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Dr. Ping H Liou



Chinese Medicine Acupuncturist, Pharmacist

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Wi-Fi in Schools: Experimenting With the Next Generation

Commercial wireless systems expose children to nation's highest radiation levels

CONAN MILNER

The internet has unleashed human knowledge. Never before has it been so easy to learn so much. Of course, it has also drowned us in distraction and created a breeding ground for trolls and misinformation, but if the internet is redeemed by anything, it is its liberation of education.

When it comes to accessing this ocean of information, we have two basic choices: wired or Wi-Fi. The vast majority of schools have embraced the wireless revolution. It's easy to see why. Compared to wired internet, wireless is simpler, cheaper, and faster for schools to install.

Today, students are trading notebooks and textbooks for laptops, cell phones, iPads, and all manner of "smart" devices connected to a potent wireless infrastructure that lets them be used virtually anywhere on school grounds.

But that wireless web comes with a devastating downside. Doctors and scientists say that the students and teachers who attend these schools are risking their health.

Radiation Dangers

Dr. Martin Pall, professor emeritus of biochemistry and basic medical sciences at Washington State University made a grave case about the dangers involved in his paper, "Wi-Fi is An Important Threat to Human Health," published in the July 2018 issue of Environmental Research.

"The placement of Wi-Fi into schools around the country may well be a high-level threat to the health of our children as well being a threat to teachers and any very sensitive fetuses teachers may be carrying, as well," Pall writes.

Since Wi-Fi is found everywhere from private homes to public spaces, Pall's alarming claim seems hard to fathom. And yet his evidence is compelling. 23 controlled scientific studies demonstrating numerous adverse effects of Wi-Fi radiation exposure. And that's just the tip of the iceberg—there are dozens more studies on Wi-Fi harms which were not included in the paper.

Wireless radiation has become commonplace despite well-documented evidence of its harm, with thousands of studies going back several decades demonstrating health problems associated with exposure. Some of the strongest evidence came last year from the final report of a \$30 million, 19-year study funded by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. It was conducted by the National Toxicology Program (NTP)—the federal agency tasked with testing toxins—and was designed to be the final word on whether wireless radiation was harmful. It showed clear evidence of cancer and DNA damage linked to cell phone use.

Concentrated Risk

Schools are particularly worrisome, experts say, because they are where the most intense concentration of wireless radiation is found today. The Wi-Fi systems schools have adopted are much more comprehensive than your average home or coffee shop Wi-Fi. These commercial grade systems use several routers or "access points" throughout the classroom, often in the ceiling above students' heads. Now, add in all the radiation spewing from all the wireless devices operated by each student, and you'll find that kids are spending up to seven hours per day in a thick soup of electro-smog.

Even worse, the people we place in this remarkably concentrated field of wireless radiation are more vulnerable to it. Compared to adults, children are smaller and have smaller and thinner skulls so the radiation penetrates more easily and gets to larger parts of the brain. It is also problematic that children's immune and nervous systems are still developing. Plus, kids' cells divide at a faster rate, which increases the risk for mutations that can lead to cancer.

According to Pall, these factors make children more susceptible to the disease processes that wireless radiation has been consistently shown to cause: oxidative stress (which can lead to cancer and non-cancerous conditions, as well as DNA damage), sperm and testicular damage, neuropsychiatric effects, cell death, changes to the endocrine system, and calcium overload.

Evidence of illness

These disease processes aren't merely theoretical. Epidemiological studies conducted by Dr. Lennart Hardell, an oncologist at Orebro University Hospital in Sweden, showed that children exposed to this radiation are more likely to develop cancer and develop it quicker.

Other doctors and scientists say exposure is likely a significant contributing factor to the rising rates of other childhood diseases. Dr. Hugh Taylor, a professor and chair of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences at Yale University, has shown that fetal exposure to wireless radiation affects neuro-development and behavior and can lead to Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)—a condition that has doubled in the past 10 years.

Harvard Medical School professor and a pediatric neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Martha Herbert, makes a compelling argument that the rise in autism spectrum disorders may also be related to our rise in wireless radiation exposure.

Herbert's 60-page report from 2012 doesn't provide evidence of cause, but it does reveal several similarities between symptoms known to occur with wireless radiation and biological manifestations in autism, such as cellular stress, tissue damage, protein misfolding, and injury of membranes.

Herbert describes autism, not as a condition of a broken brain, but of a brain that has a hard time regulating itself. And she believes that if such a brain is caught in a cloud of wireless radiation, it is confronted with a disruptive factor, making it even harder for behavior and biology to come into balance.

While the brains of children with autism may be most vulnerable to microwave radiation, Herbert says every brain is at the mercy of its influence.

Students are trading notebooks and textbooks for laptops, cell phones, iPads, and all manner of 'smart' devices.

"I really am concerned about people's brains," Herbert said. "It's not a joke to have this stuff getting into these three pounds of delicate, gel-crystalline structure in our heads that does this amazing stuff." It wasn't meant for this level of exposure.

Electromagnetic Neurology

Herbert explains that, just like our wireless devices, our brain communicates with electromagnetic signaling. In fact, as our instruments have become more sensitive, scientists have discovered that each cell in our body uses electromagnetic signaling.

Now that we live in a wireless world, where we all walk around in a field of electromagnetic radiation nearly all the time, Herbert believes there is enough scientific support to argue that this influence could be an important contributor to degrading the optimal chemical-electrical function of our bodies—thereby detuning our brains and nervous systems.

Autism was once considered strictly a genetic abnormality. But as knowledge of the condition has grown, researchers have uncovered a more complex landscape, where a host of environmental influences have shown an impact on gene expression.

This means that instead of one smoking gun tied to this fast growing condition (the latest estimate from the Centers for Disease Control is that one in every 40 children has autism, up from one in every 166 in 2005), there are likely many factors. Toxic chemicals, for example, have long been demonstrated to impact fetal brain development.

But Herbert argues that, due to electric nature of our bodies, wireless radiation may create more of a disruption than toxic chemicals.

"When you have a toxicant exposure, it can affect the brain, but it has to go through metabolic pathways that can influence the electromagnetics in order to do that," Herbert said. "But when you have electromagnetic radiation, it's a straight shot. It's the same language, so it can be more instantaneous."

Sick in Schools

Dafna Tachover is a former telecommunications officer turned lawyer who advocates for people harmed by wireless radiation. Her Supreme Court lawsuit in Israel led to the first limits on Wi-Fi in schools worldwide. Tachover showed evidence of 200 sick children from the Wi-Fi in just six schools.

Now in the United States, Tachover says she is contacted by several parents every week with children who have become sick from their school's wireless system. She says the most common symptoms include headaches, increased sensitivity to noise, nose bleeds, concentration and memory problems, nausea, exhaustion, and hyperactivity.

"Unfortunately, these harms are not potential but existing, and at an epidemic scale," Tachover said.

The acute or chronic illness that results from wireless radiation is known as electromagnetic sensitivity. It's the same illness the U.S. Navy dubbed "microwave sickness" when soldiers who had been working with technologies such as radar for extended periods of time displayed the same symptoms. The illness is named for the microwave frequencies that powers wireless technology. Those who contract microwave sickness can't be in the presence of wireless radiation without painful and sometimes debilitating symptoms.

One child Tachover is working with is a 13-year-old girl from Oregon whose desk was directly under the classroom's Wi-Fi router. After she developed microwave sickness, her parents enrolled her in a private Waldorf school, because they're one of few schools that don't use Wi-Fi.

In some cases, parents are forced to homeschool their children because they can't get access to schools without Wi-Fi. In other cases, sick kids are forced to make do.

Tachover said one parent had two sons who developed microwave sickness. This mother urged her sons' school to accommodate by hard wiring the classroom internet and even offered to pay for the accommodation, but the school refused. As a result, her children can only attend school for a few hours per week.

"When in the Wi-Fi environment they experience headaches, concentration problems, skin rashes and hyperactivity," Tachover said.

Risk to Teachers

Microwave sickness can impact teachers who work in Wi-Fi too. Laurie Brown, a teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), says she knew nothing about the health impacts from wireless until her school installed a commercial grade Wi-Fi system in April of 2015. Today, she says the damage caused by this technology is impossible for her to ignore.

"We had Wi-Fi before, but the upgraded system now had two access points in every single classroom, adding a total of 290 access points to the school, and additional boosters to prevent any loss of connectivity," Brown said. "All of this was for Common Core testing, and 21st-century teaching."

