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Self-Healing

For People Who Enjoy Helping Themselves

June 2005

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IN THIS ISSUE

— STRESS AND LIFESTYLE

HI EVERYBODY!

Summer means carefree, light-filled days spent enjoying friends, family, and outdoor activities. Right? Wrong! I have found that many of my clients are just as stressed during summer months as they are during the rest of the year. Kids at home, relatives visiting, changes in routine, and even planning a vacation can make an already hectic life feel out of control. Stepping back and honoring your own needs can be a first step towards reclaiming a feeling of calm and control. Checking in with how you feel before making any decisions, consciously slowing down, scheduling lunch breaks, setting aside time each week (or day!) just for yourself, and limiting time on the computer are small steps you can take that can have a big impact on your outlook and sense of well-being. The newsletter topic for this month, written by my colleague, Tony, outlines a wide variety of practical, concrete lifestyle changes you can make that can dramatically improve the quality of your life. Too often we get caught up in all there is to do and forget that we're the ones running the show. You probably have more options than you think. Sometimes the smallest change can make the biggest difference.

HEEDING MY OWN ADVICE

Often the advice I give to clients is the very advice I need to follow myself. This summer, with the encouragement of my wife who is a Wellness Coach, I am making a commitment to get more sleep, take a daily walk, and spend time each day doing nothing! Amazingly, the days I take the best care of myself are the days when I am more productive in less time. For those of you who are struggling to make lifestyle changes, I offer you my support and I encourage you not to give up. Remember that taking care of yourself is the greatest gift you can give to others.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

My free, monthly Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) teleclasses will resume in September. If you would like information on EFT during the summer, please feel welcome to call me at (630) 960-2887 to schedule a free telephone consultation. Also, if you are interested in learning more about my **Freedom from Overeating** program which was featured in the May newsletter, please call me at (630) 960-2887 for more information. You can learn more about the computer program that complements my **Freedom from Overeating** program by visiting www.conquerovereating.com. In the meantime, **remember to take care of yourself!** Schedule some uninterrupted time for yourself and your family and enjoy summer's light.

STRESS AND LIFESTYLE
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Medication and therapy aren't worth a dime unless they lead to real changes in the way you live your life. Medication can give you more energy, and therapy can improve both your energy and problem-solving ability. But it's the actual changes you make in your lifestyle, not the pills or the therapy, that make all the difference. Below you'll find a list of practical, concrete lifestyle changes that can help the most.



**IF YOU THINK YOU ARE UNHAPPY DUE TO STRESS** Don't believe the "stress" is making you feel bad. Stress is just a general term we use when we don't know what the real problems are. And the real problems are always about how we spend our time and energy and how we get along with the people in our lives.

#### **IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT YOUR LOVE RELATIONSHIP**

- Spend more time in the same room with your partner.
- Touch each other, non-sexually and sexually. Make touch a guarantee, not a hope.
- Keep an eye on the amount of time you want to spend close to your partner and how much you want to spend away from them. Make concrete changes in how you allocate your time.
- Play joyfully together.
- Think clearly together.
- Take care of each other, especially when you've been asked. Expect resentment otherwise.
- Make solid agreements about who does what around the house. Stick to them. Renegotiate when needed.

#### **IF YOU'RE UNHAPPY ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL LIFE**

- Have one! Get out of your house or apartment and see what happens.
- Say hello to everyone you meet so conversation can evolve. If you get brushed off, move on to the next person. (It's their loss!)
- The best place to meet people is where other people with your interests gather. You always have the shared interest to talk about.
- Think about all the places where lots of people gather. Consider churches, active entertainment events (skating, bowling, skiing, dancing, etc.), and social clubs for people in your marital or age group. If there is only a five-percent chance that you will like it, try it! (When you are lonely, nothing sounds good. When you are with people, you usually enjoy yourself much more than you thought you would. The worst that can happen is that you'll waste a few hours away from home instead of wasting them at home.)
- Notice how people treat you. Think of each time you go out as a trial-and-error experiment to learn how to invite better and better treatment from others.
- Improve how you talk to yourself after you've gone out and how you explain why things went the way they did.

#### **IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT MONEY**

- If you know other people who are happy with the same income you have, money isn't the problem. Your standards are the problem. Let these people teach you how you can be happy with what you have.
- If income is a problem, will your education and experience get you the income you want? If not, find enjoyable ways to increase your education and gather the experience. (Don't say "I can't" unless it is a physical impossibility.)
- Spending is usually a problem. Learn where the money actually goes, and take full responsibility for every non-essential item you buy. Look at your purchases and rank them according to the degree to which you enjoy them each day. Look at everything, from the place you live to the toilet paper you buy! If you pay too much for housing, consider moving to a less expensive home. If you spend a couple of bucks every day on highly advertised coffee, ask yourself if you'd be happier with cheaper coffee and sixty bucks more in your pocket each month. Everything you don't absolutely need is worth reconsidering.

#### **IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT TIME AND ENERGY**

- If you have a physical problem that limits your time and energy, get the best medical care you can.
- If your work is taking too much time and energy, consider changing the way you work. Plan a specific day or afternoon each week when you'll handle paperwork without interruptions. Then schedule a separate time to return and receive phone calls. Blocking out chunks of time when you're not required to juggle several different tasks at once not only reduces stress but gets the work done faster.

- If your household is taking too much of your time and energy, consider whether you can get more help and whether you can lower your standards. Remember that the bottom line in housekeeping is not whether your parents or friends would give you a gold star. It's whether the house is healthy and whether you are spending your time and energy wisely. If you can afford to hire help, do it. If you need more help from your partner or your older children, ask for it - and if they refuse, stop doing the work they care most about.

### **IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN**

- Don't hit them and don't threaten to hit them. Such things may bring quick and temporary results, but they set up long-lasting rebellion and create many more problems than they solve.
- If you say you'll do something, do it. The clarity and trust in your relationship is much more important than what's going on today. (If you must break your word occasionally, apologize at the first opportunity. If you forget very often, expect your children to "forget" their responsibilities, too.)
- Your primary job is to keep your children from physical harm.
- Once they are safe, your remaining job is to provide them with love and support.
- Play with your children. Show them you aren't a work robot. You are a person who can be enjoyed.
- Don't worry about the mistakes your kids make. Making mistakes is their job! (They are supposed to learn through trial and error. If they could stop making mistakes, they'd stop learning and growing.)
- Don't expect them to take care of you. It's your job to take care of them, not the other way around. Get your caring from other adults.

Notice that you still need the same things children need:  
safety, warmth, trust, joy, and the freedom to learn.  
I sincerely wish you all of these!

As you commit to the actions that will contribute to your overall health and well-being, don't be afraid to ask for support. Remember that I am here to support you in living a high quality life.

Wishing you a relaxing and healthy summer,

Dan Lippmann

P.S. I want to thank all of you who have recently referred friends and family to me. If your friends would like more information on my services, have them visit my website at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com). Please forward this newsletter to anyone who is experiencing stress.

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Dan Lippmann has more than 25 years of individual and marital counseling experience. After facilitating his own recovery from a chronic pain condition in 1987, Mr. Lippmann began collaborating with experts in the field of mind-body health to develop innovative stress reduction and wellness techniques. He has been cited as a "Master Practitioner" in the book, *Light Years Ahead*, and in July 1999 his work on stress reduction was featured in the *Chicago Tribune*. He has also been interviewed about his work on radio and television. To receive this free monthly email newsletter, visit [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com).