

DO YOU KNOW THAT...

- Only 16 percent of depression is accounted for by genetics.
- Contrary to ads given by drug companies, there is a slim evidence that depression is caused by certain chemical imbalance (serotonin) in the brain.
- Prozac, the current antidepressant, was introduced in the market after just 6 weeks of clinical trials on 286 people.
- In 1967 alone, 23.3 million prescriptions were written for amphetamine; 12 millions of those numbers were given on medical advice.
- Ritalin, the drug used for the treatment of ADD & ADHD in children is a synthetic derivative of cocaine.
- Once you start taking anti-depressants, it is difficult to come off them.
- In developing countries such as India, two third of people afflicted with schizophrenia recover their mental health while this number is only one third in the developed countries such as USA.

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WE NEED TO LEARN SELF-MANAGEMENT

Another year is coming to a conclusion and it is time for charting new course and adding new maps for exploration next year. This year has been eventful affording us new insights. True to its nature, time always offers hints and sometimes even directions for taking the path we are meant to. It is not that black and white always, but if we keep our eyes and ears open, we can hear the faint whispers of future speaking to us in a muffled tone and encrypted language.

This year, we made a transition from publishing 'Zen Letter' to 'The Health Q' so that we can speak to a wider spectrum of audience; that the word 'Zen' does not stand between us and the believers. The response has been encouraging. Our goal is to teach people, regardless of their personal affinities, how to manage physical, mental and emotional health and realize the creative potential by letting go their conditioned living and thinking. This publication is also one part of that effort.

Going further, the name of our parent educational and instructional program 'Zen Of Living' has also been changed to 'The Health-Q Consulting'—Intelligent Health & Life Management. Through this multidisciplinary instructional program, we intend to teach participants how to

learn self-management when it comes to their health and life-style. By choosing to learn these skills, not only do we lessen the burden of the medical & social system but also use the same resources on more important social and community development. Our program is aimed at general population, athletes, professionals, corporate management, educators and students. We do not simply teach techniques, but are focused on inspiring people to *think better, cultivate an independent thinking process and create better lives*. Our program is a unique combination of activities and techniques drawn from various professional disciplines. In addition, to further community development, we intend to set-up a sustainable system through which people from all the walks of life, especially those below the poverty line can learn these skills either for free or at bare-minimum cost. The complete blueprint is expected to be on our website www.TheHQ.ca in 2006. If you would like to join us in this community initiative, please give us a call or write at the following e-mail. We are all ears.

In the meantime, stay well and warm.

—Parmjit Singh, PhD
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**'ZEN OF LIVING' has changed to
'THE HEALTH-Q CONSULTING' (The HQ)**

new website: www.TheHQ.ca

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Mission Statement

'The Health Q' envisions to present factual information for the promotion of wholesome mental, physical and emotional/spiritual living. Synthesizing diverse sources spanning from scientifically valid physical/mental/emotional therapeutic techniques with latest research in mind-body medicine/sciences, cognitive & positive psychology, sport psychology, yoga, meditation, health sciences and other evidence-based integrative/alternative therapies, we intend to make 'The Health Q' an authentic vehicle for dissemination of reliable information for practical and healthy living.

'The Health Q' is not a replacement of a medical advice or treatment.

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KNOW YOUR TRIGGERS

—by Gurudarshan Jyot, PhD

Have you reacted defensively or aggressively lately? If you have, you are not alone. This is something we often do. Interestingly, we get defensive or aggressive only when we want to avoid something. Defensiveness also erodes trust and the loving feeling in a relationship and generates mistrust or blaming. If we let this behavior go un-analyzed, we develop a sort of mindlessness.

On the other hand, if we try to identify these hot-buttons or triggers, they can become a source of change for our future behavior.

Here is a simple method to identify hot-buttons or triggers:

- ◆ Identify a recent situation when it happened
- ◆ Try to pinpoint a trigger that might have caused it
- ◆ Remember the reaction
- ◆ Keep a diary to track your reactions, triggers and behavior in future.

