

Health Hunter[®]

N E W S L E T T E R

Can imagery help heal?

Marilyn Landreth, M.A.

Does anxiety, depression, lack of social support, psychological distress, or a pessimistic outlook on life play a role in our ability or inability to deal with the effects of disease? Does the mind play a role in health or sickness?

This is a topic for a great deal of research and also heated debate. Psychoneuroimmunology is the long name for this type of research.

Learning to use relaxation techniques and imagery skills may help us all deal better with stress.

There are several promising clues coming from recent research. Drs. Cohen and Herbert, writing in *Annual Reviews of Psychology*, described the mechanism that explains how psychological factors might influence immunity and the immune system. They provided substantial evidence that psychological factors can influence indicators of immune status and function. In addition, they found links between stress and disease onset and progression, at least in cases of colds and flu.

Learning how to deal effectively with stress may play a part in improving the quality of life in patients with breast cancer, according to Christine M. Bryla, R.N., M.S.N., and reported in *Oncology Nursing Forum*. She evaluated relaxation/breathing exercises, or a combination of relaxation and imagery, as tools for patients undergoing radiation. Patients who were trained in both relaxation and imagery were more relaxed than those trained just in relaxation, she reported.

Also from *Oncology Nursing Forum*, Kathryn Ann Caudell, Ph.D, R.N., explored the relationship of behavioral interventions on reducing or improving quality of life in patients with cancer. She was evaluating interventions such as relaxation training and guided imagery, along with others. She concluded, "A multi-component, long-term program of behavioral interventions may provide the greatest and lasting interventions."

Where does all this research seem to be leading? It looks as though there are inexpensive techniques that can help people deal better with the stress and strains of life and disease. These techniques are not meant to replace medical treatment, but to be used in conjunction with treatment and, in some instances, these mental techniques may help the person better deal with the medical interventions.

Learning to use relaxation techniques and imagery skills may help us all deal better with stress. Learning to do deep muscle relaxation and/or really taking the time to meditate or pray each day for a few minutes can be a good start to taking better care of ourselves if we are not already doing so. Letting our sense of humor develop more freely and laughing more often is another sense to explore.

One method studied often is the use of imagery. Although the word, imagery, may bring to mind the use of our visual sense, that is not the only sense used. Think about getting up this morning, getting dressed, eating breakfast, and getting to work.

How did you remember that? Did

continued on page 2

Talkative parents make kids smarter

"The more parents talk with their young children, the more good things happen intellectually for those kids later on," Todd Risley at the University of Alaska told *Science News*.

Risley and Betty Hart, at the University of Kansas, codirectors of the 2 1/2 year study of 42 families in the Kansas City area, spent another three years listening to tape-recorded observations and analyzing mountains of data.

They found that parents in all families spend about the same amount of time in controlling children. "But those parents who talked to children the most added critical elements to those interactions, such as affirming the child's efforts, responding to questions, providing guidance and using a diverse vocabulary."

The researchers also found that children whose parents provided this high level of talk performed markedly higher on a measure of developmental IQ at age 3. [Hi]

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Nutritional Medicine

by Ron Hunninghake, M.D.

Understanding


The emerging field of mind-body medicine is often looked upon as a fairly esoteric place. Hypnosis, guided imagery, positive affirmations, relaxation therapy, and biofeedback are but a few of the burgeoning list of mind-body modalities.

There is one such modality that is commonly used as a fundamental mind-body technique at The Center. That "technique" is simply: understanding.

The typical patient sees their physician with a symptom, the symptom is diagnosed, treatment is given, and everyone goes home. At The Center, our co-learners also present to a physician, usually with multiple symptoms, for which the individual has found no therapeutic help. But instead of passively waiting for the system to simply diagnose and treat, our co-learners are invited into a discovery process where they become "co-detectives" with the Center's staff.