Each of Brown's students was given a wireless laptop (Chromebooks) so they could access this new system. After just two hours in the upgraded classroom, Brown started feeling several symptoms: tingling and burning in her skin, breathing problems, and a rising heart rate. Her ankles started itching and her nasal passages started to swell.

Symptoms grew worse and soon Brown could barely make it through the day. Before the new Wi-Fi system, Brown was rarely sick and had saved over 800 hours of time off for illness. After the new equipment, she was out at least two days every week.

"I just started to feel horrible," she said. "I would go home from school feeling so lousy, I was never a headache person, and I was getting all these headaches that were so strange."

Brown knows of at least 10 teachers and staff members who complained of symptoms that they traced to the school's Wi-Fi. A few retired, and at least three (including Brown) are currently suing LAUSD for workers compensation injuries.

Brown is now on disability leave, but she would rather have her old life back. Today, if someone is just using a cellphone near her, Brown's inflammatory symptoms as well as other sometimes debilitating symptoms can quickly return.

"It's overwhelming and it's sad because it takes away from the enjoyment of life and your lifestyle," she said. "I'm someone who is accommodating, likes to please, and is easy going. I wasn't a high maintenance person. It makes me feel uncomfortable in my own skin to feel like I'm inconveniencing others."

For schools that are willing to make accommodations, lives have been turned around. Appeals through the American with Disabilities Act have made some schools remove the Wi-Fi routers in the classrooms where there are microwave illness sufferers, even extending the router removal to neighboring classrooms when they still exert an influence.

Teacher Sheila Reavill contracted microwave sickness but she convinced her school to hard-wire their internet access and connect laptops with an adapter. There is no Wi-Fi or Bluetooth in Reavill's class, and the children who carry cell phones shut them off when they're in the room.

"She says she not only she feels better in the classroom, but her students are also calmer and can focus better," Tachover said.

Experts saw dangers in school Wi-Fi upgrades even before they were installed. In 2013, Herbert wrote a warning letter to the LAUSD, citing the thousands of papers that have accumulated over decades which document adverse health and neurological impacts of electromagnetic frequency and radiofrequency radiation (EMF/RF). "EMF/RF from Wi-Fi and cell towers can exert a disorganizing effect on the ability to learn and remember, and can also be destabilizing to immune and metabolic function," Herbert wrote. "This will make it harder for some children to learn, particularly those who are already having problems in the first place."

The letter went viral, but the school district paid it little mind.

"You know who did react? The firefighters," Herbert said. "They had this boondoggle going where they were putting cell towers right behind all the fire stations. So guess what? All the firefighters were getting sick."

Pushing for Change

As more people become aware of the dangers associated with wireless radiation and Wi-Fi

Kids are spending up to seven hours per day in a thick soup of electro-smog.



ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

in schools, efforts are emerging from teachers unions, parent organizations, and physician groups to address the problem.

One widely proposed solution is for schools to adopt a wired system. This would allow students to have more reliable high-speed internet access but without the microwave radiation. The cost would only be slightly higher than a wireless system.

While installing a wired system would mean a greater cost up front, it could save schools millions in the long run, as well as ensuring the health of the children who attend these schools. Tachover says that most schools are not insured for health effects related to wireless radiation because most insurance companies learned their lesson from tobacco and asbestos and have made an exclusion with regard to wireless.

Some change may come in the form of new laws. In Massachusetts, seven bills have recently taken aim at the issue of wireless technology in a handful of schools.

Deb Meyer runs the Oregon chapter of Parents Across America (PAA). She says her organization has introduced three bills into the state legislature that target children's increasing exposure to wireless radiation.

"We aren't against technology. We're against unsafe use and irresponsible use," Meyer said.

One bill allows Wi-Fi wary parents to choose an alternative for their child. The bill also calls for kids to have recess so they get a chance to move around in the physical world for some part of their day.

The second bill focuses on better public understanding of the biological impact of wireless. It requires public and private schools to distribute information about the potential health risks of wireless network technology to employees, students and parents or guardians. It would also require the state's Health Authority to examine peer-reviewed, independently funded studies on the effects of exposure to microwave radiation in schools and similar environments, particularly exposure that results from the use of wireless network technologies. It then calls on the Health Authority to create guidelines based on this review.

The bill that Meyer believes has the best chance of passing is one which calls for something wireless manufacturers already do, but write large. Buried deeply in your cell phone manual are tips about using your device more safely. The bill asks to have these tips more explicit with clear warning labels so that consumers take safety more seriously.

Overall, that's the biggest challenge—getting schools, lawmakers, and the public to treat the

issue with the gravity it deserves.

"Getting people to believe that what we say is real and true is really a heavy lift, because they don't want to think there is a downside to their devices," Meyer said. "And they especially don't want to think that giving devices to their kids is a bad thing to do."

Herbert says another reason why people may be resistant to see this problem is that all this wireless radiation may be affecting our judgment.

"Your judgment is intrinsically off when your brain function is altered in some way. You could be missing things—missing distinctions, or being disorganized in ways you don't realize until you come out of it. Maybe you never come out of it."

Herbert said. "Just something to contemplate as we try and look at our increasing exposure to electromagnetic waves."

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What Happens When You Embrace Dark Emotions

A psychologist explains how to face emotional challenges using mindfulness, acceptance, and self-compassion

Mindfully observing what we're feeling can help us cope with whatever is before us.

BETH KURLAND

When I was 15, my mother died in a car accident. Not knowing how to deal with the enormity of my loss and grief, I threw myself into homework and activities. I never missed a day of school and tried to control everything in my life. This strategy succeeded in some ways—I was able to get good grades, for example. But the inner cost of pushing away my grief and sadness showed up in other ways. I became anxious around things I couldn't control, like unexpected changes in plans and minor injuries. And as I grew older, I started to harbor irrational worries, such as the fear of exposing my baby in utero to toxic fumes when walking past a strange smell. It was not until later, after my first child was born, that I was able to fully grieve the loss of my mother with the help of a therapist and feel all of the emotions I had spent so many years trying to ward off. As I write in my new book, "Dancing on the Tightrope," the desire to avoid what's unpleasant and seek what's pleasant is part of human nature. But avoiding unpleasant emotions—rather than accepting them—only increases our psychological distress, inflexibility, anxiety, and depression, diminishing our well-being.

Self-compassion is a quality that's been linked to psychological well-being.

STEP 1

Develop a Willingness to Open the Door

Imagine that you're opening the door and welcoming your emotions to come and have a seat somewhere in the room. You can picture this seat as close to or as far away from you as you like. From this perspective, you can take a gentle and curious look at what is there.

Often people will picture their emotions as having some kind of color, shape, or form. Sometimes they envision their emotions as cartoon characters or as younger parts of themselves. Part of the practice is simply to accept whatever arrives.

This is a new experience for most people. Who wants to let anxiety in the door? Who wants to welcome in sadness or anger? But when we let in whatever arrives and see it from a bit of a distance, we can take a curious look and explore what is there.

Research suggests that when we turn toward our cravings, we're less likely to engage in addictive behaviors. When we turn toward our physical pain, we're less likely to be trapped in cycles of chronic pain. When we turn toward our sadness, we're less likely to be stuck in depression. And, when we turn toward our anxiety, we're less likely to be paralyzed by it and can find it easier to bear.

Learning to embrace dark emotions not only reduced my anxiety but also gave me the ability to experience the joys of life more fully and trust in my ability to handle life's challenges. As a therapist, I have also seen tremendous healing with my patients as they have learned to embrace their difficult emotions.

If we want to live more fully and be our most authentic selves, we need to turn toward our pain, not try to suppress it. But what can help us get there? The tools of mindful attention, self-compassion, and acceptance—which all come together in a practice I call "The Door."

To do this practice yourself, make sure to start with emotions that aren't

STEP 2

Take a Curious Look at Whatever Walks in the Door

Mindfully observing what we're feeling can help us cope with whatever is before us. It can be useful to name our feelings—"Oh, that's hurt; that's jealousy; that's anger"—because, as simple as this sounds, we often don't pay attention to the nuances of what we're feeling. Consequently, important information gets lost along the way. Labeling our distressing emotions gives us a way of validating our inner experience, but it has the added benefit of dialing down their intensity.

It can also be beneficial to see our emotional "visitors" as temporary guests. Adding the phrase "in this moment" to a statement like "I am feeling stress, anger, or hurt" can help us with what is there without feeling overwhelmed. Other things you might say to yourself include:

- Can I allow myself to notice how this is showing up in my body and in my thoughts?
- If this feeling or part of me could talk, what might it say?
- What might it want or need?

