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Keeping Yourself in One Piece During Finals Week

Signs of stress can be revealed through physical body changes as well as memory deficits, which may cause even more stress creating a vicious cycle.

Stressors cause a raise in the body's hormonal cortisol levels, increasing oil production by the skin, which contributes to acne breakouts and other skin-related problems. A study conducted with teenagers in Singapore revealed that participants high in stress were 23% more likely to have severe levels of acne.

In addition to excessive oil production, stress can trigger the immune cells in skin to overreact. The overreaction of immune cells may lead to certain skin diseases, including atopic dermatitis and psoriasis. Stress may contribute to longer time for the skin to repair itself, prolonging skin conditions.

Stress can also initiate nervous habits, such as twirling hair, which may cause hair to fall out creating bald spots in scalps and beards. Hair loss due to stress, called Telogen effluvium, causes hair to fall out for up to 3 months after a stressful event. If bald spots aren't bad enough, hair may not grow back for up to 9 months and when it grows back, it may grow in grey.

Therefore it is not a myth that stress contributes to grey hair.

Another nervous habit of picking or biting nails, may cause damage to the growth plate, permanently damaging the nail. Physical or emotional stress may also cause white horizontal lines to appear across the nails.



Ways to minimize these physical effects of stress include: avoiding hot showers, using detergent-free soap, applying moisturizer to skin after bathing, and wearing sunscreen to protect skin from sun exposure.

Stress not only causes physical body changes, but also memory deficits. It has been known that severe stress lasting weeks or months can impair cell communication in the brain's learning and memory region, but evidence also shows that short-term stress has the same effect. In re-

sponse to a stressor, the hypothalamus releases a hormone called CRH which then causes the pituitary hormone-releasing gland at the bottom of the hypothalamus to release ACTH into the bloodstream. Once ACTH reaches the adrenal gland on the kidney it triggers the hormone glucocorticoid (cortisol) release. Usually there is a feedback mechanism that inhibits the hypothalamus from producing more cortisol, however in the presence of prolonged stress this inhibition is dampened, meaning there is too much cortisol in the body. This proposes the problem that too much cortisol kills the brain's hippocampal or memory cells.

In order to stay beautiful this finals week while conserving your memory, check out these stress reducing tips.

(1) Be realistic (2) Don't over-schedule (3) Get a good night's sleep (4) Get regular exercise and follow a healthy diet. (5) Build time into your schedule for relaxing activities. (6) Keep your sense of humor. (7) Reduce sugar and caffeine intake (8) Avoid alcohol, nicotine and drugs (9) Focus on the positive (10) Share your feelings (11) Deep breathing exercises (12) Connect with others.

Active Minds:
Promoting
awareness about
mental health,
mental illness, and
available resources
in the UST
community

Active Minds

Article by Courtney Kreilkamp

There is a new club on campus called Active Minds! Active Minds is a club with the goals of increasing awareness among UST students about issues of mental health, symptoms of mental illness, and available resources in and around the UST community; decreasing stigma against those living with mental illness and/or receiving services; and contributing to an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all people, particularly those living with psychiatric disorders. While Active Minds is a new club at St. Thomas, it is known on other college campuses across the United States.

The club is run by Hana Hurley. She is the President and worked so hard with the club

advisor, Dr. Jean Giebenhain to have Active Minds be an official club on campus. Other executive board members include Courtney Kreilkamp (Vice President), Amanda McClellan (Secretary), Stephanie Tack (Treasurer), and Melissa Hass (Public Relations).

We hope to plan many fun events on campus this year. We generally meet on Wednesday evenings in lower level JRC. If you want to be part of the club or have any questions, please contact the secretary, Amanda McClellan at armcclellan@stthomas.edu for more information. You do not need to be a Psychology major or minor to join! The club is a lot of fun so we would recommend that you come to a meeting and check it out!

Seasonal Depression?



Winter blues, or seasonal affective disorder, should be treated as serious condition Great Falls Tribune, Montana (2008)

As the temperature gets colder, daylight hours get shorter and dark hours get longer, many people notice an increase in their eating and sleeping habits. These are common responses to the change in season, however some people may be more affected by these changes than others and may have seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

In individuals with SAD, the seasonal change triggers feelings of depression, lethargy, fatigue and other problems. SAD is a type of depression that can severely impair daily life. The Mayo Clinic's Web site, www.MayoClinic.com, lists symptoms such as: depression, hopelessness, anxiety, loss of energy, social withdrawal, oversleeping, loss of interest in usually enjoyable activities, craving for foods high in carbohydrates, weight gain and difficulty concentrating and processing information. Generally, symptoms appear during late fall or early winter and go away during the warmer, sunnier days of spring and summer. The specific causes of SAD are unknown, but some researchers believe that genetics, age and most importantly, your body's natural chemical makeup all play a role in developing the disorder. Treatment includes physical activity, especially being outdoors during the light part of the day to walk, run, ski or snowshoe. Another alternative for coping with SAD is a light box that emits full spectrum light much like the sun.

*If you feel that you may be suffering from SAD or need a little mood lifter, UST has a light box located in the north-west corner of the 1st floor of O'Shaughnessy-Frey library opposite of the leather room.

'Twas the Night before Finals

<http://www.appleseeds.org/finals-1.htm>

'Twas the night before finals,
And all through the college,
The students were praying
For last minute knowledge.

Most were quite sleepy,
But none touched their beds,
While visions of essays
Danced in their heads.

Out in the taverns,
A few were still drinking,
And hoping that liquor
Would get their brains thinking.

In my own apartment,
I had been pacing,
Dreading all those exams
I soon would be facing.

My roommate was speechless,
His nose in his books,
And my comments to him
Drew unfriendly looks.

