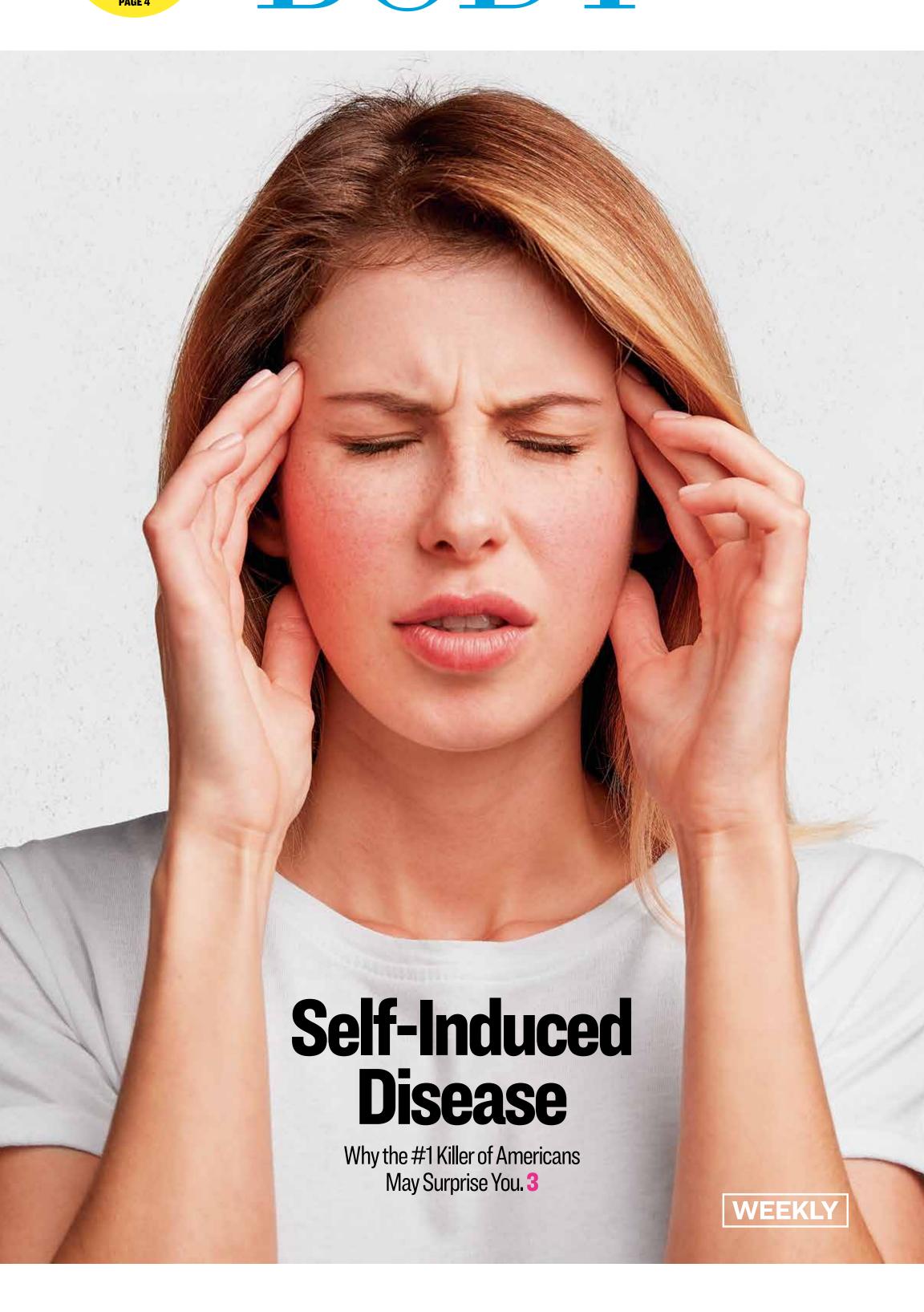
WEEK 9, 2019 • 1

THE EPOCH TIMES



RIDING MOTORCYCLES TO RELIEVE STRESS

New research suggests a good way to relax is to take to two wheels

study's primary interests like sensory focus

urine and saliva samples to measure levels

"You get a view into the consciousness and

All of the participants, some of whom came

from as far away as Tijuana, Mexico, sat qui-

etly before providing their urine and saliva

samples. The EEG caps were then placed

a designated 22-minute route in both a car

and motorcycle. Participants then provided a

second urine and saliva sample after the ride.

Half of the riders rode and drove in Angeles

Crest outside of Los Angeles, and the other half rode and drove Lake Henshaw under

The results of the study were intriguing,

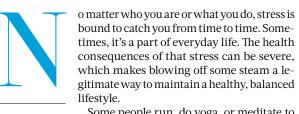
normal riding conditions.

on participants heads before riding down

of cortisol, a stress hormone.

a motorcycle," Dr. Vaughn explained.

ANDREW THOMAS



Some people run, do yoga, or meditate to relieve severe stress. Few people who don't already ride, however, likely think of motorcycles when it comes to relaxation. But recent research study conducted by Dr. Don Vaughn and his team at the University of California-Los Angeles provide evidence that riding a motorcycle reduces stress, and increases focus, alertness, heart rate, and adrenaline.

Dr. Vaughn doesn't ride, but he does engage in similarly exhilarating activities like snowboarding and skydiving. Eight months ago Harley Davidson contacted him about conducting a research study on riding's effect on the human brain.

After realizing the study was feasible, Dr. Vaughn and his team decided they would try to measure stress, sensory focus, alertness, adrenaline, and heart rate for the study. Usually, when studying brain activity scientists are confined to the lab, and the neuroscientist perceived this study as an opportunity to get out into the real world.

"No lab experiment can duplicate the experience of riding a motorcycle just like with most activities. It's just hard to duplicate any kind of sports," Dr. Vaughn told The Epoch Times.

Motorcycles and Science

Jacey Correia, a 34-year-old owner of an event production company in San Diego, California, was one of the 77 riders who participated in the study. She's been riding
The Experiment a motorcycle for three years and owns a 2018 Harley-Davidson Street Bob. Correia happened to hear about the research study from Dr. Vaughn's sister-in-law, and was immediately interested.

"I felt like I was part of a science experiment. It was rad," Correia told The Epoch

In order to record and measure the brain activity of the participants, Dr. Vaughn and his team used an electroencephalogram, commonly abbreviated as EEG. The EEG was placed as a cap on top of the rider's heads under their helmets to record the electriISWANTO ARIF/UNSPLASH

showed a greater increase in alertness and sensory focus while riding a motorcycle than driving a car

This was measured by subjecting the participants to an auditory tone irrelevant to the task at hand.

The EEG results demonstrated that riders' brain activity showed they were able to reduce the response to the tone within onetenth of a second while on a motorcycle. In the car, the participants would focus on the tone longer and were less able to filter them out. This result suggests the participants were less engaged while driving and therefore more easily distracted.

The results from the urine and saliva samples taken before and after the rides indicated there was a 27 percent increase in adrenaline levels and an 11 percent increase in heart rate from an EKG. Furthermore, there was a 28 percent decrease in the stress hormone cortisol after the ride

The same results were not found while driving a car. The team only saw significant changes in stress relief, sensory focus, alertness, adrenaline, and heart rate while participants were riding the motorcycle.

"Overall, the excitatory level of it looked like light exercise. It looked like the types of changes in adrenaline and heart rate that you might expect from going for a morning jog," said Dr. Vaughn.

cal activity of the brain, and measure the Riding to Relieve Stress

According to Dr. Vaughn, the reduction in cortisol levels is significant because high and alertness. Participants also provided levels are associated with decreased bone density, slowed wound healing time, the destruction of brain cells, and memory inthe experience of people while they're riding

The results were also consistent with Correia's anecdotal description of how she feels before, during, and after a ride. Before a ride, she's typically excited to get going. During the ride she finds herself in a calm, meditative state. Finally, after the ride she wants to get right back on the bike. She also rides with a group, which adds a social aspect to the experience.