Being curious rather than fearful or rejecting your emotions provides a better lens for understanding them.

Facing our dark emotions is essential to move past them, but it is not something we are taught how to do.

STEP 3

Give Yourself the Gift of Compassion

Besides pushing away uncomfortable feelings, many of us have been conditioned to judge our emotions in negative ways. We've learned that if we show sadness, it's a sign of weakness, that we're a bad person if we feel anger or jealousy, and that we should "move on" when we experience loss. When we come face-to-face with difficult emotions, we often tell ourselves to buck up and stop being silly or that there's something wrong with us.

When we practice mindfulness in combination with self-kindness and a recognition of our common humanity—the fact that we all suffer as human beings—we cultivate self-compassion, a quality that's been linked to psychological well-being.

To practice self-compassion, imagine sitting with a good friend who is suffering and think about how you might extend a gesture of compassion. What would your body language be like? How might you listen? What sensations would you feel around your heart?

Now picture that person extending compassion towards you. What might they say or do? What words would you find comforting or soothing?

Chances are, they wouldn't be telling you to cut it out or that you shouldn't be feeling this way. They might say, "That sounds really hard. I'm here for you." Or perhaps they would simply extend a hand.

When we can learn to sit mindfully with our own emotions and bring compassion to whatever we're experiencing, it's as if we have become that caring friend, sitting with ourselves. Learning to be there for ourselves, through the positive moments—and the painful ones—can be tremendously healing.

When we turn toward our sadness, we're less likely to be stuck in depression.

too intense. You might want to work with a skilled therapist, especially for more intense emotions. Here's what The Door involves.

While embracing our dark emotions takes courage and practice, using The Door technique allows us to open to a gift on the other side. Each time we practice being with our difficult emotions, we grow inner resources, learn to trust in our capacity to handle our experiences, develop resilience to move through life's challenges, and find ways to pursue what truly matters. Each of us has the power to face what is hard if we only open the door.

Beth Kurland is a clinical psychologist, public speaker, and author of three books, including "Dancing on the Tightrope: Transcending the Habits of Your Mind and Awakening to Your Fullest Life," from which this essay was adapted. This article was republished from Healthline.com

Trusting Our Gut Instincts— Or Not

Does the body really have a mind of its own? And if so who is really in charge?

JONI RAVENNA SUSSMAN

The enteric nervous system of our gastro intestines, or gut, has been described as the second brain which gives a different perspective on the idea of a "gut instinct."

We rely on our gut instincts all the time, as do other mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles. Any sentient being, in fact, must rely on this body-mind feedback if it is to stay alive, which it does in part by avoiding pain and seeking pleasure. We are predicting machines, in a sense, anticipating each moment and its potential for pleasure over pain. We automatically and naturally create an amalgam of past experience and present body-mind input to this end.

Much of this capacity is inherent, passed down through the ages. Tests with babies crawling on a wooden table covered in a large sheet of heavy glass shows they stop at the point at which the glass extends beyond the table. Though they wouldn't fall if they were to continue, they see the drop through the glass and instinct tells them to go no further.

It's empowering that we can predict danger intuitively, without having to engage in brain-taxing ratiocination for each and every little step. But should we ever ignore the signals the body gives us? Do our gut impulses always lead us in the right direction? Norbert Schwarz thinks the answer is yes and no. Schwarz is provost professor in the department of psychology and the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California and a co-director of the USC Dornsife Mind and Society Center.

He is also the recipient of many awards including, "The Distinguished Contribution Award of Society for Consumer Psychology."

Schwarz believes it's important for us to know the source of that body-mind response. It's especially important for consumers to understand how advertising agencies and marketing firms work in the new millennium and their techniques to manipulate our "urges" for financial or political gain—techniques based on years of his research.

Schwarz has conducted double-blind studies involving what he describes as "embodied metaphors." We all know that there are contextual factors such as mood, emotions and other such meta-cognitive experiences which can have profound effects on our choices. But Schwarz's work focuses on the body-mind feedback mechanism: the minute, physical responses to stimuli that unconsciously affect our decisions.

Smells Fishy? Don't Trust It.

For instance, one of Schwarz's tests involved subjects who were thought to be entering into a negotiation. One group was presented the facts and the contract in a particular fashion by a particular person.

The second group was presented the facts and the contract in the exact same fashion with the exact same person, but this time there was the faintest scent of fish in the air. The second group was less likely to sign the deal.

When asked afterward, none were aware they were reacting to the faint smell in the air. It was an embodied metaphor having a subliminal but powerful effect.

Subliminal advertising has been around since 1957, when a market researcher named James Vicary inserted the words "Eat Popcorn" and "Drink Coca-Cola" into a movie. And those 'single frame' words—which appeared just long enough for the subconscious to absorb but not long enough for the viewer to register—did the trick. There was an 18 percent increase in Coke sales and nearly a 60 percent increase in popcorn purchases.

But whereas those early subliminal marketing techniques relied on the written word, today's marketing industry knows how to use our other senses for a greater effect. The mechanics of our own body movements can trigger strong 'gut instincts.' This is the focus of Schwarz's work.

"Thirty years of psychological and marketing research shows that—Independent of semantic meaning and rational thought—our preferences and judgments are heavily influenced by modal, that is, sensory and motor components of our men-



It's especially important for consumers to understand how advertising agencies and marketing firms work.

tal representations," says Dr. Schwarz. "What we perceive through the senses—the body's minute muscular contractions and other physical responses—though unfelt by us on a conscious level, plays into our 'choices.'"

A Hidden Route to Consumer Preference

Because speech and food ingestion/rejection use the same related movements, those functions can overlap so that inward movements trigger approach impulses toward food while outward movements produce avoidance impulses.

Schwarz's studies found that the formation of certain words in the mouth can cause us to desire to eat something, or to reject it. Knowing this, marketing cake becomes easy. But the findings were so surprising that others conducted their own studies to confirm it.

For instance, in 2017, a German Psychologist, Sascha Topolinski, conducted a study wherein test subjects were told that a cake was made by BAKO, a word which engages the lips first, then the tongue, then finally the back of the throat, i.e., front to back, similar to ingestion.

However, when subjects were told that the same cake was made by KABO (articulation starts at the back of the throat and ends at the front of the mouth) they were less likely to purchase the cake. The mechanics used to formulate the word KABO simulate expulsion.

Just hearing the word caused participants to engage in unconscious, silent imitations of actually uttering the name, instigating a series of minute muscle movements, and the ensuing urges.

Even anticipated movement can trigger body feedback that will affect how, or whether, a person decides to act.

Electrodes were placed on the fingers of test subjects asked to sign a petition that was lying on a table with the pen to the left. Left-handed subjects were more likely to sign

the petition. However, when the pen was placed to the right of the petition, right-handed subjects were far likelier to sign.

The electrodes measured the minute muscle movements, the result of a mental simulation of reaching for the pen that happened without their awareness. Clearly, when less physical exertion was anticipated, the subject was more likely to sign. When tennis balls were placed in both hands of the subjects, this effect was gone. There was no greater proclivity to sign, regardless of where the pen lay. Gripping the balls precluded the mental simulation of reaching for the pen.

Perhaps most fascinating is the work done with Botox.

When we engage with others, mirror neurons in our eyes cause us to involuntarily mimic the expressions of the person we are speaking to, thereby internalizing the other's emotion. When the typical subject engaged with an angry person, the subject became angry too. This is one reason heated arguments easily escalate.

"People with Botox, however, will register the other person's anger later and less intensely because the body feedback-mimicry mechanism has been thwarted by the Botox, a neuro-muscular toxin," Schwarz says.

In 2018, Schwarz and Eryn J. Newman published a paper on how we evaluate information based on sound quality. They found that despite identical content, people evaluated scientific research and the researcher as less favorable when the audio quality of the TV, Radio, or other mode of message delivery, was low. This built on Schwarz's earlier visual work which found that the same message is less likely to be accepted as true when the print font is difficult to read.

The Take-Away

We need to know that we are making decisions based on facts, not irrelevant or manipulated body-mind feedback. As long as we're armed with the knowledge that our gut reactions are not always reliable, we can look more closely at why we're feeling a certain way, and think twice before we act on those feelings.

Similarly, next time you're on the phone, ask yourself if your poor phone connection is influencing the listener's evaluation of you. Maybe it's time to get a new carrier.

Joni Ravenna is a freelance writer specializing in health and wellness. Her articles have appeared in dozens of national and regional publications over the years. She is also a playwright and TV writer.





