



**VYANA WELLNESS**  
NATUROPATHIC CENTRE

Our Newsletter this month is all about stress and how to deal with it. Also we are growing again... Vyana would like to introduce Christie Arthurs, our newest member of the Vyana Wellness team. Here is a little bit about her:

My love for yoga started when I was 16 years old. A family friend had shown me some postures in her backyard one day. I couldn't believe how something so simple made me feel so great.

I did yoga at home with videos for quite a few years but without a consistent practice. It was good, but didn't feel like enough for me. So I started to take yoga through one of UW's clubs, and found that group classes with an in-person instructor made a huge difference to my practice and the way that I was able to learn and progress.

In 2008, through the same club, I completed my 200-hour teacher training, and since then have been teaching there. I absolutely love teaching, and thoroughly enjoy watching people discover what they can achieve through a regular practice.

While my class structure varies in nature depending on what the students are looking for, you'll find that they are gentle yet challenging and completely beginner-friendly. Most importantly, I always try to teach with a sense of playfulness and fun.

Currently I am offering 3 classes per week: 12:00-12:45 p.m. on Mondays, 7:00-8:00 a.m. on Tuesdays, and 8:00-9:00 p.m. on Wednesdays. In addition to these classes, I can arrange for private or semi-private lessons. For prices or more information please visit my website at <http://www.catonthematyoga.com>

If you've never tried yoga before, but have been curious to explore it, this is a great way to start. If you have any questions at all, please send me an email at [info@catonthematyoga.com](mailto:info@catonthematyoga.com)

Namaste, and see you on the mat!

**Christie**

*"I'm learning how to relax, doctor- but I want to relax better and faster! I want to be on the cutting edge of relaxation!"*  
-Adapted from cartoon by Randy Glasbergen

## **Stress by Maya Jobanputra**

I love this cartoon because it is a great reflection of our society and it's obsession with perfection. Once we get caught up in this type of thinking we set ourselves up for unhealthy patterns leading to chronic stress. Why is this bad?? Well, stress affects all of our physiological functions including immune, hormones, cardiovascular health, mood and our ability to lose weight, not to mention energy and overall sense of well being!

Studies have shown between 60-90% of healthcare visits are related to stress-induced conditions

### What is stress?

- Stress is defined as any disturbance eg/hot or cold, chemical toxin, microorganisms, physical trauma, strong emotional reaction.
- We typically experience stress response 50times a day

### Effects of stress

In the normal person, arousal reactions return to normal after the stressor is dealt with. In maladaptive responses to stress the arousal reaction continues even after the stressor has been dealt with. In other words, the set point or baseline of arousal reactions is steadily moved upward

|             | <b>Stress</b>   | <b>Relaxation</b>   |
|-------------|---|---|
| Heart Rate  | Rate and force of contraction increase  | Rate reduced, beats are more effective, blood pressure reduced                      |
| Blood Flow  | Away from skin and internal organs (except lungs). Flows to muscles and brain | blood shunted to internal organs, especially digestive organs                       |
| Breathing   | Rises to supply oxygen to muscles.  | Decreases as demand lowers  |
| Digestion   | Digestive secretions reduced  | Secretions increased, greatly improving digestion                                   |
| Blood sugar | Raised, liver dumps stored glucose into blood stream                          | Levels maintained in normal physiologic range                                       |
| Sweat       | Increases to eliminate toxic compounds produced by body and lower temperature | Diminished, person who is calm and relaxed does not experience nervous perspiration |

### How do we combat stress?

There are a number of ways to combat stress. Time management, outlook and attitude on life are important areas to consider. Taking time to put the body into a relaxed state using breathing exercises are all ways to combat the negative effects of stress. Long deep breaths are the only way we can consciously put the body into a relaxed state, and promote the body's own repair and healing mechanisms.