"It's a really calming feeling once I actually get out onto my ride. If you can picture it, sweeping curves and beautiful landscapes, that's the kind of riding that I really enjoy. And it is a de-stresser. We have been seeing that for a long time, for years, but until this study there wasn't really any proof of that,"



Why the **#1 Killer** of Americans May Surprise You

PATRICIA J. SULAK



s a practicing physician for over 30 years, I realized that more and more of my patients were becoming unhealthier and unhappier. This was often due to a self-induced lifestyle, including an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, substance abuse, financial irresponsibility, and an inability to deal with the usual stressors of daily life. As a medical school professor and researcher, I also had the latest data on the declining health of our nation, confirming what I was seeing in my practice: The #1 killer of Americans is an epidemic of self-induced disease and disability.

When I graduated from medical school in 1980, about one in 10 Americans were obese compared to one in 3 today. This high rate of obesity is leading to diabetes, high blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol levels, heart attacks, strokes, destruction of joints, higher rates of some cancers, includ-

The #1 killer of Americans is an epidemic of self-induced disease and disability.



We currently have an abundance of selfinduced diseases.

I was also seeing an increasing number of my pa-

medical illnesses.

tients on pain medications for all sorts of chronic conditions. It's not that we have new diseases that cause pain. We appear to have less of a tolerance for the pain Growing up on a farm, we often hurt ourselves

ing breast and uterus, and numerous other costly

How did this happen? Two key contributors:

our food is unhealthy, and we are leading a sed-

working, and my mother had severe degenerative we continually work on growing and striving to joint disease. But we didn't even have an aspirin be the best model we are capable of being, our in the house. Pain medications have become so pervasive that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced in 2013 that we have a "prescription painkiller epidemic among" is to lose yourself in the service of others." The women.

There are almost one million emergency department visits annually by women for drug misuse and abuse. About 15,000 deaths among women annually are attributable to drug overdoses. That's more than deaths from ovarian cancer.

And despite all the conveniences of everyday life, an ever-increasing percentage of my patients are stressed out, in unsuccessful marriages and relationships, often depressed, requiring medications for anxiety, mood disorders, and sleep disturbances. The statistics are alarming. The CDC has announced there are now more deaths from suicide than from motor vehicle accidents, with the suicide rate increasing 30 percent since 1999 in middle-aged people ages 35-64.

We currently have an abundance of self-induced diseases the medical industry is failing to adequately address. Of the 2.5 million deaths that occur annually in the United States, hundreds of thousands are preventable. Besides the two major lifestyle causes-poor diet and lack of exercise-the other leading contributors to premature death and disability are substance abuse such as smoking, alcohol and drugs, and stress.

Increasingly, Americans are spending billions on "health" products or relying on their health care providers to manage self-induced problems through prescription medications, procedures, is a mandatory component to optimal health, takand surgeries, rather than altering the behavior that caused the problems to begin with.

As a doctor, I became frustrated with my inability to help solve the problems. There wasn't enough time in a short office visit to discuss all the preventive measures along with suggestions for implementation. The situation was made worse by my lack of training in wellness issues.

To be honest, I was not a prime example of wellness myself, often stressed out, angry, and definitely not eating well. My marriage was not ideal either. Frustration with my patient's health status and my own drove me to seek out a new positive direction. My physician husband and I decided to focus on being healthier and happier. I began I can use my time, treasures and talents to help investigating all aspects of wellness, spending several years reviewing literature, reading books by respected authors, attending seminars, personally — to be guided by a higher power, not my culture conducting conferences, and most importantly, driven ego. When I'm living my purpose, I'm at my implementing the concepts I was teaching into best. When I'm not, I'm allowing my ego to create my own life. The result: my husband and I are now havoc in my life. Who are you? That's a question healthier and happier than ever, and our marriage you must answer for true health and happiness. of 35 years has soared to levels we never thought possible.

Here is a summary of everything we learned about leading a life of health and happiness, detailed in my national presentations and my book, "Should I Fire My Doctor?: Eleven Essential Elements to Living Well Aware."

Normal Numbers Now

I'm referring to cholesterol, blood sug-▲ ar, blood pressure, and body weight. Getting these numbers in optimal range is critical to preventing premature death and disability. Know your numbers and get them normal now. Check out my website and download my "Partner with you should know and their normal range.

Critique Caloric Consumption

We all need to critically critique what we eat. It's not about going on a diet. It's about eating healthy. The truth is most people consume more than they burn off while consuming unhealthy food, often full of sugar, unhealthy fats, salt, and preservatives. It's not about giving planning, praying. For me, it's about RPM: reflecup what you love. It's about getting rid of what's tion, prayer, and meditation. It's the toughest eskilling you! The Mediterranean Diet has the most data on health benefits.

Make Movement Mandatory

We all need to move. It's one of the most • important things we can do to decrease disability, depression, death, and even dementia. The problem: technologic advancements have greatly decreased our need to move. The solution: we have to be creative in putting movement into our schedule. It's not difficult, and definitely doesn't require I need to forgive. I then simply focus on breathing a killer boot camp or gym. We just need to move as I mindfully meditate. We can find meaning in and in healthy ways working on stamina, strength, $balance, and flexibility. It is also important we don't \qquad we are and what we need to do. I call this living$ hurt ourselves in the process.

Address Adverse Addictions and Harmful Habits

• All of us do things that are not in our best it's a harmful habit such as overeating, overworking, anger, overspending, excessive time on Faceharms us. Harmful habits need to take a hike.

Meticulously Manage Money and Minutes

all have excuses. "I don't have enough time," you Savvy.com might say, or "I don't have enough money."

That's why you must meticulously manage money and minutes. Using our time and money to serve others and ourselves well is an important element to health. If you're blessed to have more than you need, deciding what to do with that excess is critical to your well-being. Money and minutes need to be managed. What are you doing with yours?

Graciously Give Your Gifts

Eleanor Roosevelt said it best: "When you cease to make a contribution, you die." If contributions will soar as we use our time, talents. and treasures to help others. Or, as was so humbly stated by Gandhi, "The best way to find yourself more I am concerned about others, the more I am at peace with myself. If I give and expect nothing in return, I avoid self-servitude and will never be

Here's the kicker. We have to inconvenience ourselves. We are truly giving when we sacrifice our time, talents, and treasures for others. Stopping to help a neighbor, visit someone in a nursing home or prison, volunteering at a crisis pregnancy centeryou name it. Why do I want to strive to give more and more? I want to be happier and thus healthier. Make true giving an integral part of your living.

Forgive Friends, Family, Foes-and Yourself

 Holding no grievances is essential to optimal health. Anger destroys. Forgiveness heals. Our body is a chemical factory releasing neurotransmitters and hormones. Keeping them in balance helps us function optimally. When we are angry, our entire body is affected by the immediate release of these substances. In the past, I could get upset in a heartbeat. Now, when I see myself having a grievance, a warning light goes off. Being angry is not going to help this situation. To quote the Buddha: "You will not be punished for your anger. You will be punished by your anger." Every religion has a major focus on forgiving. Forgiveness ing away anger, guilt, and stress. Give and forgive, so you can move forward.

Passionately Pursue Purpose and

• Who am I? What is my purpose in life? Without a healthy concept of why we are here, we can find ourselves going through each day not satisfied, depressed, and anxious. Our priorities may be out of whack because our purpose in life

is not defined. Who am I? It's a critical question

Who is Patricia Sulak? I strive to be a loving, energetic force that lifts others. By defining myself, others. I want to love, not hate; be energetic not lethargic; lift others, not bring them down. I want

Stifle Stress, Sever Suffering

that requires an accurate answer.

Stress. Do any of us go a day without feel-• ing stressed? Stress is defined as emotional tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. What determines if something is adverse or demanding? You! What one views as demanding, another may view as exciting. It's not what happens to us in our life; it's the meaning we attach to it.

I think of stress as a conflict between my inner self that wants a life of peace, joy, and love and my ego that is driven by power, prestige, and possessions. Our ego also wants total control over life events–a set up for stress. We need to Your Provider" worksheet which lists all the values stifle stress, and try to sever suffering. This can help us be the creative, amazing people we are meant to be.