Co-learners participate in the de-

cision as to what lab tests to get. They are asked to study the nutrients that tested low and to read about toxic factors. Diaries and symptom journals are kept. Biologic measurements of their bodily functions are taken at home. The educational model is quite active at The Center, which houses a first class medical library with the best computerized collection of nutrition and health related books and journals in the state. Co-learners are actively involved in the process of understanding the many and varied factors that have culminated in their unique and personal illness.

The key here is: UNDERSTANDING! When we gain insight and understanding of what affects our health and of how we can change things for the better, a startling mind-body shift occurs. Helplessness is transformed into empowerment. Passive dependency is raised to active search and discovery. A new and dynamic belief, "I CAN HEAL," is born. 

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Health Hunter Newsletter is published as a service ten times a year by the Olive W. Garvey Center for Healing Arts, a division of The Center for the Improvement of Human Functioning International (A Non-Profit Organization). Memberships are \$25 plus tax for one year, \$30 plus tax for outside the U.S.; \$38 plus tax for 2 years, \$43 plus tax for outside the U.S.; and \$56 plus tax for 3 years, \$61 plus tax for outside the U.S. To subscribe, see the order form on page 7 of this issue.

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Continued from page 1


you feel yourself wanting to stay in bed, wrapped up and quiet for just a few more minutes? Did you see yourself jumping out of bed, ready to face another beautiful day? Did you remember the taste of orange juice as it slid over your taste buds? Did you smell the aroma of coffee as you slowly opened your eyes? Did you remember hearing the alarm on your clock radio or maybe the sound of the TV as you got ready to start your day? As you did this, you just took part in a form of imagery.

Research shows a possible connection between imagery and physiologic responses. If you would like to find out if you can use imagery to elicit a physiologic response, do this little experiment:

First, tell your salivary glands to secrete fluid. Can you make them do that just by commanding them? Most of us are not very successful at commanding the autonomic nervous system that controls the salivary glands.

Now use imagery to elicit a physiologic response. Think about a big, yellow lemon. Remember the tangy smell of the lemon and the feel of its waxy skin. In your mind's eye, take a sharp knife and cut the lemon in half and watch the juice drip off the side of the lemon. Now imagine taking a big bite out of that tart, juicy lemon. Remember the tangy taste of lemon? Are you salivating like I am? If not, you may want a friend to read the above paragraph to allow you to get the full benefit. What we imagine has an effect on our physiologic responses.



The above was a simple little experiment that allowed you to have a brief glimpse into one method which shows promise in helping people deal with life threatening or chronic illnesses. Now that we know some of the power of our imagination let's learn to use it to improve our health. 

New no-cal fat substitute on its way

Z-Trim, a new product invented by George Inglett of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, may soon replace the fat and some of the carbohydrates in foods such as ground beef, chocolates, cheese, and cookies, according to *Science News*.

Using the hulls from corn, oats, or rice, Inglett spent three years perfecting the process to make Z-Trim a smooth and palatable product. This results in a fine, white cellulose powder that can be made into a gel by adding water.

Most fat replacers based on carbohydrates, such as an earlier invention of Inglett's called Oatrim, add calories to the product. Z-Trim does not. It passes through the body undigested.

Z-Trim does not have the problems of Olestra, a new fat-free product from Proctor and Gamble. Olestra can cause gastrointestinal problems, as well as sweep out fat-soluble vitamins and the carotenoids, while passing through the body. The only disadvantage of Z-Trim is that it cannot be used to fry foods.

Although Z-Trim holds some promise for future product development, nothing beats whole foods for a delicious, nutrient rich, low calorie way of eating. [H]

An apple a day keeps the doctor away

Another saying is, "To eat an apple on going to bed will make the doctor beg for his bread."

When apples first came into use, there were only 22 varieties of either yellow or red crab apples. Too sour and acidic to eat raw, they were wonderful used for preserves and cider. Now there are close to 2000 varieties of apples cultivated, giving us great choice for eating and cooking.

