



NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS DAY 1st NOVEMBER 2006

Every year ISMA^{UK} (International Stress Management Association) holds **National Stress Awareness Day** in order to raise stress awareness. The bad news is that stress is one of the biggest causes of ill health in society today but the good news is that it is also something we can do the most about, as the most effective management is through self-help and lifestyle changes.



This year ISMA is running an ongoing campaign -

STRESS – DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU!

The new campaign aims to present a more positive, proactive and manageable approach to stress management.

We often only associate stress with major life issues such as divorce or financial hardship but a huge amount of our anxiety comes from minor day to day annoyances. When these build up they undermine our natural ability to cope, leaving us tired, anxious and irritable, making stress more infectious.

The **"STRESS – DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU!"** campaign is designed to show how easy it is for stress to pollute our lives from one person to another. We want to demonstrate how positive actions can reverse that trend.

NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS DAY – 1st NOVEMBER 2006

"SMILE AWAY STRESS" on **National Stress Awareness Day** will kick off the new campaign. We want to encourage as many people as possible to -

STOP STRESS – PASS ON A SMILE!

By sending out a message through as many mediums as possible throughout the day, we aim to create a mass smile, when at 2pm anyone can stop, wherever they are, for just a minute and smile, think good thoughts, say kind words and experience the benefits to not just their anxiety levels but to those around them.





HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We want as many people to get involved with **National Stress Awareness Day** and you can do that in a number of quick and easy ways: -

TAKE PART IN THE UNITED SMILE - At 2.00 pm on the 1st of November 2006 we will be holding a united smile. It does not matter where you are or who you are with just stop for "a minute smile." If you are on your own this will give you a perfect opportunity to reflect and unwind. If you are with friends, make it a fun event and if you are at work, take a break and relax.

PASS ON A SMILE - Use our "Smile Away Stress" stickers and/or email and see how many times you manage to pass on a smile during the day. If you are a group or business and would like a pack of stickers please email info@behappybehealthy.co.uk with your quantity requirements.

DOWNLOAD OUR VITRUAL STRESS PACKS - This document has been designed in leaflet format for you to send, print or save. This information can also be found on the Be Happy Be Healthy website www.behappybehealthy.co.uk

We also have a range of stress leaflets available, which can be ordered, along with your **Smile Away Stress Stickers** at info@behappybehealthy.co.uk:

Workplace Stress for Employees

Making the Management Standards Work

Endorsed by HSE, ACAS, TUC, CIPD
and ISMA^{UK} "You Can Do Something About Stress"

TRY OUT OUR QUICK STRESS RELIEF TIPS

Read about our simple but effective quick fix stress tips and advice from our team of celebrity health professionals.

ANSWER OUR SURVEY

The more we understand stress the more help we can offer so please help us to help your stress by answering just 3 questions in our stress survey. You can also test your own stress at www.behappybehealthy.co.uk

TELL US ABOUT YOUR DAY COMPETITION

It just gets better - for those wonderful participants we have some great prizes to give away including a spa break at Champneys, an Omron Home Healthcare kit and luxurious toiletries from Timetospa.

We will be giving out prizes for a range of Stress Awareness Day happy stories and pictures so don't forget to send yours in to info@behappybehealthy.co.uk

The categories are:

- best smile picture
- smile in the most unusual place
- most people smiling in one picture
- kindest act of goodwill
- person with the biggest heart
- happiest New Year story
- smile in adversity

We all know January can be a bit miserable so we want to start 2007 with a smile on the ISMA stress pages of www.behappybehealthy.co.uk where all the winning entries will be posted.

BUSINESS STRESS AWARDS

We will also be announcing a series of ISMA Awards and Certificates for businesses taking part so register your interest to receive further details in the coming months.