CONNECT TO LEAD

Motivation Through a Leadership Philosophy

Share your vision and purpose with clarity to help associates drive the mission forward

SCOTT MANN

I have a friend, Greg, who is the CEO of a wealth management company in New York City. He's also a former Marine infantryman. About a year ago, Greg decided he wanted to foster a high-performance culture within his company.

He could see the changes happening in our economy and he knew his company would have to play at their highest game if they were going to lead the industry through these turbulent times and thrive on the other side of it.

To do this, Greg had to create changes in his company culture. The New York City market environment can be pretty cutthroat and individualism often trumps the day. What Greg wanted to build was the same high-performance culture that he had learned in the Marine Corps that was all about the team before self, protecting people's dreams, and fighting for others. He knew he had to inculcate that culture in his people.

He wanted us to push the envelope because that's what Green Berets do.

Greg needed a strong leadership philosophy to pull this off. So I told him a story about one of my favorite group commanders in Special Forces in the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) back in the mid-'90s named Colonel Ed Phillips. Big Ed, as we called him, was a tall, lanky, six foot four Green Beret. He was very congenial, easy to talk to, but trust me, you never wanted to mistake his kindness for weakness. This guy was all business.

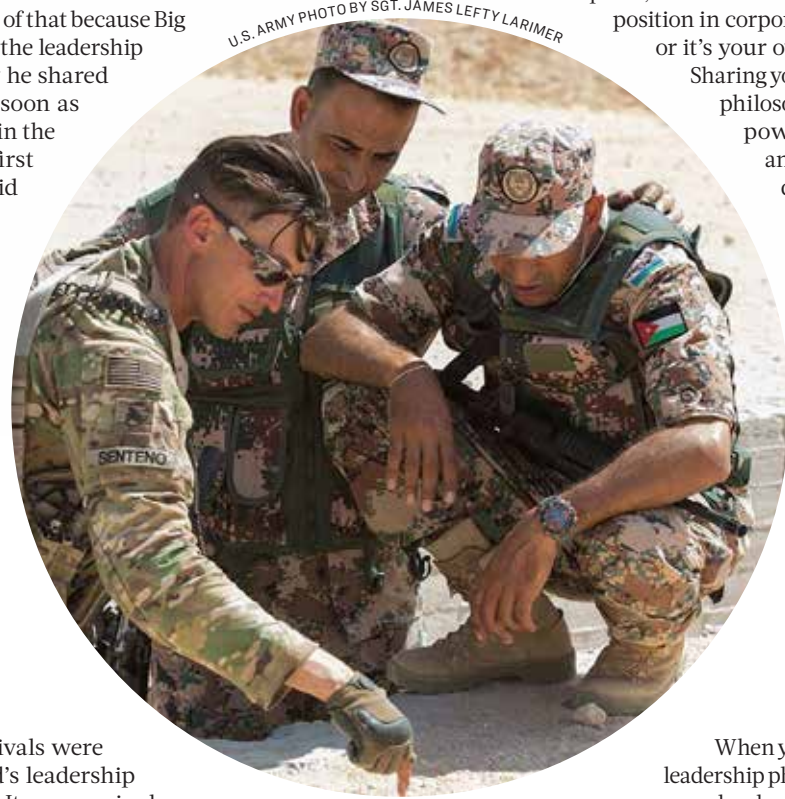
Big Ed's leadership philosophy was that he believed his Green Beret A-Teams down in Central and South America should absolutely go local in the sense that they should immerse and build relationships and connect with the locals in that area. He was adamant about getting as indigenous as we

possibly could, to speak the language, to know the culture at a micro level.

He also expected us to know the people, their family members' names, the names and birthdays of their kids, and when one's wife was pregnant. He called our Special Forces Group the 'Family Business', and he expected us to run it that way.

He also expected us to fail at times. He wanted us to dare greatly. He wanted us to push the envelope because that's what Green Berets do.

I knew all of that because Big Ed put it in the leadership philosophy he shared with us as soon as we arrived in the unit. The first thing we did



U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT. JAMES LEFTY LARIMER

Getting truly embedded with locals can be crucial to military success, as one Green Beret taught his soldiers through his leadership philosophy.

as new arrivals were read Big Ed's leadership philosophy. It was required. As I continued my career, I saw leaders—good and bad—who had a leadership philosophy. It was something I started to do myself. I saw the value in it because it shares who you are, why you're there, and where you're going, giving everyone a united sense of clarity.

Greg developed a leadership philosophy for his company and now whenever new people get hired,

they have to read it. Whenever he does an all-hands, he references that leadership philosophy. Whenever he does a training program, he trues back to it. When he sits down and does end-of-year bonuses and talks to his people about where they're going and how they're doing on an individual level, he references the leadership philosophy.

It becomes a leadership anchor point for where you're driving your organization to go, whether it's a nonprofit, or a mid-level management position in corporate America, or it's your own business. Sharing your leadership philosophy is such a powerful thing and your people deserve it.

When you write your leadership philosophy, tell your people who you are. What makes you tick? What do you stand for? What don't you stand for? Who do you work with? Who do you not work with? What are the things that matter to

you the most regarding the path of your organization? What's your ethos? Now, why do you do what you do? Why did you found this company? Why do you show up to work every day? Where do those leader attributes come

from in your life? Why is it important to you to lead? It's so critical that we know why. Simon Sinek is right, "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Humans are meaning-seeking creatures, so tell us why you do what you do, and we'll be more likely to follow you.

If your organization is a vessel, where are you going? Remember, as the leader you need to have a crystal-clear vision of a better world that doesn't yet exist. You've got to take that blank canvas of organizational vision and, through the power of narrative, human connection, and storytelling, paint a picture of what that future looks like. As you do it, you have to help me as the associate see how I can be the hero of that journey. Then, and only then, will I emotionally connect to it.

When you write your leadership philosophy, tell your people who you are.

When you manage to do this, I'll fight for your vision. I'll fight for your story. I'll tell your story better than you do when you're not around. I believe those are some of the strongest metrics for letting leaders know that they have built a high-performing culture.

Get started on change now. Go somewhere quiet and do the work. Reflect. Write your leadership philosophy down on paper. Share it with the relevant people in your organization. Weave it into the culture. The things we learned about leadership philosophies in the military are just, if not more, relevant in what you do in your world.

Scott Mann is a former Green Beret who specialized in unconventional, high-impact missions and relationship building. He is the founder of Rooftop Leadership and appears frequently on TV and many syndicated radio programs. For more information, visit RooftopLeadership.com

THE NO NONSENSE GUIDE TO BUILDING LEAN MUSCLE

Muscle burns more fat, keeps us safe, and lets us live a fuller life as we age

JENNIFER CHESAK

Get strong and lean while you spur fat loss and stave off the effects of aging.

Whether you call it strength, resistance, or weight training, anybody can benefit from gaining muscle. A strong core and limbs can help you avoid injury and make lugging groceries up the stairs easier.

Then there's the added bonus of a leaner composition and weight loss, if that's your goal.

Benefits of Strength Training:

- Improves balance
- Enhances posture
- Increases coordination
- Prevents injury
- Protects bone health
- Eases pain
- Reduces fat
- Prevents weight gain
- Slows age-related muscle loss



“

Weight training truly is the fountain of youth when it comes to keeping your body healthy.

Allison Jackson, certified personal trainer

“Weight training truly is the fountain of youth when it comes to keeping your body healthy,” explains Allison Jackson, a certified personal trainer.

“As we age, we generally lose muscle,” she explains, adding that in addition to building muscle, weight-bearing exercises are key to building stronger bones.

If you're worried about muscles changing the body you already love, keep reading. We've got the science-backed info on why muscle matters and how to build strength training into your workouts to fit your goals.

Muscle-Building Basics

You already own one of the best pieces of equipment for building muscle: your amazing body. And you don't have to follow a rigid routine to glean lean-inducing returns. You can choose the types of movements or fitness styles you enjoy and incorporate strength training into your lifestyle.

Aim for two or three strength training workouts per week, whether that's weightlifting, power yoga, high-intensity interval training (HIIT) or body weight exercises.

1. Pumping Iron Isn't the Only Way to Get Buff

Sure, you can head to the gym, but if you're tight on funds or prefer the privacy of home, you can get lean just by using your body weight.

A recent study shows that training with lighter loads and more repetitions is just as effective at building muscle as training with heavy weights and fewer reps. Just do the exercise until your muscles demand a break.

That means you can squat with no added weights and get a similar result as doing weighted squats—simply go until you can't do one more.

