

NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from Exmouth Wellness Centre and Margaret River Wellness Centre

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BEING MINDFUL IN THE 21ST CENTURY

BY DR SAM BALDOCK

As a Chiropractor I deal a lot with people who are in physical pain and for most people they are able to identify the physical incident that lead to this pain, but what I am going to talk about today is emotional trauma in the form of stress. How many times have you gotten home on a Friday afternoon and walked in the door saying 'damn I am glad it's the weekend that was a busy week', yet how often do you stop to think about the toll that this stress is taking on your body.

Stress forms one of the three main groups of traumas that negatively affect the overall health of our bodies and most importantly, your nervous systems. Each of these traumas take our bodies away from homeostasis, a place of balance, and towards a place of disease and imbalance. So let's talk about stress and what we can do to combat it. Most of us out there very rarely stop to evaluate our mental stability and take a small portion of our time to re-balance our thinking.

Even fewer get out of bed in the morning and take 10 minutes to start our days off properly with a mindfulness routine. Eating healthy and exercising have become key focuses in our lives (and as a health care professional I rejoice to see this), but there is one aspect of this triad that we often neglect, and that is mindfulness. So what can you do?

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BEING MINDFUL IN THE 21ST CENTURY CONTINUED...

Well, the main focus of this article will be to give you a few essential and easy to use tools, that will enable you to destress both your mind and your body. This will involve taking 5-10 minutes in both the morning and the afternoon to start and end your day in a positive and productive way.

So first things first. I want you to think about the very first thing that you do when you wake up in the morning. Do you roll over and turn off the alarm on your smart phone? While you are turning off the alarm how many of you quickly jump on Facebook or Instagram to have a look at what is going on in the world? For a large majority of the population this has become the norm, and it is the first thing we need to change. Mobile phones, especially charging mobile phones, do not need to be left right next to our heads while we sleep. Our brain is made up of billions of complex neurological pathways that communicate via chemical synapses, and it is while we sleep that our brains go about reorganising these connections. If this process is hindered in any way during the night, then you will not wake up feeling refreshed and recharged. It is for this reason that I am a big fan of putting your phone onto flight mode and away from your bed during the night. The second thing we need to do is to put that phone straight down after switching off the alarm. If you find this too hard to do once you have picked up your phone, then I suggest getting a bedside alarm clock. The thinking behind this is that we want to start our mornings off in a specific way. We want to start our mornings off with a specific intention and jumping straight onto Facebook is not the way to do that. Those 3-4 minutes of scrolling can be put to much better use.....

WAKING UP RIGHT

Right now we need to talk about what to do once you are out of bed. There are two types of people in this world, the morning people, and the people who struggle to form any kind of meaningful sentence without a strong coffee. For me, I have always been in the second class of people, and so my morning routine needs to involve something to stimulate both my mind and my body. For the others who jump out of bed fully awake, you need to be doing something to calm and centre your bodies and minds. Don't worry, both of these things can be achieved in an incredibly easy way, all you need is some quiet floor space. If you don't have a quiet space then headphones are the answer.

THE MORNING PEOPLE

So for the morning people out there what we want to start you off with is some form of calming routine, the most well-known of these is meditation. There are a wide variety of guided meditation apps out there these days and even guided meditations on YouTube. All you are looking for is a 5-minute quick tutorial, which will allow you to focus on your diaphragmatic breathing and bring your focus back to the present, rather than the million different things that you have on for the day.

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One of the other techniques that I have recently started to use is breath holds. This is not a technique for the faint hearted, but there are various apps out there to guide you through CO2 tables. The idea with this is that you use diaphragmatic breathing leading up to the breath hold, and then during the breath, hold focus on relaxing each area of your body one step at a time until you feel you can't hold your breath anymore. This forces your mind into the present and for you to really focus your body in what can be a challenging situation. Now that we have woken up your mind in the right way we need to wake up your body in the right way. Being a Chiropractor, a lot of what I focus on is posture and core strength, so I have put together a few short videos outlining a set of quick and easy core strengthening exercises that you can use. The idea behind this is to wake up your core muscles so that you have the structural support as you go about your day. You can find these exercises on our Facebook page.