> Periodically Pause, Ponder, Plan, and Pray • How can we get off the path of harmful

habits and onto the road of healthy habits? Call it whatever fits your world: pausing, pondering, sential element I face. I get caught up in things I think I need to do and find that life itself is passing me by. I am so focused on the future, I miss out on the present.

I am now in the daily habit of taking time to be by myself-no noise, no electronics, no distractions. I start out with simply being grateful for my life, embracing the expected and unexpected, the gains and losses, the joy and sadness. I focus on what I am called to do, who I can lift up, who all events, creating a greater awareness of who well aware.

Seek and Secure Support We have to invest in the best wellness

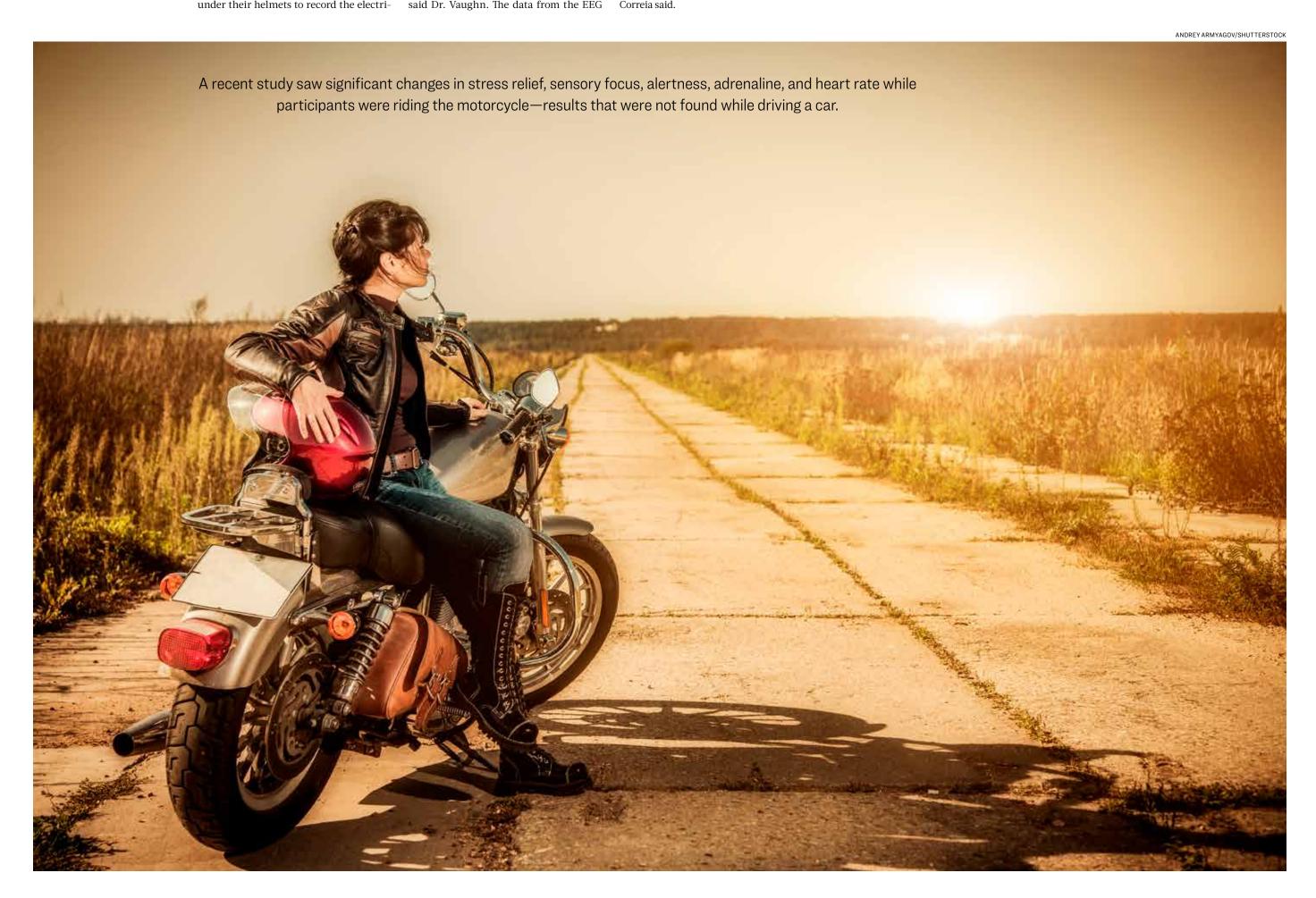
• information, implementation, and inspiinterest. Sometimes it's serious addictions. Often, ration in all aspects of our life. We must question everything. There are no new problems. Thousands, if not millions, have had the same probbook, or watching hours of mindless TV. We need lems we have. They're all recycled. And the true to determine what helps us and ultimately what answers are out there. Find them by seeking and securing support! Who's on your team? Where are you getting your information? Are you investing in your health?

Minutes

We can say, "Ok, I get it. See my provider;

Patricia J. Sulak is a medical doctor and author.

We can say, "Ok, I get it. See my provider; get to ideal weight; critique what I eat; move; halt Visit livingwellaware.com for more information. harmful habits." Should be easy, right? Not. We This article was first published on Naturally-



The CDC has announced there are now more deaths from suicide than from motor vehicle accidents.

Harness your angry energy.

Week 9 2019 THE EPOCH TIMES

How to Control ANGER

Here are two dozen ways to get a grip on your anger or put it to good use

KIMBERLY HOLLAND

Anger is a normal feeling and can be a positive emotion when it helps you work through issues or problems, whether that's at work or at home. It can also give you the emotional push to address injustice or problems.

However, anger can become problematic if it leads to aggression, outbursts, or even physical

Anger control is important for helping you avoid saying or doing something you may regret. Before anger escalates, you can use specific strategies for controlling anger.

Here Are 25 Ways You Can Control Your Anger:

1. Count Down

Count down (or up) to 10. If you're really mad start at 100. In the time it takes you to count, your heart rate will slow, and your anger will

2. Take a Breather

Your breathing becomes shallower and speeds up as you grow angry. Reverse that trend (and your anger) by taking slow, deep breaths from your nose and exhaling out of your mouth for several moments.

3. Go For a Walk

Exercise can help calm your nerves and reduce anger. Go for a walk, ride your bike, or hit a few golf balls. Anything that gets your limbs pumping is good for your mind and body.

4. Relax Your Muscles

Progressive muscle relaxation calls on you to tense and slowly relax various muscle groups in your body, one at a time. As you tense and release, take slow, deliberate breaths.

5. Repeat a Mantra

Find a word or phrase that helps you calm down and refocus. Repeat that word again and again to yourself when you're upset. "Relax," "Take it easy, and "You'll be OK" are all good examples.

6. Stretch

Neck rolls and shoulder rolls are good examples of nonstrenuous yoga-like movements that can help you control your body and harness your emotions. No fancy equipment required.

7. Mentally Escape

Slip into a quiet room, close your eyes, and practice visualizing yourself in a relaxing scene. Focus on details in the imaginary scene: What you may regret.

color is the water? How tall are the mountains? What do the chirping birds sound like? This practice can help you find calm amidst anger.

8. Play Some Tunes

Let music carry you away from your feelings. Put in earbuds or slip out to your car. Crank up your favorite music (avoid heavy metal), and hum, bop, or sashay your anger away.

9. Stop Talking

When you're steamed, you may be tempted to let the angry words fly, but you're more likely to do harm than good. Pretend your lips are glued shut, just like you did as a kid. A moment without speaking will give you time to collect your thoughts.

10. Take a Timeout

Give yourself a break. Sit away from others. In this quiet time, you can process events and return your emotions to neutral. You may even find this time away from others so helpful that you want to schedule it into your daily routine.

11. Take Action

Harness your angry energy. Sign a petition. Write a note to an official. Do something good for someone else. Pour your energy and emotions into something that's healthy and productive.

12. Write In Your Journal

What you can't say, perhaps you can write. Jot down what you're feeling and how you want to respond. Processing it through the written word can help you calm down and reassess the events leading up to your feelings.