Apples contain between 80 to 85 percent water, about 5 percent protein, and 10 to 15 percent hydrocarbons, including starch and sugar. Sugar content of a fresh apple varies from 6 to 10 percent. The apple is rich in vitamins, and is considered to be one of the best and most valuable antiscorbutic fruits—good for preventing scurvy. [H]

HEALTH HUNTERS AT HOME

Hope

One of our patient/co-learners remarked to me the other day that, "There are no hopeless situations, just hopeless people." She has cancer and is opening every avenue of treatment she can find to be sure that she is doing what she needs to do to return her body to a state of health.

Her comment, combined with a piece that appeared in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) under the "A Piece of My Mind" column, started me thinking about hope and what others have said.

A couple of quotes about hope from Samuel Johnson, the 18th century British lexicographer and author, caught my eye.

"Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords."

"Hope is necessary in every condition. The miseries of poverty, sickness and captivity would, without this comfort, be insurmountable."

Victor Hugo, the 19th century French novelist, playwright, and poet who wrote the novel, *Les Miserables*, from which the recent hit musical was taken, said about hope, "Hope is the word which God has written on the brow of every man [and woman]."

When you come into my room, you need to sustain my hope

You need to know that I believe love wins over hate, hope over despair, life over death
that I hope against hope
that I pray and believe prayer works ...

Sit on my "mourning bench" if you are my physician
listen to me, talk truthfully to me...

And support my hope
that tomorrow there may be medicines
that today you care deeply
that you will do your best

When you come into my hospital room, promise me presence
promise me a healing partnership
keep hope alive
it is all I have.

Stephen A. Schmidt, EdD - Chicago, Ill

Emily Dickinson, the great 19th century American poet, wove these words together so beautifully when she wrote about hope.

"Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without words and never stops at all."

"Hope is an adventure, a going forward, a confident search for a rewarding life." These words are from Karl Menninger, the psychiatrist and philosopher who started the world famous Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas.

Bernie Siegel, M.D., wrote of hope that, "Refusal to hope is nothing more than a decision to die." This seems a bit harsh, but ripens quickly into truth.

Carl Jung, who started the Jungian school of psychiatry wrote in his book, *Late Thoughts*, "In the long run...no conscious will can ever replace the life instinct." I believe the essence of this life instinct is hope.

Stephen Schmidt wrote a moving piece in JAMA called "When You Come Into My Room." It is a description of who he is and what he wants the physician to see when coming into Schmidt's hospital room. Schmidt closes with these observations.



—Richard Lewis [H]

INFORMATION WORTH KNOWING

Do you carry around with you the internal critic that is always telling you what you are doing wrong? Maybe this critic also tells you that you are too fat or too tall or too dumb to ever amount to anything. Addressing that inner critic is to be armed with more than just appreciation for your positive qualities. Self-esteem is more an attitude of acceptance and nonjudgment toward yourself and others. The questions this month are taken from *Self-Esteem* written by Matthew McKay, Ph.D. and Patrick Fanning.


- 1 One of the special qualities of humans is an awareness of self; to form an identity and then attach value to it. The problem that keeps some people from developing a good self-esteem is the human capacity for _____.
- judgment
 - humor
 - inflating worth
 - weakness
- 2 Making changes is always difficult and it is almost impossible to change how you perceive and feel about yourself.
- True
 - False
- 3 Appreciation of your self-worth is determined by your _____.
- external circumstances
 - thoughts
 - height
 - weight
- 4 The toxic critic is that inner voice that attacks and judges you. One way it develops is, when as a child _____.
- a clear distinction was not made between your behavior and identity
 - someone once told you that you were bad
 - your parents were consistent in rule setting
 - all the above
- 5 When you listen to this inner toxic critic and believe every word she/he says, it is because it is rewarding to do so.
- True
 - False
- 6 _____ are bad habits of thought that are consistently used to interpret reality in an unreal way and play a role in lowered feelings of self-worth.
- Dreams
 - Engrams
 - Cognitive distortions
 - None of the above
- 7 The essence of a healthy sense of self-worth is _____.
- compassion for yourself and others
 - never making a mistake
 - setting goals that cannot be reached
 - all the above

• FOR ANSWERS, SEE PAGE 7 •

Should I eat soy products?