THE COFFEE ADDICTS

So for the coffee addicts out there, we are going to do things a little differently. Instead of focusing on the mind first, we are going to focus on the body, because the last thing I want you to do is fall asleep on your floor once you have gotten out of bed. The first thing you are going to do is run through the exercises I recorded and put up on Facebook. These exercises wake up your body and start to get the blood moving. Just 10 minutes of light intensity exercise has been shown to decrease fatigue and increase blood flow carrying oxygen and nutrients to muscle tissue. This is all we really need to start with in the mornings, if you have more time and can incorporate other exercises then fantastic, but as a starting point 10 minutes is perfectly adequate (Puetz, 2008). Once we have woken up our bodies, we then need to wake up our minds, which involves either a 5-minute guided meditation, or a 5-10-minute breath hold routine which I have explained above.

A CALM END TO THE DAY

The idea here is the exact opposite to the morning wake up routine. While in the morning we need to wake up your bodies and minds, at night we need to calm down both our bodies and minds. Our autonomic nervous system (ANS) is made up of two distinct parts. One is the sympathetic (fight or flight) and the other is the parasympathetic (rest and digest). Both parts activate very different physical and mental states of being. When our bodies are in harmony and the ANS is functioning well, we have the ability to effortlessly change between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.

While the sympathetic part of our nervous systems has its uses, too often in this day and age I see people who are stuck in a sympathetic dominance pattern. What this means is that instead of using your sympathetic nervous systems 20% of the time and your parasympathetic nervous systems 80% of the time, your body is stuck the other way around and in the sympathetic state 80% of the time. This means that we are stuck in this fight or flight response, our bodies are continually being pumped full of adrenaline and the blood is being diverted away from our internal organs and towards our muscles in order to prepare our bodies to respond to this external threat. What does this mean? It means that both our bodies and minds find it hard to properly switch off at the end of the day, so we need to be doing something to help our bodies back into the parasympathetic state. If left in this sympathetic state, it will actually effect how you see the world. Due to the way your brain is activated in this sympathetic state, you are constantly analysing things from a worst-case scenario and looking for an external threat. When we have to deal with the possibility of imminent physical danger this is important, but when we are sitting at home trying to go to bed after a stressful day this is very detrimental (Michalak, 2014). The interesting thing about this sympathetic pattern is the effect it has on our posture.



When we are in this fight or flight response we tend to assume a slumped and defensive posture. In this position we protect our internal organs which in a life threatening situation is important, when we are sitting in the car or on the couch at home this is not so beneficial. Putting your body in this position compresses your lungs and digestive tract, meaning that your body gets less oxygen than it should with every breath and finds it harder to pass food through your digestive system (R Dainese, 2003).

So what can we do about it? There is actually a very easy way to push your body back over to the parasympathetic nervous system, and it involves the use of a posture pole or two rolled up towels and a pillow.



There are videos on our Facebook page that show exactly what to do, but the basic idea is to open up your chest and bring your posture back into a more normal and functional state. While lying on the towels or posture pole you use diaphragmatic breathing which massages the spine, increasing blood flow to the nervous system and helping to relax your body. These two things help to shift your body from a sympathetic state over to a parasympathetic state, and all you need is 10 minutes. If you want, put some music on while you lay there. I would also advise using an alarm because I find a lot of patients fall asleep when doing this! The ideal time to be doing this would be just before going to bed.

The last thing I would like to talk about is a problem I see more and more with our rapid uptake and use of smart phones and computers. Using the posture pole and towels is great but there is one more small and easy thing that you can do to help your body switch off at night. Numerous studies have shown that strong light can suppress the body's ability to produce melatonin, the hormone the brain produces at night to induce sleep. That's right those smart phones, computers and TVs that we use or sit in front of to relax are actually stopping us from properly switching off at the end of the day. The solution, turn your iPhone or Mac Book onto night shift, or if you don't have an apple product use f.lux which you can download. These apps limit the amount of blue light reaching our pupils. New studies have shown that blue light suppress melatonin production more than any other wave length so with this app you are able decrease your brains exposure to the wave lengths of light that most strongly suppress the production of melatonin.



The other thing to help you get to sleep faster and enjoy a deeper sleep is to limit your texting and computer use within two hours of going to bed. Texting or computer use after this period of time has been shown to significantly increase stress levels which can trigger insomnia and disrupt sleep patterns (Wood, 2012).