13. Find the Most **Immediate Solution**

You might be angry that your child has once again left their room a mess before going to visit a friend. Shut the door. You can temporarily end your anger by putting it out of your view. Look for similar resolutions in any situations.

14. Rehearse Your Response

Prevent an outburst by rehearing what you're going to say or how you're going to approach the problem in the future. This rehearsal period also gives you time to role-play several possible

15. Picture a Stop Sign

The universal symbol to stop can help you calm

Anger control is important for helping you avoid

saying

or doing

something

down when you're angry. It's a quick way to help you visualize the need to halt yourself and walk away from the moment.

16. Change Your Routine

If your slow commute to work makes you angry before you've even had coffee, find a new route Consider options that may take longer but leave you less upset in the end.

17. Talk to a Friend

Don't stew in the events that made you angry. Help yourself process what happened by talking with a trusted, supportive friend who can possibly provide a new perspective.

18. Laugh

Nothing upends a bad mood like a good one. Diffuse your anger by looking for ways to laugh, whether that's playing with your kids, watching stand-up, or scrolling memes.

19. Practice Gratitude



you away from

your feelings.

Kimberly Holland

This article was

journalist and editor.

originally published

is a freelance

on Healthline.

Take a moment to focus on what's right when everything feels wrong. Realizing how many good things you have in your life can help you neutralize anger and turn around the situation.

20. Set a Timer

The first thing that comes o mind when you're angry likely isn't the thing you

should say. Give yourself a set time before you respond. This time will help you be calmer and more concise.

21. Write a Letter

Write a letter or email to the person that made you angry. Then, delete it. Often, expressing your emotions in some form is all you want, even if it's in something that will never be seen.

22. Imagine Forgiving Them

Finding the courage to forgive someone who has wronged you takes a lot of emotional skill. If you can't go that far, you can at least pretend that you're forgiving them, and you'll feel your anger slip away.

23. Practice Empathy

Try to walk in the other person's shoes and see the situation from their perspective. When you tell the story or relive the events as they saw it, you may gain a new understanding and become less angry.

24. Express Your Anger

It's OK to say how you feel, as long as you handle it in the right way. Ask a trusted friend to help you be accountable to a calm response. Outbursts solve no problems, but mature dialogue can help reduce your stress and ease your anger. It may also prevent future problems.

The Bottom Line

Anger is a normal emotion that everyone experiences from time to time. However, if you find your anger turns to aggression or outbursts, you need to find healthy ways to deal with anger.

If these tips don't help, consider talking with your doctor. A mental health specialist or therapist can help you work through underlying factors that may contribute to anger and other emotional

A Fear of Regret Can Lock Us Into Bad Relationships, Jobs, and Habits

Understanding how regret works is the key to making a simple change and moving forward

EYAL WINTER

ow many times have you thought about starting a company, taking a year out to write that novel, or launching a new project but ended up doing nothing about it? Fear of regret–which is a powerful driver of maintaining the status quo in our lives-may be to blame.

As research in psychology, neuroscience, and behavioral science has unveiled, regret can have a huge impact on our lives. Money and relationships are arguably the two issues that consume most of our emotional and mental resources, and regret affects our behavior in both.

When it comes to money, a famous bias linked to regret is the "disposition effect." This describes how investors hold on tight to losing assets. Whether it be a mutual fund, a specific stock or even the cryptocurrency Bitcoin, we are extremely reluctant to sell an asset at a loss. We'd rather hang on to it as it keeps dropping in value, hoping it will pick up again-regardless of whether that is likely.

The driving force behind this behavior is our fear of regret, which makes us stick with the status quo even if our reasoning or intuition says we shouldn't. We are unwilling to sell the asset at a loss because, if we do, we would have to admit to ourselves that we made a mistake in buying it in the first place. Holding on to it therefore allows us to avoid regret for the time being.

A more general example is the "sunk cost bias." This describes the fact that we often start new projects with high expectations of them doing well. While putting enormous effort into a project, we may gradually notice that it's going nowhere. We can still opt out easily, but instead we find ourselves hanging on to it longer and longer, exerting more and more effort in spite of our gut feeling and common sense that it will bring nothing in return.

Here, we experience regret if we terminate a project before it materializes. We therefore fall into the trap of irrationally hanging on to it in order to avoid regret temporarily. This bias

is often at play in romantic relationships. For example, many people hang on to relationships that they know are going nowhere. A botched relationship can therefore still survive due to the inconvenience of terminating it. Ending such a relationship ultimately forces us to admit a failure and experience regret. To avoid regret we instead tell ourselves that as we have come this far with the relationship we should give it another chance–despite knowing there

The same fear also keeps us away from a new relationship. Fearing regret makes the status quo remarkably attractive, even if it doesn't make us happy in the long term.

The Science of Regret

But why are we so easily manipulated? Regret is a highly important emotion that equips us to learn. Without regret we can hardly learn from our mistakes. We need this painful stimulus to avoid repeating the same mistake again and again

But the way our brain processes regret and determines the level of pain we experience is counterintuitive: missing a bus by one minute triggers more regret than missing it by ten (regardless how long we expect to wait for the next bus). Similarly, a decision to depart from the status quo that later proves to be wrong triggers more regret than making an unwise decision to remain within the status quo. It seems that actively deciding to change something creates a false impression that the decision does not qualify for mitigating circumstances, making the punishment we inflict on ourselves through regret more severe.

Recent brain imaging studies have helped identify the neural circuits that are involved when we feel regret. They show that substantial activity is taking place in the hippocampus, which we know is responsible for memory. They also show that experiencing regret and being scared of feeling regret involve very similar neural circuits, indicating that fearing regret is actually practically the same as experiencing regret. Clearly, this can help ex-



Without regret we can hardly learn from our

plain why the fear of regret can be so painful and powerful

> Not all of us are affected identically by regret. People who suffer from high degrees of neuroticism are more likely to feel regret than others. This means that the tendency to feel regret is linked with the experience of anger, fear, and loneliness. It is also intimately related to "loss aversion"-the tendency to focus on losses rather than gains. That makes people who are more prone to feel regret less likely to take risks.

Challenging the Status Quo

So how can we tackle our fear of regret to get where we want in life? A starting point is actually realizing how profoundly regret affects us. If we are aware that our brain plays tricks on us it may be easier to move forward. So if you find yourself repeatedly failing to achieve your life goals, maybe ask yourself if a fear of regret is to blame

If it is, remind yourself that while making a change always involves a risk it is equally risky to do nothing. In addition, unlike anxiety–which reflects on the future–regret is reflecting on the past. So, while it helps us to learn from our mistakes, it won't allow us to correct those we have already made.

Allowing yourself to be advised by others is, I believe, the most effective remedy. For financial decisions, you can achieve this by hiring a financial adviser. Advisers reduce our fear of regret substantially because we share our decision with others and are not alone to be blamed if it turns out to be wrong.

The very same logic applies to romantic regret. Allow yourself to get advice from a close friend or a family member when start ing a new relationship or before terminating one. In addition to getting a second opinion, this will also allow you to share the misery of regret with someone else-making the departure from a negative status quo substantially easier

Comfortable as it may feel, letting the status quo take over can mean that we miss out on important things in life. In fact staying with the status quo can often make us more miserable in the long term. And for what? Just avoiding the uncomfortable, but temporary, feeling of regret.

Eyal Winter is an Andrews and Elizabeth Brunner professor of behavioral/industrial economics at Lancaster University in England. This article was first published on

Researchers Discover How Sleep Helps the Body Fight Germs

strengthens the potency of certain immune cells. It looks like your mother was right: when you've got a cold, sleep may be the best medicine. German researchers have discovered one way

sleep improves the body's ability to fight off a cold. Sleep, it seems, strengthens the potency of certain immune cells by improving their chances of attaching to-and eventually destroying-cells infected with viruses.

The researchers focused their attention on T cells, which battle infections. When T cells spot a virally infected cell, they activate a sticky protein known as an integrin that allows them to adhere to that cell. The researchers were able to prove that lack of sleep, as well as sustained periods of stress, lead to

higher levels of hormones that appear to block the master switch that activates the sticky proteins.