Yes, some medical experts are now saying. Soy beans and soy products, such as tofu, are an excellent source of phytoestrogens. Phytoestrogens, or plant hormones, appear to protect against both breast cancer, the leading cancer concern for women, and prostate cancer, the number one cancer

problem for men.

It isn't completely clear how this works, but it is theorized that the phytoestrogens and other phytohormones reduce the effect of the more troublesome kinds of estrogen by occupying the receptors for the hormones. 

Case of the month

About six months ago, a 47-year-old female came to The Center with bipolar depression and suicidal thoughts. She also had a pattern of recurrent respiratory and sinus infections that left her chronically tired.


Some of her written comments on her intake forms included, "I think about dying most of the time." "I am barely able to concentrate on my work." "I am an incompetent parent." She was taking Depakote, Ritalin, Ativan, Respiradol, Lithium, and Clonidine at her first visit.

Lab findings included low omega 6 GLA (gamma linolenic acid) and severe chromium and magnesium depletion. Also RBC (red blood cell) zinc was markedly low. Urinary pyrroles were elevated (a sign of fast excretion of B₆ and zinc). Epstein-Barr titers were positive. Her candida antibody titer was quite elevated.

Treatment consisted of intravenous ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and magnesium twice weekly. These infusions were started at The Center and continued for 4 weeks back in her home state. Liquid Zinc Boost and the high potency multivitamin, Cardi-rite, were started. LM911 drops were prescribed for magnesium replenishment.

Both Latero Flora and Diflucan were given to help control yeast overgrowth. Black current oil was given to boost GLA. Melatonin for better sleep pattern was recommended. Finally, hydrochloric acid tablets to improve digestion and nutrient absorption were given at the start of each meal.

One month prior to her most recent contact, alternate day slow release T3 was prescribed to counter the effects of her lithium. Since beginning that, and in combination with her other therapies, the patient reported improved energy, warm hands and feet, rare infections (that are milder), better skin, stabilized moods, and more productive work life.

She is off Depakote, uses Respiradol only every other day now, and Ativan is rarely used. She reports doing a better job of choosing whole foods. Her confidence as a mother has also greatly improved. 

Do it today!

How many times have you thought of something that you really would like to do—only to put it off until another day? Life is too short to keep doing this.

Enthusiasm is a good habit to acquire—and it is strengthened with practice. When we show enthusiasm, it uplifts others as well as ourselves. Enthusiasm is really contagious, and so is the lack of it. Think of the times in your life when you were really all fired up about something, and then were shot down by the disinterest and indifference of others. We need to live, not just exist, all the days of our lives.

I am reminded of a quote from Michael Landon in which he states, "Somebody ought to tell us, right from the start of our lives, that we are dying. Then we might live life to the limit every minute of every day. Do it! I say. Whatever you want to do, do it now."

With this in mind, today I did something I have wanted to do for a good many years and I am now approaching 80 years of age. Today I did it—I went for a ride on a Honda Shadow motorcycle, and it was great—just as I had expected it to be. I may not have been in the best of form getting on and off, but I managed, and I feel good now that I have accomplished one more thing that I really wanted to do before I leave this precious world behind.

I encourage each Health Hunter to do something special today and be glad that you were able to do it. Savor the joy! And, like me, think "what can I accomplish next." Don't worry about what others will say or think. Just think of the joy you will receive by this accomplishment. My joy and enthusiasm will kindle the same reactions in all those I meet today—as will yours.

—Nelda Reed

Little known, but interesting facts

Walking and weight lifting were ranked 1 and 2 as the most popular forms of exercise among women, according to the Fitness Products Council, North Palm Beach, Fla.