Strive for three sets, adding to your number of reps as you get stronger.

Continued on Page 9



After 30, we lose approximately 3 to 8 percent of our muscle mass per decade.

How the Convenience Fallacy Contributes to Clutter in Our Home

It only takes a few seconds to put something in a cupboard, but the clean surfaces last for days

JOSHUA BECKER

There are certain places in our homes where we leave out items because we think it is more convenient. For example, we leave something on a counter because it is easier for us to grab it the next time we need it.

This can happen at countless places in our home: the kitchen, the bathroom, the living room, the office, the bedroom.

Consider items like:

- small appliances on our kitchen counters
- toiletries beside our bathroom sinks
- office supplies on our home-office desk
- DVDs on the entertainment center
- tools on our tool benches
- art supplies, keys, canisters, magazines, newspapers, a knife block

By leaving these things out in the open, we think we're saving time when we need them and we think we're simplifying our lives, but the result is anything but. I call this the "convenience fallacy." It's a huge source of the visual clutter in our homes.

Sure, by leaving them out, you may save a couple seconds when you

How to Overcome the Convenience Fallacy:

1. Notice, and identify. Look around the room you are sitting in right now—maybe you are reading this in your living room, your bedroom, great room, or office for maybe you need to wait until you get home). Where can you see the convenience fallacy at play? A coffee maker, a teapot, a blender, a stack of unread magazines, or maybe even an unnecessary clock. Take note of how many items you leave out simply for "convenience-sake."

2. Clear unneeded possessions from cabinets and drawers. One reason people leave things out is because their cabinets are full. They don't have space to put appliances away. To over-

come the convenience fallacy in your home, you'll need to minimize the possessions that are hidden away. Once you've gotten rid of things in your drawers and cabinets, you can put more things away and keep that counter beautifully clean.

3. Find a new home, out of sight. Organizers will tell you it is best to keep the most frequently used items in-front of rarely used items, so they are easier to reach. That's good advice. Which of the items on your counter really do get used? And on what basis? Keep the most frequently used items stored out of sight, but near the front so they are easy to reach. In my home, that means the toaster and the coffee maker are in the front of our kitchen cabinet, while the teapot and hand mixer are in the back.

4. Be intentional at the beginning to store items away. Habits can be tough to break. Once you have found a new home for your convenience items, be intentional and diligent to put them

away—especially at the beginning. After a short while, you will begin to appreciate the empty space and those items will feel like clutter when you forget to put them away. But at the beginning, you'll need to re-program yourself through intention to put things away immediately after use.

5. Take special note of the new, empty space. There is a wonderful possibility in empty spaces. It keeps our eyes, minds, and attention focused on other things than material possessions. An empty space can be used for anything, at any

time. Energy is free to flow. And an uncluttered space is less likely to attract more clutter. Notice these benefits as you clear surfaces and keep them clutter free.

There are many different factors that contribute to the clutter in our home. The "convenience fallacy" is one of them.

Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker and the founder and editor of *Becoming Minimalist* where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit BecomingMinimalist.com



It's a huge source of the visual clutter in our homes.

ZARIYA MAXIM ALEXANDROVICH/SHUTTERSTOCK



Putting away items that are not in use, instead of "keeping them handy" will create visual calm in your home.

want to grab one of them. But for the other 99.9 percent of the time they're sitting out, where they create a visual distraction, get in the way, add to the disorganization of our spaces, and attract more clutter.

Consider those old CDs you've held on to for years in a CD tower in your family room. Since it would take very little time to pull a CD out of a storage cabinet and put it back when you're done, wouldn't it be better to store them out of sight instead of where it's contributing to clutter and acting as a visual distraction in your space?

The same goes for most, if not all, of the things we leave out for "convenience" around the house. They actually spend far more time as clutter than in service to our lives and our environment.

For example, if you make toast for breakfast, it will take you roughly three minutes to toast your bread. After that, the toaster will sit unused, on your counter, for the next 23 hours and 57 minutes.

Is leaving the toaster out where it's taking up space and creating visual distraction worth the few seconds you will save pulling it out when you're ready to drop your slice of bread into it in the morning? Think of all the times you've needed to move it to clean around, or behind, or had to shuffle it about to create more working space on your counter.

Rather than allowing these appliances to take up space, find a home for them in an easily accessed part of the kitchen, such as inside a cabinet or on a shelf. When you do, you will immediately reduce the amount of visible clutter for both you and your guests.

come the convenience fallacy in your home, you'll need to minimize the possessions that are hidden away. Once you've gotten rid of things in your drawers and cabinets, you can put more things away and keep that counter beautifully clean.

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This Is What Happens to Your Body When You Stop Drinking Alcohol

Alcohol can be fun and refreshing, but the toll it takes on our body isn't

Alcohol dehydrates you and triggers inflammation.



BOB SHUTTER/SHUTTERSTOCK

DEVON ANDRE

Alcohol can be used to celebrate, take the edge off, or accompany a meal. For some, alcohol consumes their lives and can be difficult to quit. Others only consume it in social settings. Regardless of your relationship with alcohol, you should still be aware that it must be consumed in moderation.

Some studies suggest a small amount is beneficial for health, while others suggest there is no safe amount to consume. But one thing is for certain—if you consume too much alcohol, it can lead to serious consequences, especially for your liver. You may have heard of "Dry January" or "Dry February," which are efforts to get people to give up booze. You may think it is a gimmick, but it can be wise to give your body a break from alcohol. Here are some reasons why.

9 Things That Happen When You Give up Alcohol

Brain tissue growth: Consuming large amounts of alcohol can lead to deficiencies in thiamine (vitamin B1). B1 is essential for tissue growth, especially in the brain, which can contribute to memory. The good news is that alcohol-induced memory problems are

reversible, as long as you quit drinking, or at least cut back significantly.

Improve liver health: We all know that alcohol can hurt the liver and long-term alcohol consumption can lead to irreversible damage. If you give up alcohol you will dramatically reduce your risk of liver disease.

Balance gut bacteria: Alcohol can disrupt the bacteria balance in the gut, and these imbalances can lead to other illnesses. Once you stop drinking, these essential bacteria can start to rebalance.

Improve digestion: Adding to the previous point, by quitting drinking, you will also notice that your digestion will improve as you will have less inflammation. Cutting out alcohol also lowers your risk of acid reflux and gastritis.

Sleep improvements: Although alcohol makes you tired, it actually disrupts your sleep, meaning you won't get a good night's rest. In fact, you'll probably wake up feeling more tired and less energized.

Clear skin: Alcohol dehydrates you and triggers inflammation, which can show up on your skin. You

may notice more wrinkles and fine lines, puffiness, and redness. Furthermore, if your alcohol consumption has led to liver problems, your skin may appear yellowish as a result of jaundice.

Healthier eating: When you're drinking, you often become hungry. While inebriated, you don't tend to make the best food choices. So, you opt for chips, fast food, and other processed foods that are unhealthy. Even the next day when you're hungover, you may continue eating unhealthily.

Weight loss: Alcohol contains a slew of calories. The more you drink, the more calories you're taking in. Pair that with poor food choices, and you set yourself up for added pounds.

You'll drink less over time: By eliminating alcohol for a while, you will find you drink less because you will enjoy feeling so good. It makes you more aware of how poorly alcohol makes you feel. Studies have

shown that people who take a break tend to drink less in the future, which is even better for your health.

Devon Andre holds a bachelor's of forensic science from the University of Windsor in Canada and a Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh. This article was first published on *Bel Marra Health*.

THE NO NONSENSE GUIDE TO BUILDING LEAN MUSCLE

Muscle burns more fat, keeps us safe, and lets us live a fuller life as we age

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2. Toss Out Rules About Reps

If you prefer holding lunges in a yoga class rather than doing walking lunges around your apartment, you'll still reap the strength benefits.

Repeating a movement to fatigue is a great way to gain strength, but muscle contraction of any kind will produce powerful results, says one small study.

Aim for a mix of isotonic (moving with muscle contraction) and isometric (non-moving, constant tension) exercises in your fitness regimen. If you've got achy joints, aim for more isometric exercises. Hold for 30 seconds to start and work your way up to more time.

Isotonic

- push-ups
- squats
- crunches
- donkey kicks
- triceps dips

Isometric

- plank
- Warrior Pose(s)
- wall sit
- boat pose
- glute bridge

For both types of exercises, try for 3 sets.

3. Bust the Moves That Give You the Most Bang

Whether doing reps or holding a static pose, compound exercises, which target multiple muscles or muscle groups, will make your efforts the most efficient.

