

WHEENK! HEALTH

EXERCISE... WHY BOTHER? REDUCING STRESS THROUGH EXERCISE

HOLIDAYS ARE WONDERFUL, BUT THEY CAN ALSO BE EXTREMELY STRESSFUL. STRESS IS NOT ALWAYS DETERMINED BY WHAT HAPPENS TO US, BUT BY HOW WE RESPOND TO LIFE'S CHALLENGES. EVERYONE EXPERIENCES STRESS, AND IN FACT STRESS IS A NECESSARY PART OF LIFE AND GROWTH, HOWEVER UNRELIEVED STRESS EXPERIENCED OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME CAN CAUSE ILLNESS, DEPRESSION, INJURY, AND EVEN LEAD TO AN EARLY DEATH. OUR LIVES WILL GO MUCH BETTER IF WE LEARN TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND WELL TO THE STRESSES THAT COME OUR WAY.

WHAT CAUSES STRESS IN YOUR LIFE?

WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELIEVE THAT STRESS?

THESE ARE TWO QUESTIONS I ASKED MYSELF OVER THE HOLIDAYS, PLANNING FOR THE NEW YEAR AND ONE WAY THAT I KNOW OF THAT RELIEVES STRESS IN MY LIFE IS EXERCISE. BY THE END OF A LONG "STRESSFUL" DAY THE LAST THING I WANT TO DO IS GO EXERCISE, HOWEVER WHEN I DO, I RETURN WITH A CLEARER MIND AND A NEW, LESS "STRESSED" PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE.

I CHALLENGE YOU ALL TO BEGIN TO ADOPT NEW WAYS THIS NEW YEARS TO REDUCE "STRESS" AND RETURN TO A HEALTHIER, MORE BALANCED LIFESTYLE. EXERCISE MAY BE THE ANSWER FOR YOU. IF IT'S A 10 MINUTE WALK AROUND THE BLOCK, A RUN AT THE BEACH, OR A HEAVY WORKOUT AT THE GYM, ALL THREE CAN AND WILL ASSIST YOU IN THIS "STRESS" REDUCTION. CHOOSE SOMETHING THAT YOU ENJOY. HERE ARE A FEW BENEFITS TO EXERCISE:

- EXERCISE INCREASES BLOOD FLOW AND OXYGEN TO THE MUSCLES AND SURROUNDING TISSUES.
- EXERCISE CAN LEAD TO AN IMPROVED OVERALL FEELING OF WELL-BEING.
- EXERCISE HELPS REGULATE BLOOD PRESSURE AND BODY WEIGHT.
- EXERCISE CAN INCREASE FEELINGS OF JOY AND EUPHORIA.
- EXERCISE CAN HELP YOU SLEEP BETTER AT NIGHT.
- EXERCISE CAN ALSO GIVE YOU A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT, SOMETHING THAT IS OFTEN LACKING IN THE LIVES OF "STRESSED-OUT PEOPLE."

THESE ARE ALL DESIRABLE GOALS FOR ANYONE. FIND WAYS TO WORK AROUND THE ROADBLOCKS OR BARRIERS THAT ARE PREVENTING YOU FROM TAKING ON THE CHALLENGES OF AN EXERCISE PROGRAM.

MY NEW YEARS RESOLUTION IS TO LIVE A LIFE WITH LESS "STRESS" AND MORE FUN AND LAUGHTER! WHAT'S YOURS?

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