3 QUICKIE STRESS TIPS TO DO RIGHT NOW!

- 1. MICRO BREAKS.** Just a few deep breaths is enough to switch off stress, so get into the habit of taking 5 all through the day to enable your body to recharge. For example, every time you put the phone down, stop at red traffic lights, finish a conversation, send your emails.
- 2. FIGHT ENERGY DRAINERS.** Always start a conversation with a positive statement or complement, for example "I really want to talk but later when I have more time" or "I think you would be brilliant at this job...can you help me later." If there is conflict, expressing a positive first will help diffuse the situation, for example "you are usually brilliant at this so why do you think it didn't work?"
- 3. LESS ANALYSIS MORE ACTION.** The longer you leave stress problems the more worry takes over your whole thought process. You can't sleep, socialise or feel good about yourself giving your mind another good reason to worry. Inaction generates constant stress but if you are concerned about acting remember deciding to do nothing is still a decision so imagine the consequences of doing nothing opposed to doing something.

STRESS SURVEY

The best way to answer these questions is to put down the first thing you think of.

QUESTIONS

1. What is your biggest cause of stress?
2. Do you have more than one stress related problem and if so how many?
3. If you feel you are suffering from stress, how long has it been going on for?
4. Do you think stress is contagious? E.g someone else's stress effect you negatively or visa versa.
5. If you took part in the "Stop Stress - Pass on a Smile" campaign, approximately how many people did you pass the message on to?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short survey, please send your answers either by email to info@behappybehealthy.co.uk or post them to:
ISMA UK, PO Box 26, SOUTH PETHERTON, TA13 5WY



TIPS - HEALTH EXPERTS

This year we have a top team of health experts giving us their tips and advice on stress.



Harvey Walden

CELEBRITY FIT CLUB EXPERT - HARVEY WALDEN

Harvey was happy to offer his full support to the new ISMA stress campaign as he feels stress can destroy energy levels and motivation making it much harder to stay fit and healthy.

“Exercise not only protects you against stress but is also a great stress buster as feel good chemicals released in the brain help to keep energy levels going and help defend the body against stress inducing toxin and free radical damage. Modern day stress is mainly mental and emotional rather than physical so doing something active really does help your body let off steam!”

Harvey's top tips

- 1. Get outside** - The great outdoors is the best place to exercise as natural light and fresh air will boost energy and feel good levels further. It's also good to see what is going on in your neighbourhood.
- 2. Keep it social** - Doing active things with friends and family makes exercise something to look forward to. This works great for me. Every time I get home the kids look forward to taking our walk and catching up on what I have missed while gone. It also helps me to get and see how much they are growing and how much older I am getting. But I still don't look a day over 21 and will out run them any day.
- 3. Keep it real** - don't be too ambitious but find a way of exercising that is achievable so you always get a good result.
- 4. Anything is better than nothing** - even 5 mins here and there is going to make a difference so get a step counter and find ways of increasing throughout your normal day. You will soon find you can come out of that comfort zone of 5 mins within a short time and become motivated to reach a higher level of fitness for the rest of your life.



Dr. Mark Porter

TV DOCTOR - DR. MARK PORTER

From a professional point of view Mark believes proactive stress management is the most effective way.

Mark's advice is to identify the root cause of your stress and do something about it. Treating the results of stress with medication is a bit like using bleach to deal with a smelly drain. It may help for a while but unless blockage is cleared the drain will soon start smelling again. If you can't get rid of the source of the stress then find ways to stop worrying about it - worry is a useless activity that rarely helps and always hinders.

There are plenty of relaxation, time management and organisational techniques that are quick and easy but very effective. Taking some sort of action is much better than worrying through inaction.

TV STRESS EXPERT - LIZ TUCKER

“I think it is impossible to get through life without experiencing stress so being prepared is the key to staying fit and healthy.”

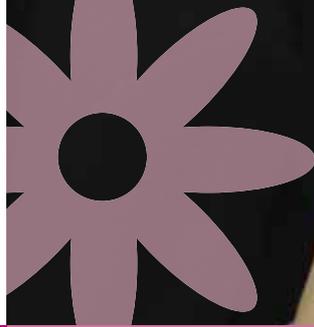
To get Liz's top stress tips and more information about stress go to:

www.behappybehealthy.co.uk



Liz Tucker





Because you know you can be



Philippa Forrester

PHILIPPA FORRESTER

"We all have times when everything seems overwhelming, whether it's a manic day at work or a run in with a toddler tantrum. There are lots of ways to unwind - I find that a relaxing bath or a good brisk walk can get me back on track. Paying attention to your diet is also important, as eating well can help your body cope better with stress and pressure."