If you want to have your immune system tuned up to fight off invaders, "get the needed amount of sleep every night and avoid chronic stress," said study leader Stoyan Dimitrov, a researcher at the University of Tubingen, Germany.

Dimitrov and colleagues suspected that certain hormones, including epinephrine, norepinephrine, adenosine, and prostaglandins, might hinder the activation of the sticky proteins by turning down the master switch

To test that hypothesis, they studied cells from people infected with cytomegalovirus (CMV). T cells are supposed to seek out and destroy cells infected with CMV, but when patients' T cells were mixed with the suspect hormones in test tubes, the T cells' ability to activate the sticky proteins dropped.

Next, the researchers looked at what happened in people. Knowing that levels of these hormones naturally drop during sleep, they rounded up 10 healthy volunteers who were willing to spend one night snoozing in a sleep lab and another night, approximately two weeks later, awake in the same the same lab.

All of the volunteers had been infected with CMV, a mostly benign virus. "We recruited healthy humans seropositive for CMV because (they usually have) a high number of antigen-specific T cells," Dimitrov said in an email. That meant the researchers would have no trouble finding CMV-targeted T cells to study in the volunteers' blood, his team

explained in the Journal of Experimental Medicine During the nights designated for sleeping, volunteers were hooked up to intravenous catheters, so researchers could draw blood samples without disturbing anyone's slumber.

The researchers compared T cells collected on slumber-filled nights to T cells from waking nights and found, as expected, that when volunteers were sleeping, levels of stress hormones were lower than when volunteers stayed up all night. More important, T cells from sleeping nights had more infection-fighting sticky proteins activated than those from waking nights, meaning they were more potent

Scientists have long known that lack of sleep can impact the immune system, said Dr. Louis DePalo, a professor of medicine, pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City.

"Multiple clinical studies have demonstrated that people who do not get quality or sufficient sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to viruses," DePalo said in an email. "This (new) study demonstrates yet another molecular pathway where good quality and quantity sleep may lead to immune supportive effects via immune cells, called T cells."

DePalo, who was not involved with the new study, added that it "therefore presents another uniquely described mechanism underlying some of the immune supportive effects of sleep.'

Are You Eating Enough Methyl Donor Foods?

Scientists are beginning to better understand which foods help us metabolize our DNA

DEBORAH MITCHELL

A few questions likely come to mind when you see the question, "are you eating methyl donor foods?" Like "what are methyl donor foods?" Or, "is there a specific reason why you

should be eating them?" You may have noticed stories about MTHFR gene mutations and methylation but few people know how methyl donor foods to tie it all together. It will take a little organic and biochemistry to explain it.

What Does the Term 'Methyl'

"Methyl" refers to nutrients that are involved in a biochemical process called methylation. During methylation, a process that is critical for healthy bodily functioning, chemicals are added to and bond with proteins, DNA, or other molecules. Methyl donors are composed of a carbon atom attached to three hydrogen atoms, signified as CH3.

Why Are Methyl Donor Foods Important?

Although experts have not yet com-

pletely identified how methylation works, it is known that it is intimately involved in the metabolism of DNA and lipids and appears to help prevent the expression of cancer genes and thus the development of cancer. In fact, methyl-related nutrients have been associated with a reduced risk of pancreatic, colon, and breast cancers.

It's suspected that the ability of the body to perform methylation declines with age, which means eating plenty of methyl donor foods could be beneficial in helping prevent diseases such as Alzheimer's and heart disease. Methyl donors also assist in the production of several brain chemicals (e.g., dopamine, epinephrine) that are involved in energy, alertness, concentration, mood, and visual clarity. These, subsequently, are important to manage in order to avoid depression and dementia.

Methyl donor foods contain nutrients such as vitamin B6, vitamin B12, folate, choline, and methionine, an essential amino acid that is used in the production of proteins. Other nutrients involved in methylation include N-dimethyl glycine (DMG), S-adenosylmethionine (SAM-e), and dimethylamino-ethanol (DMAE).

Which Foods Are Good Methyl

Finding foods that are good sources of methyl donors isn't difficult because there are so many.

Folate: chickpeas, lentils, pinto

beans, leafy greens (e.g., spinach,

kale, collards, mustard greens, bok choy), strawberries, and citrus (e.g., grapefruit, oranges, lemons) Vitamin B6: beef, pistachios, pinto

beans, avocado, blackstrap molasses, tuna, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds Vitamin B12: fish, organic meats, seaweed (laver and nori), eggs

Methionine: Brazil nuts, sesame seeds, roasted soybeans, parmesan cheese, tuna, eggs, and white beans Choline: beets, Brussel sprouts, broccoli, liver, eggs, raw cauliflower,

cooked beet greens, cooked aspara-

DMG: beans, brown rice, pumpkin

DMAE: anchovies, salmon, sardines

A good balance of methyl donor foods, as part of a natural foods diet, can help promote and support proper methylation. In addition, getting a sufficient amount of probiotics (beneficial bacteria, which help produce and absorb B vitamins) as well as zinc and mag nesium (which support methylation) can be good for your health.

Deborah Mitchell is a freelance health writer who is passionate about animals and the environment She has authored, co-authored, and written more than 50 books and thousands of articles. This article was originally published on NaturallySavvy.com

Tuning into your environment can give you a competitive edge and help you connect

SCOTT MANN

hen I was going through Ranger School we would do missions all over the United States-up in the mountains of North Georgia, the desert in Texas, and the swamps of North Florida

One thing stayed consistent: we would always roll out of the chopper and move quickly into the wood line. We would lay own the room. Just by being present and down in the prone position on our bellies and we would wait for the chopper to lift off and then we would wait for the signal that it was time to do SLLS-stop, look,

listen, and smell. We do that to adjust from a very noisy, chaotic, fast-paced environment to this new territory where we are literally animals on the hunt.

We are on a mission and so we have to adjust. We have to acclimate ourselves quickly to the sights, sounds, smell, and feel of the environment around us.

Have you ever seen an animal that's on the edge of a forest fire? They'll stop, they'll look, they'll listen, and they'll smell. It's the same approach. It's basically recognizing that you've gone from one envi-

ronment to a new environment and immersing yourself in that new environment.

And that is a useful toolset, not just in the military world, but also in your life, whether you are a corporate leader, entrepreneur, or you're just taking your family out to eat in a crowded restaurant.

The recognition that one is moving from one environment to another-and allowing your senses to dial into that new environment and become present-is a very relevant thing to do as a leader. It allows you to show up in a way that is

much more effective. To be present in the ground? Can you feel them chaos is to be relevant to those we lead because all around us, this chaos is churning.

Try this-walk into a restaurant and just notice how people are behaving. Most likely they're lost in their own conversations. They're not paying attention to what's going on around them. Most of them have their faces buried in their phones. They're in their heads, not in their bodies, and it's just this loud cacophony of chaos.

Experiment with this everywhere you go and you'll see it-most people are stuck in their own head. Many are not really connecting to the other person. Few are really dialed in.

I want you to be different. Whenever you walk into a new environment, you should do your own version of SLLS. This will make you more situationally aware. You will automatically be For more information, visit more present and aware of what's going RooftopLeadership.com

on around you than most other people, which gives you a competitive edge.

By doing SLLS in our life and business, we automatically send a signal to our brain to drop in and be present. And when we're present, we're available to other people. The other party senses this and they reciprocate that action.

These are the skills that can help you available, you become the most relevant

So how do you do it?

Well, when you get in the room, stop. Look around. Notice what you see. What's the baseline? Are people comfortable? Uncomfortable? Passive? Aggressive? Are they paying attention to each other? Are they on their phones?

Then listen. Take in the sounds and let them occupy your personal space. You can even close your eyes and just listen and absorb what you hear. It will really give you a baseline of what's going on in the room and it'll drop you in.

Now, smell. Our sense of smell is such a powerful thing and we don't use it enough. So just take a mo-

ment again, eyes closed and just take in the smells.

Now you're present, we're activating your vailable to other senses. Larry Moss, one of the best

directors on the planet, says that when you walk onto the stage, you need to know what it feels like in the scene. What does the rain smell like? Can vou smell the mildew? Can you hear the raindrops on the

on your skin?