Introspection: to contemplate or ruminate

Self evaluation is great as long as you contemplate, not ruminate, over the past, C. Randall Colvin and colleagues at Northeastern University in Boston and the University of California, Berkeley told those at a meeting of the American Psychological Association recently.


These are two separate processes. Contemplation is defined in Webster's Dictionary as, "to view or consider with continued attention." To ruminate is defined as "to go over in the mind repeatedly and often casually and slowly or to chew repeatedly for an extended period of time."

Cows, camels, and giraffes are ruminants. They are often bringing up something they have eaten and chewing it again. Humans can ruminate as well, bringing up something that happened a while ago and chewing it over again to see where they went wrong. This rumination leads to self-condemnation rather than self-examination.

Self-contemplation is the positive view of oneself. It entails a relatively accurate analysis of previous events, current concerns, and future desires, which yields greater self-knowledge, the researchers believe.

Through contemplation, "People can gain insights about their own personalities to the extent that they are able to accurately recall memories...and form appropriate judgments about the meaning of the memory data," the researchers found.

They concluded that self-contemplation results in a "behavior style that is flexible and that facilitates successful adaption to difficult and trying circumstances that people face on a daily basis." In short, they can handle change better.

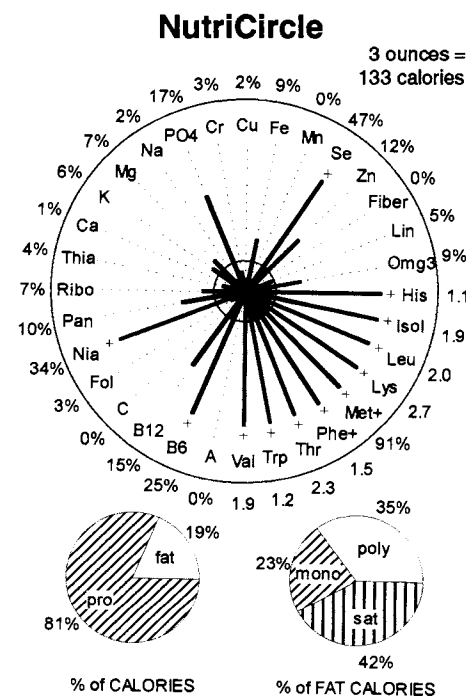
By contrast, ruminators are, "in a poor position to cope with life and as a result frequently feel sad and tend to suffer from low self-esteem." Who wants to be like a camel, anyway? 

Food of the Month



by Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.

TURKEY is a native American food traditional for holiday roasts. Of the 32 nutrients shown here for light meat (without skin), 22 are in adequate amounts compared to calories. Besides the amino acids of protein (*His...Val*), standouts include selenium, niacin, and vitamin B₆. Dark turkey meat has more fat (35% of calories) and slightly more calories per serving (160). But dark meat also has more of many nutrients, including two or three times more zinc, copper, riboflavin, pantothenic acid, and omega-3 fatty acid. Its dark color denotes exercised muscle, and—to many—a better flavor.



The length of each bar shows the amount of one nutrient. If a bar extends out to the inner circle, the food has enough of that nutrient to match the calories it contains. The numbers show nutrient amounts in RDAs per serving shown. The pie charts show the sources of calories (left) and the types of fat (right).

Beat The Odds Update

Which vitamin E is better, synthetic or natural?

People often ask the question, "Which is better, the synthetic or natural vitamin E?" "The synthetic is often cheaper than the natural form, but am I really saving money by picking cheaper form?", many people ask.

To answer this, *Health Hunter* turned to Don Davis, Ph.D., a biochemist at the University of Texas at Austin.

First, Dr. Davis clarified the terms. The natural form of vitamin E is called d-alpha tocopherol while the synthetic is d,l-alpha tocopherol. In this case, the "d" is short for dextro, meaning right handed and "l" means levo or left handed. You may see the alpha replaced by its Greek symbol, α .