If you can respond with self awareness and honesty, you will be able to pin-point the triggers. It also encourages us to take responsibility for our actions.

AROMA FOR THE WINTER

—by Marianne Bogoslawski, CAHP

Aromatherapy is the systematic use of essential oils in holistic treatment and improvement of physical and emotional well-being. It is especially effective in stress-related problems and a variety of chronic conditions. Essential oils, extracted from plants possessing distinctive therapeutic properties, can be used to improve health and prevent disease. Aromatherapy massage rejuvenates, nourishes and heals the body. The natural plant oils are applied in a variety of ways:

- + Massage (most used method)
- + Baths
- + Inhalations (not for asthmatics, unless recommended by a professional Aromatherapist)

Essential Oils—An essential oil is an aromatic, volatile substance extracted from a single botanical source by distillation or expression. They are metabolized by the body like any other nutrients. Certain components within the oils will stimulate the immune system, destroy bacteria, act as powerful

antioxidants and building blocks to improve nutrient absorption. It takes between 20 minutes to 2 hours for the oils to be absorbed by the body and remain there for 7 hours or more before being excreted.

Smell plays an important role in the whole process. Differing aromatic rings are contained within essential oils and through smell the odor is transferred into a nerve message. The message is sent to different parts of the brain where it stimulates different hormones. Essential oils are chemically complex and versatile. Juniper oil, for example, can be used to treat skin problems, dandruff, or joint pain. However, it should NOT be used by those with kidney disease or by pregnant women. The natural plant essences with their hormone-like properties and vitamins, minerals, and natural antiseptics, are easily absorbed into the bloodstream through the skin or nose. Different fragrances (i.e. natural vs. synthetic), with varied vital electromagnetic prop-

random snippets

COFFEE DOES NOT RAISE BLOOD PRESSURE, COKE DOES

It is often maintained that consumption of caffeine is linked to high blood pressure (BP). However, in recent study, scientists found that there is 'no linear association between caffeine consumption and incident hypertension.' (Winkelmayr, W.C., et al (2005). Habitual caffeine intake and the risk of the hypertension in women. *JAMA*, 294, 2330-2335.).

They also found that even though drink-

ing coffee regularly does not lead to a risk of high BP, yet drinking sugared or diet cola increases the risk of high BP.

In spite of what research says, we should consume this stuff moderately. If possible, drink warm water with honey and lemon. That will keep your system free of excessive un-needed sugar & chemicals.



THE BEST DIET IS WHAT OUR ANCESTORS ATE

Everyday, there is new advice about how to eat well and stay healthy (and possibly thin). Dieting business is a booming industry and anyone with an iota of knowledge about food groups and necessary vitamins is dishing out whole-sale wisdom in the form of books and new-diets. That is why there are miracle diets and magic potions. But strangely enough and in spite of these magic diets and magic formulae, as a nation, we are still bulking up.

Now, experts are saying that our body is not designed to digest all the junk food we eat. It does not cope well with breads and cookies, rather it is equipped to do well

with lean meat, vegetables and fruits.

However, this is not the mantra of majority of popular weight-loss techniques. They tempt us with slogan such as '*eat whatever you like and still lose weight*'. And we fall for it.

What we also need to do is to think of the *person* who eats rather than what we eat. Though a certain type of food is important, even more important is the *person who eats it*. If you listen to that *person* inside your body, you will find an intelligent way to deal with food and manage your body weight.

YOGA

is a powerful tool for health and

FOR ATHLETES
—by Byron Selorme

wellness. Though the focus is not meant to be purely physical, it

can still aid many athletes and sport enthusiasts.

One of the most powerful, full body posture for athletes is the Downward Facing Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana). This pose can help in lengthening the hamstring and strengthening the calf muscles, especially for sports involving running, skating or cycling. An added benefit is the strengthening of the shoulder girdle and forearms in female athletes.