The more aware we are at a sensory level, the more effective we are, the more present we are. Any version of SLLS can help you do that. It only

Stop. Look. Listen. Smell. It works. It's effective. It makes you more relevant and present and helps you connect to what's going on in the room.

Stay present in the chaos and until next time, I'll see you on the rooftop.

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.



Screen Time Linked to an Epidemic of

Among Young People

Rates of nearsightedness have skyrocketed, raising the risk of more serious eye problems

LANGIS MICHAUD

evoung people are wearing glasses hat has prompted fears that the use hones is damaging eyesight at

Forty percent of North Americans are affected by myopia, a number that doubled between 1972 and 2004 and continues to grow at a rate that qualifies the phenomenon as an epidemic

In Europe, myopia is prevalent among 42.2 percent of adults aged 25 to 29 years, almost twice that of adults aged 55 to 59 years. Many cases of myopia significantly increase the

risk of major ocular health disorders such as retinal tearing (21 times greater), glaucoma (40 times) or cataracts (six times). An eye that becomes short-sighted becomes longer.

The stretching is proportional to the increase in myopia. The more the eye stretches, the more the retina, which lines the inside of the eye, becomes thinner. Symptoms such as cracks, abnormal development of subretinal blood vessels, and bleeding may appear.

Ultimately, the very nearsighted patient has a more than 50 percent risk of spending the rest of his or her life legally blind, which is when vision is reduced by 60 percent or more. This means that the length of their eye exceeds 28 mm (the normal length is 23 mm) or that the myopia levels exceeds six diopters. Diopter is a unit of measurement used to calculate eyesight–the further away from zero indicates a worsening in vision. It is important to intervene before these levels of myopia

What's Behind the

Epidemic? There are many causes of myopia. Genetics plays an important role but epigeneticsthe environment in which the child evolves-is a more

important factor. And what has changed in our environment to explain the recent skyrocketing rates myopia? The impact of technology, which has seen a boom in recent years, is being

closely examined. A rapid increase in visual problems has been noted since the introduction of the smartphone in 2007. The device requires the user to read its screen at a distance of 20 cm rather than the normal distance of 45 cm to 50 cm. It has been suggested that this close distance boosts the risk of developing myopia by eight times, especially if both parents are myopic. Ambient lighting also plays a role because the use of fluorescent lights in places like classrooms also promotes myopia. When a tablet is used in such an

environment, the effect is multiplied tenfold. Unlike books printed on paper, tablet and computer screens are optically associated with so-called chromatic aberrations. The shortest wavelengths (blue light) reach the eye faster than other colors, which generates a myopia stimulus. There is a dose and response effect here, suggesting that prolonged use leads to more negative effects.

Today's young people don't play outside nearly as much as previous generations and are heavy users of electronics. Exposure to daylight has a protective effect against myopia.

Possible Solutions

The purpose of myopia treatment is to slow down the elongation of the eye. To avoid this problem, it is imperative to influence epigenetics—the environment in which the child grows.

The American Academy of Pediatrics says parents should keep their children away from electronic media before the age of two, due to wideranging health issues. A limit of one hour per day should be the rule for those between two and five years, and the emphasis should be put on educational sites or applications that promote interactions between the parent and child, the Academy recommends

While school requests should be taken into consideration, the use of electronic media should continue to be limited as the child gets older. A maximum of

one hour, besides school work, must be observed for good eye health. A two-minute break after every 30 minutes of device use will also lessen harmful effects. Children should also be kept from using devices for at least one hour before sleep to avoid sleep Today's young people don't play outside

Children need a minimum of 45 minutes of daylight per day. They can get this by walking to school or participating in outdoor activities like sports. Regular optometrist checkups are also important

to ensure the health and coordination of both eyes. An optometrist will need to correct, by exercise or optical means, any anomaly that may be detected. Finally, optical correction must be chosen with the goal of slowing down the progression of myopia. In rare cases, glasses with anti-myopia lenses may be

prescribed. They can decelerate progression by about

30 percent. Specialized contact lenses are often preferred and offer control ranging from 50 percent to 80 percent. The contact lens treatment is available from the age of seven, and will be periodically reassessed according to the child's changing needs.

In short, myopia is not just a commonplace vision defect. It is a significant risk factor for serious eye disease. We must therefore do everything possible to slow its progress and protect our children's visionespecially reviewing their use of electronic devices.

Langis Michaud is a tenured professor at the school of optometry at the University of Montreal in Canada. Michaud is an expert in eye health and the use of specialized contact lenses. This article was first published on



nearly as much

generations.

A new study looked at women's ability to read facial expressions while on birth control



New research suggests that oral contraceptives may actually affect a woman's ability to judge social situations

JULIA RIES

early two-thirds of women of reproductive age in the United States are currently using contraception. The most common methods used are female sterilization, oral contraception pills (OCPs), and intrauterine devices, according to the Centers for Diseases Control.

And while birth control has helped millions of women prevent pregnancy and regulate their periods, contraception also comes with various side effects for women.

There can be physical side effects—such as breast tenderness, spotting between periods, and weight gain-and there can be

the emotional ones: mood swings, increased anxiety, and depression. Some people may not experience any noticeable side effects while on contraception, and

some may give up on the idea of pill or drug-based contraception altogether

Now, new research suggests that oral contraceptives may actually affect a woman's ability to judge

A new small study found that women who were taking OCPs tended to be poorer judges of deciphering subtle emotional expressions. The study was published today in Frontiers in Neuroscience.

OCP Users Experienced Impaired Social Judgment

To understand the effects OCPs have on women's ability to recognize emotional expressions, researchers administered a social-recognition task to two groups: 42 women who took OCPS and 53 women who did not use OCPs.

The task required all women to identify the complex emotional expressions from subtle cues from the eye region of various faces.

"The expressions did not depict basic emotions like, for example, fear or anger but complex ones like, for example, pride or contempt. As a consequence, the emotion recognition task was quite challenging," the study's senior author Alexander Lischke, an experimental psychologist at the University of Greifswald in Germany, told Healthline.

The study found that the OCP users were, on average, approximately 10 percent worse at deciphering complex emotional expressions. This effect was consistent for both positive and negative expressions and some show the opposite," Dr. Candice Fraser, an

was not impacted by either the type of OCP taken or the menstrual cycle phase of nonusers.

The findings suggest that OCPs could, ultimately affect the way women maintain intimate relationships and go about social interactions. Emotion recognition is, after all, a huge part of how we relate and connect to one another.

"If there's any kind of bias or misreading [of emotions] that influences our responses to [others], then our responses may be aberrant or not empathic or overly defensive," Catherine Monk, a professor of

medical psychology in the departments of psychiatry and obstetrics and

gynecology at Columbia University, told

obstetrician-gynecologist and founder of Trinity

Medical Care in New York, said. Here's how the medication works: There are estro gen receptors in areas of the brain-like the hippocampus-that are involved in memory and attention. When these receptors come in contact with estrogen, which is naturally produced by the body, they bind to the hormone and carry out various cognitive functions related to memory and learning.

It's possible that, when exposed to the man-made hormones used in OCPs, those areas of the brain do not function as well, Monk suspects.

"When you're on oral contraception, you are having this external, exogenous source of estrogen, so there is a question of how is the receptor dealing with that in the brain in terms of what's typically available," Monk explained.

> Contraceptive pill users were, on average, approximately 10 percent worse at deciphering complex emotional expressions.

For ex-

ample, if we are not able to accurately interpret whether or not someone is expressing contempt—one of the emotions the study evaluated—we might see it when it's not actually there and react unnecessarily defensive. As a result, such misinterpretation of emotions

could contribute to friction in social interactions, Monk said.

Hormones Can Have a Powerful Effect on the **Body and the Mind**

Hormones are very powerful and can significantly influence our moods, behaviors, and how our brains

For example. high levels of estrogen have been associated with mood swings and anxiety, while low levels of progesterone have been linked to anxiety

and depression. However, when it comes to the external hormones used in prescription birth control, and how they impact people's emotional functioning, there have

been mixed theories. "There have been previous research on mood changes and OCPs, however, the results are not consistent. Some studies suggest that OCPs are associated with depressed mood or anxiety, while

In addition, previous studies using brain imaging have identified reduced activation of specific brain regions that are responsible for emotional salience in women taking hormonal contraceptives, compared to those who are not.