"Healthy fruit snacks such as blackberries, strawberries, and oranges are not only an enjoyable taste of summer, but are also rich in vitamin C. This is needed to boost adrenalin stores in your body, as these are lost when stress kicks in which can make you feel worse. Vitamin B is also perfect for calming frayed nerves, and is easily found in oat products such as cereals and flapjack bars. A hot drink is always a good way to relax and have a break, and I find that a cup of camomile tea is particularly soothing and gives me a much needed five minutes to myself!"



Jenny Biddell

THE GIRLS FROM HOLLYOAKS

Jenny Biddell who plays student Jessica in Channel4's Hollyoaks goes on a yoga holiday at least once a year to help her to de-stress. While she's there she always manages to chill out and get fit along with tips on nutrition that help keep her balanced in daily life. She'd go more if she could, but usually only finds time once a year, which, although she's desperate for it by the time it comes around it gives her all the stress relief she needs and keeps her chilled and happy for a good few months after.



Gemma Bissix

Gemma Bissix from Hollyoaks finds that going and watching her favorite football team play is all the stress relief she needs! A football fanatic, when she's not working she always fits in a match every weekend and cheering her team on in the stands helps her vent any pent up aggression and release any tensions she's been carrying around. During the week she feels completely relaxed and unphased by things and she swears that getting it all out of her system at the weekends really works!



Roxanne McKee

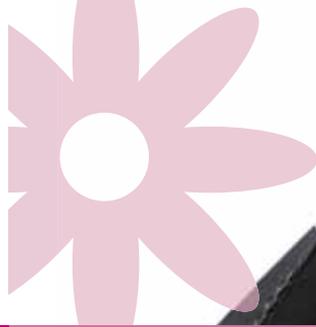
Roxanne McKee who plays Louise in Hollyoaks swears by a good massage for her stress relief, she makes sure she has one every week, usually on a Friday, to set her up for a relaxing weekend. She enjoys a good Swedish massage or aromatherapy for best results and to really push all the tension away. Roxy says a good massage is worth every penny!

Carly Stenson who plays Steph Dean says her best way of relieving stress is to quite simply dance around her bedroom when no one is watching. She'll turn the music up and dance like she doesn't have a care in the world! It releases endorphins, gets rid of tension, clears her mind and she even gets fit in the process. She says if anyone saw her she'd die of embarrassment, but dancing like a nutter is guaranteed to chase the blues away!



Carly Stenson





Liz Tucker

LIZ TUCKER STRESS AND HEALTHY LIVING

It is easy to see why we put Stress into the contradictory category of “can’t live with it, can’t live without it.” We view stress as a bad thing that needs to be avoided but then deliberately load our lives with multiple stress inducing situations like having children, moving house, building a career and falling in love that are exciting and stimulating but also have elements of disappointment, excessive pressure and exhaustion.

NATURAL BALANCE

Stress is a natural part of living and we have an inbuilt Stress Response to enable our bodies to fight stress, stay alive and be happy but excessive or constant stress can upset this natural balance. Stress upsets our body’s natural ability to cope as energy levels fall, essential resources such as nutrition and fluid are drained and internal cellular damage is generated. Symptoms generated by Stress such as pain and fatigue are there to warn us that our body is struggling to cope and we need to do something to restore the balance. For example if your life repeatedly consists of too much work and no home life, too little activity and no positive stimulation or too much pressure and no pleasure then your stress could soon become a health problem. Similarly, a traumatic event, constant upset or a bout of ill health, such as bereavement, divorce, bullying or a nasty accident could also expose you to stress related problems. If stress continues unmanaged, energy and ability decline, increasing the risk of accidents and mistakes. Feeling exhausted, powerless, fearful and unable to cope escalates stress levels even further. This is why effective stress management is so important as a healthy balance comes from knowing how to deal with imbalances rather than wishing life was Stress free.

We need to deal with difficult and scary situations, challenge ourselves and cope with change and our body enables us to do this if it is fit for the job. This is why the better informed and healthier we are, the easier it is to deal with stressful situations and maintain a healthy balance.