Manufacturers can make the synthetic or "d,l" form of vitamin E more cheaply than they can refine the natural form. Because of this, it is the cheaper one on the shelf.

In this case, they can't count the

"l" in the International Units (IU) that appear on the label, but a sharp salesman may claim that you are getting twice what the label says.

The more expensive form of vitamin E found on the shelves is d-alpha tocopherol, the all natural one. This is derived from vegetable oil through a process developed by Eastman Kodak.

Dr. Davis says he always chooses to pay a little more to get the natural "d" form of Vitamin E. He sees it as a "play it safe" precaution.

He also selects the oil-soluble form of vitamin E over the water form since it is a fat-soluble vitamin. This preference was backed up recently by research in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* that found, "It appears that for normal adults and patients with normal lipid absorption, fat-soluble forms of vitamin E are preferable for therapeutic and prophylactic uses." 

CENTER UPDATE

Nature or nurture; partners in crime

The argument is over nature or nurture, genetics or family relations, that molds a person into a criminal or a productive person.

New research seems to come down square in the middle. In short, it takes both, according to recent research by Adrian Raine, a psychologist at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, and his colleagues, and reported in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, according to *Science News*.

The researchers studied 397 Danish boys born between September 1959 and December 1961. Next, they interviewed the boys and their mothers when they were 17 to 19. Finally, they reviewed a national data base to examine criminal records, if present, when the boys reached 20 to 22.

When processing the data, the researchers found that the boys fell into roughly three equal groups:

1. Obstetric group. These survived pregnancy or birth complications, were born prematurely or showed delays in


holding their heads up and other motor skills.

2. Poverty group. These had faced economic hardship throughout their lives, but had no motor skill problems and their parents got along well.

3. Biosocial group. They experienced various difficulties, including neurological problems, slow motor skill development, early maternal rejection, family discord and divorce, and parental law-breaking. They did not, though, experience economic hardship.

As it turned out, the boys in group three committed 70% of all violent and property crime recorded for the entire 397 boys. Mothers also noted more behavioral problems in group three.

Group two (poverty) had a slightly better record than those in group one, less than one in six committed serious crimes.

"Good parenting and good early health development may compensate for the otherwise ill effects of low income," Raine told *Science News*. 

Surgeon General's report on physical activity and health

Physical activity benefits all ages. For the elderly, it helps prevent falling and encourages independent living. For all ages, it reduces the risk of developing or dying from coronary heart disease, non-insulin dependent diabetes, hypertension, and colon cancer, according to the Surgeon General's report.

In addition, the report pointed out that physical activity also reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression, controls weight, and improves the health of bones, muscles, and joints.

Ralph Paffenbarger, M.D., was one of the pioneers in the effects of exercise on heart disease risk factors. In 1967, his research data, collected through his work at Harvard, showed that exercise decreased heart disease risk factors, so he decided to start jogging at the age of 45.


"It was terrible," Paffenbarger told *American Medical News*, "I was exhausted by the time I was down to the end of the block."

He improved. "In 10 days, I was proud of myself." On April 19, 1968, the not well prepared, but game, Paffenbarger ran the Boston Marathon—in 5 hours, 5 minutes. "I was on crutches for days," he recalled.

Exercise researchers, like the pioneer Paffenbarger, have learned a great deal since 1968. Now 74, he still exercises, though it is now 3 1/2 miles of walking a day.

The Surgeon General's report agrees. It recommends moderate amounts, such as walking briskly for 30 minutes a day. Benefits, the report suggests, increase with the amount

of such exercise. Other activities it suggests include raking leaves for 30 minutes, swimming laps for 20 minutes, and running 1.5 miles in 15 minutes. Any one of these burns about 150 calories a day.

The sad part of the report was that most American adults do not exercise even this much, and 25% are physically inactive. That puts exercisers in a select, but hopefully growing group. 