I drained all the coffee,
And brewed a new pot,
No longer caring
That my nerves were shot.

I stared at my notes,
But my thoughts were all muddy,
My eyes went a'blur,
I just couldn't study.

"Some pizza might help,"
I said with a shiver,
But each place I called
Refused to deliver.

I'd pretty much concluded
Life is unfair and cruel,
Since our futures all depend
On grades made in school.

When all of a sudden,
Our door opened wide,
And Patron Saint Put-It-Off
Ambled inside.

Her spirit was careless,
Her manner was mellow,
She looked at the mess
And started to bellow:

"Why should us students
Make such a fuss,
About what those teachers
Toss out to us?"

"On Cliff Notes! On Crib Notes!
On Last Year's Exams!
On Wingit and Slingit,
And Last Minute Crams!"

Her message delivered,
She vanished from sight,
But we heard her laughing
Outside in the night.

"Your teachers won't flunk you,
So just do your best.
Happy Finals to All,
And to All, a good test."



**Good Luck on
Finals
Everyone!**

**- From your
friendly
neighborhood
EAs**



9 Neuroses of Christmas

You have heard of obsessive-compulsive disorder, phobias, anxiety disorders, mood disorders, and personality disorders, but have you heard of any of these disorders associated with the Christmas holiday season?

1. Orderline Personality Disorder (OPD): The inability to stop calling 1-800 numbers in pursuit of last-minute holiday sales. OPD sufferers commonly exhibit an unusually flat ear and the inability to recite numbers without also mentioning a cardholder name and expiration date.

2. Ho-Ho-Phobia (HHP): A profound fear of bearded men in red suits and black boots.

3. North-Polar Disorder (NPD): The chronic fear that someone is on the roof.

4. Blitzen Fits (BF): Uncontrollable tantrums resulting from the belief that reindeer have befouled one's driveway.



5. Calendar Countdown Condition (CCC): An unyielding obsession with how many shopping days are left until Christmas.

6. OCD-AAA: A variation on obsessive-compulsive disorder, in which sufferers constantly fear that they forgot to buy triple-A batteries for their kid's presents.

7. Tongue-Tied Terror (TTT): The inability to speak normally in the presence of one's in-laws at the holiday dinner table.

8. Walking Winter-Wonderland Disease (WWW): The inability to be giddy at the sight of a new snowfall.

9. Angoraphobia: A chronic fear that your Aunt Harriet sent you another homemade sweater for Christmas.

For more holiday neuroses go to: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/index.php?term=20031028-000006&page=2>

Need Help With a Psychology Class or a Place to Study? Come visit the EAs!

Hours: M-Th 4:30pm-9pm, Sunday: 6pm-9pm

Location: JRC LL09 and LL54

Services: Tutoring, help with research and writing, study sessions, researching grad school and internship/job opportunities

Online help: Instant Messenger: AIM: ustpsychology
MSN Messenger: ustpsychology@hotmail.com

EA update

1. You may have noticed that the bulletin boards have been redone in both of the computer labs. In LL09, you can find a variety of resources from employment opportunities to psychology-related movies. In LL54, you can find information on applying to graduate schools and registering to take the GRE.
2. We now have a Facebook account as another way that you can access us for psychology related questions. Search "Psych EAs" and put in a friend request!
3. Make sure that you check out the binders located in the computer labs if you are looking for graduate schools, a good job, or a cool internship!

Study sessions will be held for Psychology finals during finals week, however the EA lab will be **closed** Sunday, December 14th. Happy Studying!

Famous Amnesiac Dies

Henry Gustav Molaison, known to the world as H.M., died as a result of respiratory failure on December 2 at the age of 82. As a young man, H.M. lost the ability to form new memories after undergoing brain surgery to treat severe seizures. In the 55 years following the surgery, his case became well-known because of the knowledge regarding

learning and memory that scientists were able to gain from studying him.

Read his full obituary here:

www.nytimes.com/2008/12/05/us/05hm.html?_r=1&em

This Month in Psychology: December

Dec. 1, 1947 — B. F. Skinner was elected professor of psychology at Harvard University. The appointment became effective July 1, 1948.

Dec. 3, 1895 — Anna Freud was born. Sigmund Freud's youngest daughter was his constant companion and became a prominent child psychoanalyst. She refined and expanded the concept of defense mechanisms of the ego. She founded the Hampstead Child Therapy Center in England.

Dec. 4, 1943 — Allied bombing in World War II destroyed Wilhelm Wundt's original Leipzig psychology laboratory.

Dec. 6, 1866 — The first state mental hospital in Minnesota, St. Peter State Hospital, opened for patients. Before this time, patients under Minnesota

state care were treated in hospitals in Iowa and Missouri. The facility is now named St. Peter Regional Treatment Center.

Dec. 8, 1941 — The first data were gathered for the World War II studies later published under the title *The American Soldier*. The attack on Pearl Harbor had occurred on the previous day. The official name of this series of studies was Studies in Social Psychology in World War II.

Dec. 10, 1969 — The state of Wisconsin approved its psychologist licensure law. The law became effective on April 16, 1970.

Dec. 12, 1957 — The first certificate to practice professional psychology in the state of New York was awarded to Frank S. Freeman, chair of the State

Board of Examiners in Psychology.

Dec. 16, 1901 — Margaret Mead was born. Mead introduced the American public to cultural anthropology through her field studies of primitive societies. Her evidence on the cultural sources of personality, child rearing standards, and gender roles continues to influence developmental and social psychologists.

Dec. 25, 1914 — Thyroid hormone (*thyroxine*) was first isolated by Edward Kendall of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Dec. 29, 1904 — With the election of Mary Whiton Calkins of Wellesley College to the presidency of the APA, the APA became the first American scientific society to elect a woman president.