Think burpees, side-plank rotations, and mountain climbers. These exercises often get your heart rate going and give a dose of cardio, especially if you do them as part of a HIIT circuit.

Target multiple muscles or muscle groups to make your efforts the most efficient.

4. Modify Movements to Suit Your Needs

Altering an exercise is all about meeting your body where it's at right now. If

your wrists aren't pleased, drop to your forearms. If you aren't ready for standard push-ups, use a wall or a bench so you can do them at an incline. Over time, you may be able to work your way to the floor.

Most exercises have several modifications. Or you can try a "sister move" that produces similar results. Step ups can sub in for box jumps, for example, if you don't have a box, are worried about banging your shins, or just want to go easier on your pelvic floor.

Before getting started, consider doing your own research or schedule a session with a personal trainer who can teach you moves that make sense for you.

The Loss That Comes With the Gains

If you're striving to sculpt a leaner physique or you want to lose fat, gaining muscle can help you do both. Muscle also protects your body from injury and can ease pain by addressing posture or body imbalances.

1. Look Leaner

If you compare a pound of muscle to a pound of fat, you'll see that muscle takes up less space than fat. This concept leads to confusion because of the myth that muscle weighs more than fat. But a pound weighs a pound, regardless of what it contains.

Ultimately, adding muscle can give you a more svelte look in your skinny jeans, even when the number on the scale doesn't change.

And regardless of your gender, you're not going to get a "bulked-up" body-builder look without a serious fitness and diet program specialized for that purpose. So ditch that myth if it's holding you back.

2. Burn More Calories, Easier

Although the difference isn't huge, muscle tissue torches more calories than fat tissue does, both during physical activity and at rest. If you're trying to increase your calorie burn, increase your muscle mass.

3. Amp Up The Afterburn

The process of the body attempting to recover or return to its resting state after a workout produces

an extra calorie burn that can last for several hours to more than a full day.

This afterburn effect is known in scientific lingo as excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC). The higher the intensity of your workout, the longer EPOC will last.

Research shows that strength training can enhance and extend EPOC, especially when it's done as part of a HIIT workout.

4. Change How You Eat

Although more research needs to be done on this topic, research suggests that increasing your muscle mass may make you less hungry, which could help with weight loss and decrease the risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

5. Prevent Accidents

Many of our daily movements involve our transverse abdominal, located behind the "six pack." It acts like a girdle wrapping around the spine.

When it's strong, we can protect ourselves from falls or other mishaps, and enhance our form and ability

to do the activities we love.

6. Better Posture

Our muscles hold us up, whether we're standing in line at the coffee shop or sitting at our desks. If we have weak muscles and slump because of fatigue, we might experience aches or stiffness.

If we strengthen our muscles, however, we can hold a good posture for longer and stave off pain, according to a study.

Strength training can also correct imbalances in the body like lordosis or uneven shoulders that could lead to discomfort.

7. Ward Off Issues As We Get Older

After age 30, we say goodbye to approximately 3 to 8 percent of our muscle mass per decade, with even more significant losses later in life. This muscle loss may account for more fatigue, weight gain, and increased risk for fracture.

We can ward off age-related muscle loss, termed sarcopenia, with exercise that includes a combo of cardio and strength training.

Get Stronger With These Courses and Apps

You can craft your own muscle-making routine, but if you're

looking for some guidance, ideas, or just a jump start, you can follow a program that fits your preferences, lifestyle, and budget.

- DailyOM gives you a list of 3-week courses to choose from, each with instructor-led video workouts that show up in your inbox. Courses are "pay what you want," and once you've made the purchase, you can access your courses repeatedly. DailyOM caters to yogis and people in need of joint friendly HIIT-based workouts.

- Freeletics offers take-anywhere, no-equipment sessions based on your goals, current fitness level, and age. The subscription-based app teaches you to use your own body weight to get results via customized, guided plans. Workout recommendations will change based on your feedback.

- BodyBoss sends you a 12-week progressive HIIT program. Their one-time payment is more economical than a recurring gym membership and it includes a bonus pre-training section to prepare you for the main action. Share your progress, enjoy camaraderie, learn helpful modifications, and glean motivation from the online Facebook community. The program and community are geared toward women, but all genders can benefit from the movements.

- Mark Lauren's Bodyweight Training provides more than 200 exercises you can do using your body weight and everyday items. Tackle any of the 10-week programs that fit your fitness level or goals. Pay \$5 for the app download and then choose which in-app purchases you want.

Realize Your Power

The benefits of muscle-building transcend giving you an athletic or lean physique. Adding brawn can give you confidence to do new things, improve your health, amp up your life enjoyment, and keep you feeling agile and able throughout the years. That's reason enough to hold that plank.

Jennifer Chesak is a Nashville-based freelance book editor and writing instructor. She's also an adventure travel, fitness, and health writer for several national publications. She earned her Master of Science in Journalism from Northwestern's Medill. This article was first published on *Healthline*.



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Why Kids Younger Than 12 Don't Need OTC Cough and Cold Remedies

Complications and dangers from cough and cold remedies outweigh the benefits of symptom relief

EDWARD BELL

The common cold season is here, and if you have children, you will likely feel their suffering from these annoying upper respiratory tract viral infections. Due to their lack of immunity, children experience more colds than adults. With each cold producing symptoms of nasal congestion, runny nose, cough, and mild fever lasting up to seven to 10 days, it may seem that children are nearly continuously sick.

Parents certainly want their ill children to feel better, and naturally, they want to help. A frequent solution is over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, which are heavily advertised to treat many maladies, including colds. A stroll down your local pharmacy drug aisle will highlight the numerous products available for adults and children.

It is tempting to buy one or more of these OTC drug products to help your child. However, for children younger than 12 years of age, it is best not to use commonly advertised OTC cough and cold drug products. These products lack supportive clinical study efficacy and safety data, an issue I've studied as a professor of pharmacy practice.

Children Are Not Just Small Adults

When treating children with OTC or prescription drugs, it is important to understand that young children differ significantly from the adult population with respect to drug efficacy and adverse effects.

Over the past 30 years, we have learned much more about pediatric pharmacology and drug action and behavior, known as pharmacokinetics, and differences between children and adults. Prior to this, and even today to some extent, health care professionals assumed that drugs functioned and behaved similarly in children as in adults.

Based on this assumption, health practitioners often only reduced the prescribed amount of a drug to a child based on a proportion of the child's body weight to an adult. For example, a provider would prescribe 50 percent of an adult drug dose for a child with 50 percent body weight of an adult. The efficacy of OTC cough and cold product active ingredient, as demonstrated in adult studies, was assumed to be similar in children.

However, we have learned, and are continuing to learn, that this strategy is not accurate and can be dangerous. Most drugs are not specifically

studied and evaluated in children prior to their labeling by the FDA and availability to the public. A safe and effective drug dose and dose schedule are derived from these formal studies and evaluations. But without these formal studies, pediatric-specific drug pharmacology is not accurately evaluated and determined. In addition, a physician can legally prescribe any drug for a child, even if there aren't data supporting its efficacy and safety in children.

OTC Drugs Regulated Differently Than Rx Drugs

FDA regulation of OTC drug products differs from prescription drug regulation. Active ingredients in OTC drug products are evaluated and approved by therapeutic category, such as the cough and cold therapeutic category. In a major undertaking begun in 1972, the FDA has been reviewing OTC drug product categories for safety and efficacy, and it continues to do so.

Pediatric OTC cough and cold products have seen significant regulatory changes in recent years. In 2007, several health care experts petitioned the FDA to carefully review pediatric

efficacy and safety data of OTC cough and cold products, requesting that these products be specifically labeled "not for use in children younger than six years of age".

In 2008, the FDA recommended that OTC cough and cold products not be given to children younger than two years old. The trade group representing OTC drug product manufacturers, the Consumer Healthcare Products Association, additionally announced that these products would be labeled "not for use in children younger than four years old". The FDA agreed, and this remains the current status of pediatric age labeling for OTC cough and cold products.

In addition, reviews of the medical literature indicate that OTC drug ingredients are actually ineffective in reducing cold symptoms in children. OTC cough and cold products can be dangerous to use as well, with more than 100 deaths of infants and young children described in published reports where these products were the sole cause or important contributive causes.

Although several doses of pediatric OTC cough/cold products are unlikely to be toxic, these reports have described scenarios where the products were used inappropriately, by administration of doses too large, doses given too frequently, inaccurate measurement of liquid doses, or administration of similar active ingredient drugs given from numerous OTC products resulting in accumulative large doses.