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MORNING WAKE UP ROUTINE

In this five part series, Dr Sam Baldock from Margaret River Wellness Centre will guide you through his Morning Wake Up Routine. The main goal and purpose of this routine is to get your core muscles activated and to provide your body with the support that it needs throughout the day.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK TO VIEW THIS FIVE PART SERIES

BOOK OF THE MONTH

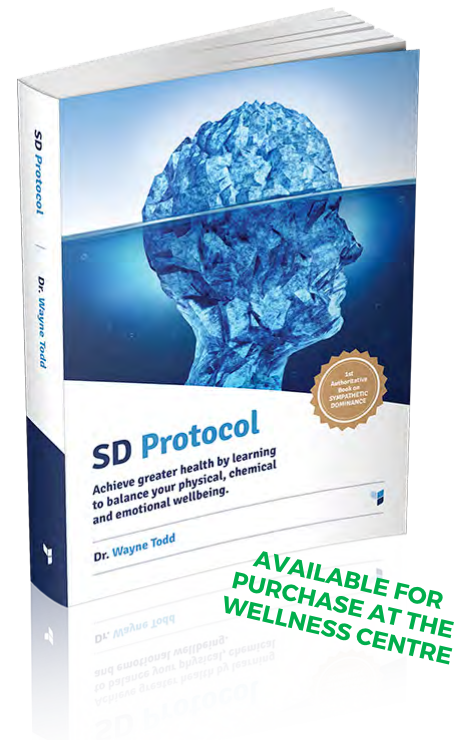
SD PROTOCOL: ACHIEVE GREATER HEALTH BY LEARNING HOW TO BALANCE YOUR PHYSICAL, CHEMICAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING.

BY DR WAYNE TODD

The SD Protocol looks at our evolutionary body and makes sense of why we just don't have one symptom or problem but a cascade of health issues that will snowball until every system in the body is affected, both physically and mentally. Dr. Todd with his 30 years of clinical experience, research and continuing education has nailed the modern health dilemma and succinctly put together this book, which addresses modern health issues that will revolutionise the way we look at modern disease.

We can no longer just look at diet, or function or symptoms, we must take a holistic approach to this modern syndrome that Dr. Todd has so eloquently and simply outlined. This is not a one pill wonder – they never work for long, but this is an approach that touches on many aspects of a lifestyle in order to make lasting change.

Dr. Wayne Todd in this revolutionary book not only looks at the problem but gives very simple solutions for change that synchronise with our evolutionary bodies. You will find yourself nodding as you read through the common sense solutions.



AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE WELLNESS CENTRE

CACOA NUT SLICE

Ingredients

- 1 cup of organic cacao powder
- 1 cup of organic maca powder
- 10 medjool dates
- ¼ cup of goji berries
- 2 cups mixed nuts
- ½ cup of pistachios
- 1 cup of macadamias
- 2 tbs coconut oil

Method

1. Crush all of the nuts in a food processor to desired consistency and place in a large bowl.
2. Add the maca & cacao powders to nut mix.
3. Remove the pips from dates & blend in processor with approximately 1/2 a cup hot water until it forms a paste, then add it to the mixture.
4. Melt the coconut oil and add to mixture.
5. Add goji berries, mix all together well & spread evenly into a large slice tray.
5. Refrigerate or freeze until set. Cut into slices and enjoy!



FEATURED PRODUCTS



Metagenics Neurocalm

Metagenics Neurocalm is a Herbal Blend Beneficial During Times of Stress, Nervous Tension and Mild Anxiety.



Posture Pole

The Posture Pole uses body positioning to naturally release the tension from tight postural muscles and relieves neck, shoulder and upper back pain caused by a forward head posture.

CLINIC NEWS



Margaret River Wellness Centre

Remedial Massage Therapy

Masami, our Remedial Massage Therapist is now working full time and is available for appointments Monday to Friday! Masami offers a range of remedial techniques and Private Health Rebates are available.

Our opening hours are as follows:

Monday 1pm - 6pm

Tuesday 8am - 6pm

Wednesday 10am - 1pm

Thursday 1pm - 6pm

Friday 8am - 12pm

For Enquiries or to schedule an appointment, please call (08) 9758 7888.



Exmouth Wellness Centre

Lifestyle Ergonomics Workshop

An active workshop led by Dr Farley that integrates the latest theories and research into the ergonomics of our daily lives. Dr Farley provides take home advice and techniques to help develop the awareness of the ideal setup of our sleeping, sitting and standing environments at home and work. For more

information about this event please call our friendly staff on (08) 9949 4118.



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