural breathing that allows our bodies the most oxygen and revitalization. We seem to lose track of it though, as we become busy and stressed. When you breath naturally, your belly should rise and fall but not your chest. Only on very deep, cleansing breaths does your chest rise secondary to your belly. Stop and do this type of breathing for a couple of minutes several times each day and while you are doing this, remind yourself of some of those “gratefals” you wrote down or remember one of the pleasant moments in your life, or give yourself some positive affirmations or say a prayer. Feel how revitalizing this is and notice how this type of breathing starts to become more common again.

As with all psychological issues, taking care of your body is important. Eating well

and getting regular exercise (within your own limits) are highly recommended. With anxiety and depression, sleep is often an issue. In a vicious cycle, emotional issues tend to create sleep deprivation and then sleep deprivation will exacerbate the emotional issues. Just as one example of the many psychological “sleep aids,” try something called “Respiratory One.” Once you are lying down and ready to sleep, breath regularly and calmly. On each exhale, say in your mind the word, “One.” This can keep all other thoughts out of your head and may help lull you to sleep.

TIP

Every day, and every opportunity you get, store away beautiful, meaningful and pleasant images and recollections. They can later be places in the mind to go for restoration, relaxation and simply enjoyment.

There are many available relaxation methods out there. Yoga, water aerobics and Tai Chi classes are just a few ideas. Practicing calming self-statements in conjunction with these activities creates a period of body and mind relaxation that generalizes to the rest of your life.

Finally, a critical part of the anti-anxiety formula is a good support system. We all need people we can talk to about our “worries.” Pick people who are good, non-judgmental listeners, but who want you to find solutions or acceptance and who do not just want to sit and commiserate with you. An added gift is someone who tends toward optimistic thinking and focuses on solutions. Regardless of which of the above anxiety management strategies you choose, a professional can help. They are a great resource at times of stress. They provide the kind of support that invites their clients to move toward a brighter future. When the time is right, a skilled professional will urge a client to find natural “replacements” in the form of supportive people, in their everyday lives.

Amy Remmele is a personal and professional consultant, working with people who want to overcome the roadblocks to success. She has her formal education and degree in Psychology. Amy authored the book, Chief Life Officer: Your Life Is The Most Important Business You'll Ever Own and co-authored Re-Phrase It: Adding Empathy and Emotional Intelligence to Your Everyday Life, and the relationship workbook, Empathy, Communication and Conflict Resolution Home Study Program with her husband and business partner, Dr. Kent Bath. Amy and Kent provide assessments, seminars, counseling and consultation to individuals and businesses. Amy can be reached at 716-626-5977 or visiting her website at www.peakofsuccess.com.

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