### A naturopathic perspective:

1. Using herbs: adaptogenic herbs help the body to cope with change are useful in nourishing the adrenal glands (glands responsible for stress reaction). These herbs can help combat physical signs of stress such as fatigue, foggy thinking, poor memory, diminished physical endurance, poor sleep etc. Using nerve tonics to sooth the nerves and decrease anxiety are also great for people who experience anxiety or overactive nervous system. Herbs should be used under supervision of a Naturopathic doctor or licensed herbalist.

2. Use of vitamins and minerals is important to nourish the body as they get used up more quickly when the body is stressed. Certain vitamins and minerals such as B vitamins and potassium for example are particularly important for a stressed body. What vitamins and minerals your body needs are best assessed by a health care professional.

3. Balancing blood sugar levels is also important component to a stressed a body. From the table above we see the liver dumps sugar into the blood stream when it is under stress which can lead to blood sugar imbalances. Small regular meals, and soluble fiber are lifestyle changes that can help. Balancing protein and fat content of meals and avoiding food allergens is helpful as well.

4. Acupuncture is another tool I use to help balance the body and sooth nerves. Point selection is based on assessment of the individual. This involves finding and treating systems that are compromised, balancing yin and yang components in the body, and removing energetic blockages.

### Helpful Tips:

1. Keep **colored dots** in problem areas, in your house, in your kitchen, car wherever you are prone to stress. These dots will remind you to take a couple of deep breaths, bring your body into a relaxed calm, and balanced state.

2. Do a **mini, examples of Mini's**

1. Count very slowly to yourself from 10 down to 0, one number on each out breath. When you get to 0, notice how you feel.
2. As you breath in, count slowly up to 4. As you breathe out count slowly down to 1.
3. Counting the space between the in breath and out breath. After each in breath count, after each out breath count again.
4. Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Bhuddist, uses this. On the in breath you think "I am", on the out breath think "at peace".
5. Square breathing. Visualize a square. On in breath visualize vertical line then horizontal line. On out breath visualize another vertical and horizontal line, and you complete the square.

## When Things Get Difficult, Celebrate! by Julie Wise, ORSC

I've got to be kidding, right? Celebrate the tough stuff? Of course, I don't know just how bad it is for **you** (that's what you're saying right now, aren't you?) Trust me, I've been there. And I've learned that we have two choices when faced with life's challenges:

- focus on making it easy on ourselves or
- turn it into a monumental struggle

If you'd prefer the easier route, read on.

You see, life flows in cycles. We all have times of delight and times of challenge. The difficult times aren't as much fun, naturally! However, by remembering this cycling pattern, we can take heart during the rough patches knowing that things will get better.

When you find yourself in the down cycle, here are three steps you can take to regain your balance.

**1. Accept that this is how it is – for now.** Envision how you want things to be when this period is over. Use all your senses to make it real, and write it down. Read that vision whenever you need a boost, and believe that better times are coming. Take steps to make it happen.

**2. Notice the moments of joy and delight that exist around you at all times, even when things are tough.** The birds still sing, the sun shines ... what else can you find? Make a note each day of at least one thing you thought was beautiful, wonderful or amazing. As you start to focus more positively, you'll find you have even more to add to your list.

**3. Now celebrate!** Make a nice meal, set the table, perhaps add candles, have a special evening with family or friends. We all need more opportunities to enjoy life, especially when things are difficult. The one rule for this celebration is that there is to be no talk of disaster, personal or otherwise. It's a celebration of life, with all its twists and turns.

So raise a glass and make a toast to the upswing in your life that is around the next corner!

Julie Wise is a Motivational Coach and Mentor and the author of *Dream BIGGER: Reclaiming a Life of Joy and Ease*. She works with individuals, couples, families and workplace teams to face challenges, ease transitions and move toward goals and dreams. She is available for appointments on Tuesdays (afternoon/evening) at Vyana Wellness Centre.

\*If you would not like to receive newsletters please respond back with the word REMOVE.