So, while it isn't at all surprising that hormonal contraceptives could affect cognitive function, health experts agree that more research is needed to fully understand how, exactly, they affect emotion regulation and

Julia Ries is a freelance health and wellness writer. This article was first published on



You can't plan for unexpected changes, but you can treasure the moment you have

close family friend, as healthy as you'd ever imagined, suffered a heart attack on Thanksgiving morning. He went to bed on November 21st but did not awake on the 22nd. Survived

JOSHUA BECKER

Life might look

predictable ups

and downs along

to have some

the way, but

there's almost

alwavs a major

coming.

turn you don't see

by his wife and two kids. My neighbor is in his 40's and was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer. I played basketball with him just a few months before. His diagnosis surprised everybody-including him.

I recently received a phone call on an otherwise normal Tuesday morning that a friend of mine had lost his teenage daughter in an automobile accident the night before. As awful news as anyone could ever receive.

Then there is the story of my relative, who showed up to work last summer, only to find her workplace being searched by the authorities as they investigated

They say the only con– stant in life is change. They

Life changes fast.

are right.

fraud. By the end of the week, she was with-

car accident. Everybody is fine, fortunately. But their vehicle was totaled. Life changes fast. This season of life you are

than today. It may change for the better.

child. My life forever changed that day. Our best friends down the street received a

his wife. And my life changed dramatically for the better on a Saturday morning 10 years ago when my neighbor unexpectedly introduced

They say the only constant in life is change. They are right.

Sometimes we plan out our lives-our days, our weeks, our years-and everything falls into place. But other times, we make our plans, only to have them upended by circumstances outside of

Sometimes life changes for the better, sometimes it changes for the worse, but always for something different

And my parents, just yesterday, were in a

in could end at any time. Everything could change tomorrow Of course, tomorrow isn't necessarily worse

In early December 2001, my wife walked into our living room to share important news with me. She was pregnant with our first

job promotion that took them back home to Texas. My cousin, simply hanging out with friends one evening was introduced to a girl, who quickly became his girlfriend, and soon

me to minimalism–a conversation that became my passion and eventually, my career.

I find myself reflecting on that fact this morning as I sit alone at this empty table. My life is good, and peaceful in this moment. My family is happy, and we are all healthy. I have friends I can rely on, extended family

I enjoy being with, and our financial needs are being met doing work that I love. It is easy, I suppose, to think life will stay this way forever. But that is not the case. Everything could change as early as tomorrow. This may cause some to worry. But I don't think that's the best response. The change

I think the best response is to appreciate this moment

could be positive. And worrying won't help

If life is good, count your blessings, be thankful, and enjoy it. Slow down, take a deep breath, and savor this season as best

If, on the other hand, your life is not in a good place, take heart-change is coming. As the seasons' change, so does life. Value love, faith, and hope. Find peace to accept the things you cannot change and courage to change the things you can. But through it all, remember, this is only a season, and seasons are temporary

If you can only live one moment at a time, you might as well make it the present. After all, we have no idea how long "today" will

Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker and the founder and editor of Becoming Minimalist where he inspires others to live





Confusing and High Bills

for Cancer Patients Add to Anxiety and Suffering

Patients need help to deal with complexities of treatment billing, insurance, and sometimes hidden resources

MARY POLITI

eeks after my father passed away from cancer in 2010, my newly widowed mother received a bill for \$11,000.

Insurance retroactively denied a submitted claim for one of his last chemotherapy treatthe prior identical chemotherapy treatments he had received had been covered, and the doctors had received pre-authorization for the treatment

Was it suddenly experimental because it was not prolonging life anymore? Was it a clerical error, with one insurance claim submitted differently than the others?

As my mother and family grieved, we had this bill looming in the backs of our minds. We took turns calling the insurance company and the hospital billing office, checking websites, and deciphering billing codes on various pieces of paper.

Advances in cancer treatments have improved patient outcomes overall, but many In addition to direct costs of care, there are of these interventions have increased costs of care. Even when care is "covered," the definition of "coverage" can include high deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, and surprise out-of-pocket bills for patients. As one participant in a recently published qualitative study of cancer survivors told us, "You just have to chargin' me for?' Plus ... you're getting billed for months ago."

By the time patients receive these delayed bills, they may be unable to recall the particuto two hours, depending on traffic and road lar visit in question, which makes it exhausting for them to manage their finances and diagnosis. The problem is so significant that the National Cancer Institute has a term for this: financial toxicity.

A Scary Disease, an Opaque System In the United States, cancer is one of the most

expensive diseases to treat; only heart disease costs more. This cost burden is often passed on to patients.

And to make matters worse, lack of transparency about cost and coverage can be confusing. Seemingly arbitrary changes in insurance decisions can contribute to patients' financial and behavioral adjustments associated with I had to go on disability." costs of care. For example, some patients have unexpected bills after they receive a diagnosis or abnormal result on a screening test.

categorized as preventive (and free from out-

of-pocket costs) can become a diagnostic or surveillance test, with associated fees. Other patients are surprised when they receive a bill for physician time as well as a hospital facility fee. It is difficult for patients to keep track of all of these changes and adjust cost expectations.

The impact of high care costs is substantial. ments, claiming it was "experimental." All of People with high out-of-pocket costs are less likely to receive necessary care, which can compromise cancer treatment and may affect overall or cancer-specific mortality. In a recent study, almost a third of adults said they delayed or avoided care due to costs.

A patient participant in a study we conducted talked about the time she spent navigating the billing process, commenting, "The billing was extremely daunting. I kept a three-ring binder that was three inches thick ... tried to match things up. It was a mess." That time and effort could be spent healing or engaging in valued activities, she relayed to us.

Hidden Costs of Care

indirect costs of care, such as fees for transportation, parking, housing when needed, and the time spent managing the financial aspects of care on top of treatment.

My father had to pay between \$18 and \$30 per day just to park at the hospital in New York City where he received his treatments, call both parties and figure out, 'what are you depending on how long he stayed. This parking fee was on top of tolls (\$15) and the time spent traveling to and from the hospital. For him, this meant anywhere from 45 minutes conditions. Transportation and parking costs are typically not covered by insurance, though some hospitals, health centers, and nonprofit organizations offer assistance with these indirect care costs.

Many other patients have to take time off work while they are undergoing cancer treatment or follow-up care. Cancer patients who are unemployed may even have lower survival rates. One patient in our study commented, "It takes me two-and-a-half hours to get here. I was coming every month, then every two months. Now I'm every three months. Eventually, I go to six months, but I have to take off work every time to come." Another patient toxicity, or the hardship, psychological stress stated, "My vacation and sick time ran out ...

Policy Suggestions

Although addressing out-of-pocket care costs In these cases, care that was previously for patients requires multiple systemic changes, there are strategies that can help.

Patients and their clinicians can discuss the costs of care and create cost-saving strategies.

The problem is so significant that the **National Can** cer Institute

Some-

times, treat-

ments are

not needed

and may add

a burden to

patients.

other care center resources. These people, with adequate training that promotes patients' access to care and assistance, can help manage a patient's out-of-pocket expenses. This process can yield positive outcomes for both patients and health care institutions. has a term for this: financial **Less May Be More** Sometimes, treatments are not needed and may toxicity. add a burden to patients. For example, a shorter

> duration of radiation for early-stage breast cancer works just as well as longer durations. And chemotherapy might not benefit some patients

First, patients and their clinicians can dis-

cuss the costs of care and create cost-saving

strategies. Patient-clinician cost discussions

can reduce overall costs to patients, but many

clinicians are hesitant to talk about costs

If there is more than one treatment option

available with equal effectiveness data, pa-

tients can ask, "is there a difference in price

between options"? Developers of patient-cen-

tered decision aids can also add the relative

costs of treatments so that patients can weigh

cost along with other aspects of treatment to

Health care institutions may be underutiliz-

ing social workers, financial navigators, and

with patients.

support their choice.

clinicians, and systems to weigh the pros and cons of care that is considered unnecessary or even harmful, many patients and clinicians might fear less aggressive treatment. There's also the Choosing Wisely campaign which is designed to help by summarizing evidence in

Finding sustainable solutions to reducing cancer-related financial toxicity requires a collaborative effort between doctors, patients, policymakers, health insurance companies, and health care institutions. Easing the cognitive burden associated with the financial stress that comes with cancer care can lead to better outcomes for cancer patients' health and quality of life.