These mistakes were easily made by parents, considering the difficulty in accurately measuring out small liquid doses and a desire for the drugs to help leading to overdosage.

A Word of Caution Regarding Codeine

Recent studies and recommendations have significantly altered our use of another drug historically used to treat cough in children—codeine. It is an opioid, and it is still available over the counter in some cough medicines in some states. It is available with a prescription in all states.

We have learned in recent years that codeine is metabolized differently from subject to subject. Codeine alone has very little useful pharmacologic activity, but the liver chemically alters it into its active form, morphine, and another chemical. Morphine is dangerous, as it suppresses breathing. It must be used cautiously even in adults.

For many years, codeine has been used for treating pain and cough in children and adults. Recent evaluations, however, have determined that its clinical efficacy for these uses is inferior to other available drugs. We have learned that the amount of morphine produced from codeine liver metabolism can vary widely from person to person, a result of genetic differences.

Some individuals may convert codeine to a lot of morphine, while others may convert codeine to much less morphine. Evidence has accumulated over the past 10 years demonstrating that codeine can produce a significant decrease in breathing in some infants and children.

More than 20 cases of fatal respiratory depression have been documented in infants and children. In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics published a warning on the dangers of administering codeine to infants and children, recommending that its use for all purposes in children, including cough and pain, be limited or stopped.

Try These Remedies Instead

When your child next suffers from a cold, instead of reaching for an OTC cough and cold product, use an OTC nasal saline drop or spray product to help with nasal congestion. You can also run a cold air humidifier in his or her room at night to help loosen nasal congestion. Acetaminophen or ibuprofen can be given as needed for fever.

If your child is coughing enough to be uncomfortable or to prevent nighttime sleep, try giving honey, so long as he or she is 1 or older. Honey has been recently shown by several clinical studies to be an effective cough suppressant and is likely to be much safer than codeine and OTC cough and cold products.

These therapies have been endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics. When using these treatments in infants and young children, it is always wise to speak with your child's pediatrician first, as several more serious illnesses may initially produce symptoms similar to those of a common cold.

Edward Bell is a professor of pharmacy practice at Drake University. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

A Morning Walk Can Cure Blood Pressure Problems in Older Adults

Brief morning exercise, and some breaks in sitting throughout the day as effective as medication, researchers find

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



A short walk in the morning can cure hypertension without drugs—and their potential side effects.



EMILY LUNARDO

Morning exercise combined with short walking breaks during the day can lower blood pressure in older adults, a new study finds.

The study revealed that at least 30 minutes of walking in the morning is enough to support healthy blood pressure throughout the day. Furthermore, taking frequent walking breaks throughout the day can improve benefits from morning exercise.

The study looked at men and women aged 55 to 80 who were overweight or obese. Researchers aimed to uncover the effects that morning exercise and prolonged sitting had on blood pressure. Furthermore, they wanted to determine if frequent walking breaks throughout the day could enhance morning exercise benefits.

Lead author Dr. Michael Wheeler explained, "Traditionally, the health effects of exercise and sedentary behavior have been studied separately. We conducted this study because we wanted to know whether there is a combined effect of these behaviors on blood pressure."

The 67 participants endured three different scenarios: Uninterrupted sitting for eight hours; one-hour sitting, 30-minute exercise, and 6.5 hours of sitting; and one-hour sitting followed by 30 minutes exercise and sitting that



was interrupted every 30 minutes with three minutes of light intensity walking for 6.5 hours. Blood pressure and adrenaline were measured repeatedly throughout.

Blood pressure was found to be lower when participants exercised in the morning compared to when they did not. Bigger benefits were seen in women who exercised in the morning and took frequent walking breaks. Men did not see extra benefits for taking frequent walking breaks.

Wheeler added, "For both men and women, the magnitude of reduction in average systolic blood pressure following exercise and breaks in sitting, approached what might be expected from antihypertensive medication in this population to reduce the risk of death from heart disease and stroke. However, this reduction was greater for women."

Future research should examine if similar results occur in younger adults who are not overweight or obese. "As the proportion of those who are overweight with higher blood pressure increases with age, adopting a strategy of combining exercise with breaks in sitting may be important to control and prevent the development of high blood pressure," Wheeler concluded.

Emily Lunardo studied medical sociology at York University with a strong focus on the social determinants of health and mental illness. This article was first published on *BeMarraHealth*.

Is Love Losing Its Soul in the Digital Age?

Love in an intimate thing made more difficult by the glare of social media

FIRMIN DEBRABANDER

Instagram users have taken to issuing "weekiversary posts," where they diligently mark the duration of their romances. It is often used by newlyweds to gush over their first week of marriage. An article in *The New York Times* explained how weekiversary posts have the unintended—or very much intended—consequence of shaming people who are not in love. The article also noted that this phenomenon makes some doubt the intensity of their own relationship. They wonder why their partners are not similarly stary-eyed and gushing online. Some even admitted that this phenomenon prompted them to stay in relationships longer than they should have; they go on celebrating their weekiversaries, just to keep up appearances.

In truth, this could apply to any of the social media platforms, where people increasingly feel the need to act their lives in real time in a public format, documenting every event and incident, no matter how remarkable or mundane. As a philosopher researching the topic of privacy, I found myself thinking about the brave new culture of digital sharing.

What does it say about love that many are compelled to live their romances aloud, in a detailed fashion?

People increasingly feel the need to act their lives in real time in a public format.



Why Display Your Love? On one hand, there is nothing new here. Most of us seek the approval of others—even before our own, sometimes. Others' approval, or their envy, makes our joy sweeter.

Philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau recognized something like this when he distinguished between "amour de soi" and "amour propre"—two different forms of self-love. The former is love that is instinctual and not self-reflective. Rousseau sees it in presocial man, who is unconcerned with what other people think of him. Largely, he loves himself unconditionally, without judgment.

Society, which complicates our lives irredeemably, introduces amour propre. This is self-love mediated through the eyes and opinions of others. Amour propre, in Rousseau's view, is deeply flawed. It is hollow, flimsy, if not downright fraudulent. The opinions and judgment of others change rapidly and do not make for a firm foundation for honest, enduring, confident self-love and any emotions related to or rooted in it.

This suggests an unflattering view of weekiversary posts. Are they just one's way of discharging the need for amour propre—seeking the approval, and stoking the envy of online witnesses? Are they for one's lover at all? Or, are they for public affirmation?

Curating our Life Stories

Is there a more positive way to make sense of weekiversary posts?

Philosopher Paul Ricoeur argued that humans have an inherent need to view their lives in a narrative fashion. This is a prime way in which a person makes sense of his or her world.

Specifically, one aims to project a narrative structure onto life, and give it a beginning, a climax and, hopefully, a fitting conclusion. The individual also wishes to situate his life story within a greater



narrative, be it social, historical, or cosmic. Social media gives us newfound powers to curate the story of our lives, and if need be, change characters, dominant plot lines or background themes, how and when we like. In documenting everyday events and occurrences, we could even elevate them and lend them a degree of significance.

So, it might seem perfectly natural that people would like to narrate their budding romances.

I am now long and happily married, but I remember how first love is both exhilarating and confusing. It's a mess of emotions to work out and understand.

Love is largely a private relationship and demands intimacy.

Among the many mixed messages issued by family, society, and the media, it is often difficult to know how best to navigate romance and determine if you are doing things right or if you have found "the one."

In fact, I sought to get a handle on it all by writing down my many thoughts. This helped give me clarity. It objectified my thoughts—I literally projected them on paper before me, and could better understand which were more resonant, powerful, and pressing.

Love and Insecurity

Social media, on the other hand, is not designed for introspection or soul-searching: Posts must be relatively short, eye-catching, and declarative. Twitter emissions only tolerate 280 characters.

Ambiguity has no place there. Social media isn't the place to hash through a host of con-

flicting emotions. You are either in love, or you are not—and if you are in love, why declare it if it isn't blissful?

As Facebook discovered, negative posts tend to lose followers—and many people want to keep up their viewership. Legal scholar Bernard Harcourt argues that social media sharing

evokes the great American tradition of entrepreneurship. From this perspective, in issuing weekiversary posts, individuals are creating an identity and a story—they are generating a brand that they can market widely.

It's hard to see how this phenomenon contributes to or makes for lasting and fulfilling relationships. If, for example, as Ricoeur says, social media effusions are an attempt to elevate the mundane, the simple, the every day, and lend it special meaning, it begs the question: Why might one feel the need to do this repeatedly, persistently?