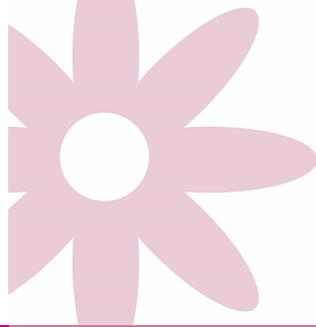
RELAXATION AND STRESS

Being able to deal with life pressures involves a lot of effort so we also need a system in place to deal with Stress generated damage and fatigue and this is the role of relaxation. Periods of sleep and rest are essential because without relaxation, constant Stress would result in a tired and unhealthy body and mind, not equipped to cope with further Stress or generate the positive stimulation we all crave. So next time you feel you haven’t got time to stop remember relaxation is essential to leading a full and busy life rather than an indulgence if you want to stay healthy.

EATING FOR STRESS

Our brain actively encourages stimulation to generate feel good feelings. Unfortunately we can also chemically reproduce similar responses in an unhealthy way from consuming stimulating foods high in sugar, fat, salt, caffeine and also smoking. Stimulants like alcohol, junk food and cigarettes may give you a feel good quick fix but under nourishment and over stimulation not only generates stress but leaves the body less able to cope with the everyday stresses and strains of living. >>





>> POSITIVE STIMULATION

We need to set goals, have dreams and ambitions, change our situation, socially interact and we do all this hoping that it will make our life that little bit better. We often feel guilty about taking time out to have fun but experiencing pleasure and satisfaction is the greatest anti-stress tonic of all as it releases wonderful feel good brain responses that relieves pressure and boosts energy.

BE REALISTIC

It is important to have role models and dreams but if you set yourself goals that are way beyond your abilities and environmental limitations such as family and financial constraints, then everyday will be a Stress inducing disappointment. In reality success should be measured by how much you managed to achieve or how well you cope under the normal less than perfect circumstances life presents us with.

A SUCCESSFUL STRESS PLAN

Whatever your stress an effective plan of action will give you control, understanding and acceptance. A good plan includes isolating the problem, accepting what you can't change, looking at what is achievable and breaking it down into small manageable steps. Never ignore stress, dealing with it may seem scary and difficult but it will make stress more manageable.

1. Write down all your stresses and why you feel you cannot deal with them. Perhaps you are trying to deal with too many things all at once or perhaps you are being too ambitious or unrealistic. By accepting a situation as it is, no matter how negative, you can then do something proactive to improve or change. Think of what you can do rather than what you can't, any action, no matter how small will still help. Small manageable steps improve and resolve when one big step won't.
2. Prioritise and organise your stress. Often we make demanding and difficult things a priority when in fact they are not important. Plan in quality time to spend with your loved ones, achieve goals and resolve long standing emotional issues because in the grand scheme of things these are so much more important than the day to day things in life that exhaust us like the journey to work and the ironing.
3. Aim for pleasure and satisfaction. The body needs to regularly experience pleasure and satisfaction to stay happy and healthy. If you think you have no time for such indulgences then remind yourself exactly why you are working so hard, getting stressed out or bogged down with endless chores and duties. Even if it is only an hour a week for a long soak or an afternoon in the park with the kids, it will really help relieve the pressure.
4. Stop one stress polluting your life. Stress in one area of your life can really pollute the happiness of the rest of it. For example, if you have a work problem it can spoil a happy home, friendships and your health until everything becomes a problem. Divert your mind to what is good in your life rather than focusing on one bad thing.
5. Incorporate relaxation. Just a few deep breaths is enough to switch off stress so get into the habit of taking short breaks throughout the day to enable your body to recharge. There is always time to fit in 5 deep breaths so every time you put the phone down, stop at red traffic lights or finish a conversation fit a micro relaxation break in.
6. Look after your health. Stress can be so consuming we often lose interest in ourselves but being unhealthy makes it much harder to cope. Eating a high fat, sugar and salt diet, low in nutrition can increase your anxiety even if there isn't anything to worry about. Alcohol and caffeine can over stimulate your system, making it difficult to switch off and if you think smoking calms your nerves, forget it. You are 16 times more likely to suffer from panic attacks. Keep healthy snacks and bottles of water at work, a relaxing tape in the car or create a comfort corner somewhere at home.