Answers from page 4

- 1 a. When you judge yourself as lacking in some way and reject parts of yourself, you greatly damage important psychological structures.
- 2 b. When those feelings change, it has a ripple effect that can touch every part of your life and change it for the better.
- 3 b. Your thoughts (or what you tell yourself) have the biggest effect on self-worth. Your circumstances are only indirectly related.
- 4 a. A child that hears about the dangers of running into the street will receive a different message than the child who hears he/she is bad for running into the street.
- 5 a. It may not lead to a happy life, but it is meeting a basic need. If you expect the worst and it happens, then you might feel you have some control over it.
- 6 c. Cognitive distortions keep you from evaluating events and give a distorted view of life.
- 7 a. When you learn compassion for yourself, you begin exposing your sense of self worth. Compassion can quiet the toxic inner critic.



SPECIAL DISCOUNTS

Audio Tapes: Regular Price—\$7.95; *Health Hunter* Price—\$7.11
 Video Tapes: Regular Price—\$19.95; *Health Hunter* Price—\$17.95

SELF-ESTEEM

by *Matthew McKay, Ph.D.*
 & *Patrick Fanning*

Do you have difficulty accepting criticism? Do you have trouble telling other people what you really want? Do you find the "shoulds" taking over your life? "I should be able to handle my feelings better." "I never should have said that." If you have ever experienced any of these problems, this book might help you develop your coping skills to improve your life. Softcover. Regular price: \$5.99
 Health Hunter price: \$5.40

HOW I GOT WELL AT THE CENTER

with *Ronald Hunninghake, M. D.*
 & *Richard Lewis*

"How are The Center's doctors different from other doctors?" "I have been to several other places for my problem. Do you think you can actually help me get well?" These are frequently asked questions at The Center. Through the eyes of Center co-learners, you can hear how The Center's approach to

health and healing actually worked for them and could also work for others. Audio cassette & video tape.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT PREVENTING AND TREATING STROKES

with *Donald R. Davis, Ph.D.*

Strokes are the leading cause of disability and the third leading cause of death in the U. S. There are two major kinds of stroke, and the risk of both kinds falls as fruit and vegetable consumption rises. Several other health measures help. Hyperbaric oxygen therapy also shows promise. Audio cassette & video tape.

MAKING THE MOST OF AGING

with *Hugh D. Riordan, M.D.*

We all know people who age differently. Why are some people 40 going on 70, while others seem to be 70 going on 40? Learn how to test your biological age and use strategies that help you to look, think, act, and feel younger than your chronological age. Audio cassette & video tape.

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Upcoming Events . . .

NOVEMBER				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1
4 Yoga	5 L & L - Know Your Nutrients: Glutamine II	6 Yoga	7 L & L - Cold and Flu Season: Get Ready!	8
11 Yoga	12	13 Yoga, Eat Your Way to Natural Weight Loss Workshop	14 L & L - Natural Options for HRT	15
18	19 L & L - Know Your Nutrients: Manganese	20	21 L & L - Arthritis: a Panel Discussion	22 Health Hunter Holiday Savings Event
25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day	29 Center closed

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Grief can trigger heart attack

The risk of having a heart attack rises 14-fold in the first 24 hours after the death of a loved one, according to Dr. Murray Mittleman, a cardiologist at Harvard Medical School, Boston.

By the second day, the risk factor is still eight times the normal rate for heart attacks. The third day it drops to six times normal. Throughout the remainder of the first month after a loved one's death, the risk factor continues at two to four times higher than the normal risk factor.

Mittleman and his associates drew their conclusions about the increased risk of heart attacks for those losing a loved one after interviewing 1,236 men and 538 women in the cardiac care units or the step-down units within a week after an acute heart attack.

A loved one was defined as a spouse, sibling, parent, child, grandparent, in-law, close friend, or other close relative.

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- Grief can trigger heart attack

Health Hunter

A Publication of The Center for the Improvement of Human Functioning International, Inc.
3100 N. Hillside Ave.
Wichita, KS 67219 USA

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WICHITA, KS 67219

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