Research coordinator Nerissa George, MPH, contributed to this article.

Mary Politi is an associate professor of surgery in the division of public health sciences at Washington University in St Louis. This article was first published on

HOW ADDING COLOR TO MY HOUSE Increased My Joy

I used the principles of color therapy to infuse my home with happy memories

PAIGE TOWERS

ow we see the world shapes who we choose to be-and sharing compelling experiences can frame the way we treat each other, for the better. Upon relocating to Milwaukee from New York City last year, I bought my first house-a 120-yearold fixer-upper. I was thrilled, but there was one feature that bothered me more than anything else on my list of items to repair or replace: the off-white color of the walls

Research shows that color can affect our mood, energy levels, and choices.

Warm colors

tend to be

more uplift

ing and cool

colors tend

to be more

Leslie Harrington,

color scientist and

calming.

consultant

Paige Towers is cur-

rently a freelance writer

living in New York City

and is at work on a book

about ASMR. This article

was originally published

on Healthline.com





After years of renting low-budget apartments that were drowning in neutral tones, I ached for brighter hues, and not just for aesthetic rea-

As someone who's struggled with depression and anxiety for 15 years, I frequently notice the positive and negative effects that color has on

Blue makes me feel calm, too choice is catching on as a design much red makes me feel tense and trend. Celebrity and model, Kendagitated, and monotonous whitewashed colors-like the ones on the walls of my former flats-make me with Baker-Miller Pink, citing the feel uninspired or even glum.

So, I headed to the paint store with one simple guiding question in mind: What colors made me feel

Color's Effect on Our Mood

As it turns out, I'm not alone in visitor to have," said Harrington. having strong responses to color. While we don't always think of interior design as something related that color can affect our mood, energy levels, and choices.

Color scientist and consultant, Leslie Harrington, states that even when we're not consciously thinking about the shades of our surroundings, color can still influence us, especially if it's a bold,

"Color can absolutely impact a person's behavior and the way they think or feel," Harrington said. "When you walk into a red, pink, or blue room, we can see measured impact on heart rate, for example. It's an involuntary bodily reaction." Still, no one experiences one hue I like to unwind while cooking or exactly the same way, Harrington

"From a psychological standassociations with different colors." In fact, our varying perceptions of color are formed through universal, cultural, and personal experiences. Red is universally associated with love, for example. Also, every country maintains unique cultural traditions with color: South Koreans wear white to funerals, while many Western cultures wear dark colors.

We also have our own personal experiences with different hues. I associate pastel yellow with my grandmother's house, and befittingly find it comforting.

There isn't one right shade for everyone, even if people share similar issues, like depression, anxiety, or other health issues. Still, given that the study of the psychology of color has existed for decades, there's some general consensus.

As early as the 1880s, Florence Nightingale discussed the importance of implementing varied and "brilliant" colors in hospitals in order to improve patients' moods and health outcomes.

Several decades later, in 1950, color expert Faber Birren wrote about how some blues and greens can act like sedatives, or even be hypnotic. olive green-tiled bathrooms of the And in the 1960s, researchers 1960s painted rooms in prisons across

on inmates. The color, later named

"Baker-Miller Pink," was shown

to reduce aggressive and violent behaviors, as well as lower blood pressure and heart rate.

"Typically speaking, warm colors tend to be more uplifting and cool colors tend to be more calming, said Harrington

Although these responses are subjective, creating an emotionally-healthy home through color all Jenner, embraced color psychol ogy by painting a room in her home research that it's both calming and suppresses appetite

Where Should You Begin? "The most important thing when designing a room is to think of the emotional response and experience that people want themselves or a

Painting With Memories

Just as Harrington suggests, I conto our well-being, research shows sidered the primary function of each room before selecting paint samples for my new (old) house.

> A luminous turquoise color not only reminded me of the coral I'd seen once while scuba diving in the South Pacific, but it instantly made me feel joyful and inspired. I decided to use it for my living room, where I like to read and converse with friends, as well as for my office, where I do all my writing.

A sunny apricot color felt energiz ing and fun, so I used in the area of my basement where I work out. I also picked out a dark, relaxing blue to use in my kitchen, where baking after a long day.

Although I kept some of my walls in more neutral tones, I felt a noticepoint, not all of us have the same able difference after I emptied my last paint can. The highly saturated colors made me feel safer, warmer, less anxious, and most important-

Color Therapy on a Budget Still, while I've found my depres-

sion and anxiety have been somewhat alleviated by painting my walls and ceilings, adding color to your home or apartment doesn't need to be as dramatic, or as expensive, as a large painting project. Once you identify which colors make you feel more joyful, relaxed, energized, inspired, or whatever feeling you're searching for, these

hues can be introduced in a number Keep a vase of bright yellow flowers in areas you like to sit in, buy vibrant decorative pillows, or just

swap out your faded armchair for, say, a royal purple one. When choosing to re-color your living space, Harrington recommends that you always return to

personal experience and instincts. Color design trends come and go: Think of the brown wood-paneled living rooms of the 1970s or the

But the feelings that a color the country with a lucid shade of evokes are less likely to change. Espink in order to study its effects pecially if they're powerful enough to make you feel like a calmer, more inspired version of yourself.

at earlier stages of cancer or some older adults, and some scans may be excessive. Until we change norms and engage patients, plain language and highlighting commonly overused interventions.

Week 9, 2019 THE EPOCH TIMES

THE POPULAR REINCARNATION OF A

Victorian Food Trend

This approach to un-dieting can help you lose weight and improve your health

LAUREN ALEX O' HAGAN

n recent years, mindfulness—defined as "a mental state or attitude in which one focuses one's awareness on the present moment"—has become embedded into our everyday language. Mindfulness has helped many people develop the skills necessary to manage chronic pain, depression, anxiety, stress, and sleeping disorders. It has also become a popular way to change eating behaviors under the term "mindful eating".

Mindful eating encourages people to pay attention to food with all of their senses, noticing the physical and emotional responses that take place before, during, and after an eating experience. Mindful eating teaches people to use wisdom to guide eating decisions, acknowledge food preferences non-judgementally, and recognize physical hunger cues.

Although its purpose is not to lose weight, mindful eating can help those struggling to follow long-term diets by correcting their attitudes toward "good" and "bad" foods. Eating mindfully is also said to help reduce emotional eating and promote eating smaller portions and fewer calories.

Despite its current popularity among psychologists, nutritionists, and dietitians, mindful eating is nothing new. In fact, it can be traced back to the late Victorian era and the work of American health food enthusiast Horace Eletcher.

The Art of Eating

In line with some of the current claims of mindful eating, Fletcher stated that regular practice of what became known as "fletcherising" would result in head clarity, increased body strength and stamina, and would fend offillness and tiredness. To demonstrate these assertions, he personally challenged Yale's top athletes to a competition of strength and endurance, which, at 60 years of age, he is reputed to have won.

Fletcher's book quickly became a bestseller and his methods were taken up by such eminent figures as Arthur Conan Doyle, Franz Kafka, Theodore Roosevelt, and Mark Twain. The cereal producer John Harvey Kellogg also implemented Fletcherism in his Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan and even hired a quartet to write "The Chewing Song"—as featured in The Road to Wellville—a film about Kellogg to promote its benefits.

Soon, Fletcherism was being advocated for children as a way to teach them to be aware of their bodies and minds. Thanks to avid campaigning from the health reformer, Bernard MacFaddan, it was added to school hygiene textbooks by 1914. Fletcherism was also considered beneficial to prisoners and soldiers, with one criminal claiming that it had enabled him to break the bad habits of a lifetime, as he learned that "dietary righteousness went hand-in-hand with spiritual well-being."