Instructions

To begin, come to the floor on your hands and knees. Hands should be shoulder width apart and the knees and ankles should be hip width apart and



YOGA FOR ATHLETES, from page 3

parallel to each other. Spread the fingers and thumbs wide with even space between each and the space between the index finger and middle finger pointing forward. Curl the toes under so that the balls of the feet touch the floor (Most runners will find this difficult for many weeks). Draw the hips back to the heels, lift the tailbone high and lengthen the spine. Start to straighten the legs and do it completely only if the shoulders are not starting to take a disproportionate amount of weight. Eventually the weight should be evenly spread between the hands and feet but since most people have stronger legs, you must wait for the strength to build in the arms and shoulders. Just concentrate on drawing the shoulder blades down and into the body while extending them wide. Let the head and neck extend and the ears be in line with the arms. With patient practice, the heels will touch the floor for most people but do not force your-

self. Let it be a gradual process. Focus on pressing the root of the index finger and thumb onto the floor and drawing energy up the heel of the palm and into the arms. Lift the hips up and back, creating a sharp, downward "V" shape with the body (See Figure on page 3).

Hold this pose for up to 2 minutes with long smooth breaths. People who have difficulty with this pose due to carpal tunnel syndrome or shoulder and neck impingements should observe body signals carefully. Many of the same benefits can be realized by placing the hands on a chair or at a staircase with the feet on the floor and the hands up to a comfortable level, slowly bringing the hands down a stair at a time over the weeks and months.

Remember that there should never be a sharp or shooting pain in muscles, just a pleasant ache as you work and slide into this or other pose.

AROMA FOR THIS WINTER, from page 2

erties and vibrational energies, serve to stimulate our immune system, circulatory system and neurological functions.

The antiseptic, antispasmodic and expectorant action of essential oils is of interest for the winter. For general use, oils of bergamot (contraindicated to sunbathing), cinnamon (caution: can be a dermal irritant), eucalyptus globulus or eucalyptus radiata, black pepper, tea tree, lemon, cypress and other essential oils can be used in a nebulizer or diffuser for inhalation, or massaged into feet, chest and along the spine. When applying to skin, the essential

oils should be diluted into carrier oil, such as Sweet Almond or Grape-seed.

An effective aromatherapy blend requires knowledge about the properties of essential oils and should be used with caution. When purchasing essential oils, make sure the company is a reputed one and the oils are unadulterated, and the label lists the place of origin, part of plant used, plant family, extraction and the botanical name. It is best to do a patch test on skin and wait for 10-15 minutes. If there is no reaction, then proceed to use.

2006 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Jan 24, 2006

5 Week 'The Healing Voyage'
@ YWCA Downtown Hamilton
Free Info session: Jan 17, 7 PM

March 7, 2006

10 Week 'The Healing Voyage'
@ YWCA, Downtown Hamilton
Free Info session: Feb 28, 7 PM

Description:

Take control of your personal health/wellness and life balance by learning the role of mind, body, and spirit. Learn advanced techniques of psychology, mind-body medicine/sciences, yoga, meditation, visualization, awareness training, creative art therapy and self-auditing.

Learn to beat stress, feeling of depression, chronic pain/health problems or to speed up recovery from an illness. Transform your negative thinking, improve relationships, enhance health & well-being and learn to create balance, manage stress/work-related health problems, anxiety, low self-esteem, body image problems, chronic pain and enhance your general well-being.

From an extensive tool-kit, chart your personalized journey of discovery, healing and transformation.

YWCA Membership not required for our programs. Open for both men and women.

"Feel Good About Yourself"

Feb 25, 2006 Saturday, 9am-1pm @ YWCA Downtown Hamilton

Call 905.524.3463 for more information about these programs

**Let us make
our community
healthy by teaching
self-management**

You may consider helping this initiative through one or more of the following:

- Sharing tips or expert advice if you are an expert
- Keeping 'The Health Q' for display or distribution to your clients
- Subscribing to 'The Health Q'
- Advertising your business in 'The Health Q'
- Any other way possible