I would argue that it betrays an air of insecurity. After all, at some point, all the affirmation one needs should come from your lover.

True Love

There is an understandable need for young lovers to pronounce their joy in public. But love, when it matures, does not live publicly.

Loving couples are not necessarily easy to pick out in public. I think of my parents, and my in-laws, married for nearly 50 years. They can sit with each other in comfortable silence for long periods of time. They can also communicate with each other without saying a word.

Love is largely a private relationship and demands intimacy. Only in intimacy does the inherent ambiguity or complexity of love emerge. Only in intimacy are you and your partner fully seen and known, with all your shortcomings or contradictions—and they are forgiven.

It is in these intimate moments that lovers learn to tolerate ambiguity, negotiate differences, and endure.

Firmin DeBrabander is a professor of philosophy at Maryland Institute College of Art. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

WISE HABITS

Cooking Healthful Joyful Meals With a Picky Family

Strategies to get your family on board with healthier food

LEO BABAUTA

Shifting from a convenient but unhealthy diet to one of healthy, delicious food can be a challenge when you're living alone—but there's a whole new level of difficulty if you are part of a family.

The problem: while you might want to change to a new style of eating, picky eaters (kids and spouses) might disagree with the change. Who wants to eat kale when fried chicken and pizza are go-to staples? Who wants to eat oats and fruit when Pop-Tarts and sausages are the usual breakfast foods?

Well, me. And maybe you. But how do we deal with a family full of picky eaters? A woman in my Sea Change Program asked me: "I've got 2 kids who are picky and a husband who doesn't generally like vegetables and really hates having the same meal 2 nights in a row. I know that you have a big family and I'm sure there's someone in your household that is picky. :) How has this impacted the way you or your wife meal plans? I really want to simplify my grocery list and for all of us to eat healthier."

I don't claim to have all the answers but we have been somewhat successful here with our family of 8. It took a while, and in truth, we still have plenty of picky eaters in our family.

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Children can be especially picky eaters, but that doesn't mean you should give up on feeding them healthier food.

That said, I'll share what has worked for us:

1. We try to find things that the whole family likes that are healthy and tasty. That might mean veggie tacos, veggie spaghetti (with whole wheat noodles if we can get away with it), sushi bowls, or anything else they might all like.
2. Other times, we cook something less nutritious that they enjoy, and either join them or cook our own meals, which we might make to last for a few days.
3. We often make a lot of food for the family dinner and then have leftovers for lunch, and possibly another dinner or two. For example, we might make a big pot of soup or chili. If someone in your family doesn't like the same dinner twice in a row, they might be open to having it again in a few days.
4. We talk to the kids and try to get them to explore foods they don't always like. This doesn't always work, though. But it's worth an ongoing conversation. You might try this with your husband as well. It helps to cook the vegetables in different ways that make them tastier. This can get them to open up to trying them. For example, if they don't like kale, they might enjoy kale chips baked with olive oil and seasonings.
5. Sometimes we cook a dish that has something

one of the kids doesn't like, mushrooms for example, but we cook the mushrooms on the side and allow them to leave off the mushrooms. This can get complicated but sometimes it's not too hard.

6. If someone doesn't like the dinner, they can just have a little of it and then make themselves a PB&J sandwich or grilled cheese or something. Our kids can cook simple things for themselves.

7. Finally, we ask everyone involved in meal planning. Everyone looks for meal ideas online. Vote on what to eat. Take one meal a week to cook themselves. If they cook it, they're likely to eat it.

You don't have to do all of these, but there might be a couple of ideas here that work for you. In the end, embrace the Zen Habits philosophy of small, gradual change. You don't have to do all of this overnight. But there's also the Zen Habits philosophy of loving the change you're creating. Try to find how you can show them that this is a joyful change to delicious nutritiousness.

Leo Babauta is the author of six books, the writer of "Zen Habits," a blog with over 2 million subscribers, and the creator of several online programs to help you master your habits. Visit ZenHabits.net

The Power and Science of Forgiveness

Moving past resentment and anger can be difficult, but offers profound rewards

ANDREA DONSKY

“I forgive you.” These three words rival the other big three when it comes to their importance and impact on the speaker, the receiver, and even those who observe the process of forgiveness.

True forgiveness, like true love, cannot be faked or forced. Forgiveness is something you know in your gut. It is a state of being you arrive at after going through other phases; in other words, it doesn't happen overnight.

Forgiveness is not simply about letting something go and moving on. You need to experience and let go of the anger, fear, doubt, betrayal, and desire for revenge.

You also need to be ready to move on.

In addition, as noted by Bob Enright, a psychologist at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, who has studied forgiveness for decades, true forgiveness includes empathy and compassion toward the injuring individual before you can forgive completely.

Clearly, the act of forgiveness doesn't happen overnight. For some people, this range of emotions takes weeks. For others, the process is much longer. The important part is that forgiveness and a feeling of contentment is at the end of the journey.

What Is Forgiveness?

Forgiveness means that you accept what happened rather than thinking about what “coulda, shoulda, woulda,” didn't happen. In other words, you let go of the event or circumstance, realizing that holding onto the resentment, anger and desire for revenge does not serve you at all. Forgiveness means being present in the moment and relishing the freedom it gives you.

Freedom is another word often associated with forgiveness. Oprah Winfrey said that “Forgiveness is giving up the hope that the past could be any different.” When you give up that hope, you are untethered; you are free from the bonds of wishing and waiting for something that cannot be and free to move forward where you can blossom and grow.

Freedom is another word often associated with forgiveness.

What Happens Before You Can Forgive

Opportunities to practice forgiveness come up when we are presented with a situation that causes us to feel that someone has done wrong to us or someone we care. Perhaps a man cut you off in traffic. Maybe a co-worker took credit for a program you developed. Your spouse or partner may have been flirting with someone else. A friend stood you up for a date or meeting. A loved one was robbed or injured with malice.

The most natural emotion to come up in such situations is anger and sometimes a desire to get even—revenge.

Even though anger is not often a healthy emotion to experience, it can be expressed and funneled into positive actions and thoughts rather than negative ones.

Behaving in a sane, calm, and mature manner when you've been wronged doesn't mean you are weak. In fact, it demonstrates that you have the maturity and ability to put aside destructive thoughts and actions. You can then strive to make a peaceful arrangement.

Banishing the thought of revenge can be challenging when you see someone get away with something and you can't take action against it. That's when you need to deny the person who annoyed or harmed you the power to make you feel unhappy or angry.

You are the boss of you, the other person is not.

Do not allow someone else to take away your peace of mind. This is easier said than done, but the key is “practicing” forgiveness. Your practice will make you better at it, and you can better put it into action and forgive when you are ready.

The Science of Forgiveness

Research has shown that some people think that practicing forgiveness is an act of weakness. Some even go so far as to make excuses for the offending individual. The fact is, staying angry is easier than working through your feelings and learning to forgive.

Forgiveness takes moral and emo-

tional strength. Meanwhile, anger and resentment take a toll on your physical, emotional, and mental health—as well as your relationships.

One of the earliest findings of research of forgiveness comes from Dr. Frederic Luskin, co-founder of the Stanford Forgiveness Project at Stanford University. Luskin, as well as some of his colleagues, found that the act of forgiving someone can raise your optimism and mood, while not forgiving and holding resentment is correlated with anxiety, hostility, depression, and major psychiatric disorders, as well as physical health problems.

Luskin reports that “When you don't forgive you release all the chemicals of the stress response,” which include adrenaline, cortisol, and norepinephrine. That means every time you recall the distressing situation, you release these damaging chemicals. If, however, you forgive someone, you don't experience this spike in hormones.

A number of experts have focused their research on the science of forgiveness and come up with programs designed to tackle this emotional dilemma. In a 2015 book entitled “Forgiveness and Health,” authors, Loren Toussaint, professor of psychology at Luther College in Iowa, and Everett Worthington explore the physical and psychological benefits of granting forgiveness. They explain that because chronic stress is damaging to our health, “forgiveness allows you to let go of the chronic interpersonal stressors that cause us the undue burden.”

The healthy route for body, mind, and spirit seems to be forgiveness. Information on steps you can take to achieve true forgiveness may be found online.

Andrea Donsky is an author, registered holistic nutritionist, editor-in-chief of NaturallySavvy.com, and co-founder of The Healthy Shopper Inc. and Naturally Savvy Media. This article was first published on NaturallySavvy.com

Do not allow someone else to take away your peace of mind.

Forgiving someone can deepen your ability to understand them.

