



WELL & GOOD

PETER DINGLE

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT

Because technology has moved so fast, our mind literally has not kept up. We have a hunter-gatherer mind surrounded by 21st century technology.

The most important first step is to focus on the right thing. Focus on what you want — not what you don't want. You will get what you focus on so if you focus on the negative aspects of your life, you will get them.

Many years ago, I took a few friends of mine skiing. They were all novices so after a few hours getting used to the skis, we went up the first "kiddies' slope" at the top.

Fortunately, she was going very slowly and she already was on her backside 5m before the collision. I have no doubt she hit the tree because she focused on it.

Another example of this you can see for yourself and that has immediate results is your mood. If you focus on negative thoughts, you instantly change your mood.

In one study, people were asked to focus on some sad childhood memories and when asked to identify situations in a group of photos, they selected negative aspects of the photos compared with a control group.

On the other hand, if you want to feel happy, focus on some happy events and immediately your mood will begin to change.

Einstein's laws of relativity were not discovered by focusing on still objects. Instead, he imagined travelling at the speed of light.

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The gain is worth the pain

Massages are great for relaxation but if you're game to go a little deeper it can help treat injury. Cynthia Cross reports.

A soothing, full body massage is bliss for relaxation but if it's an injury you need to treat, you may need to step it up a notch.

Deep tissue massage is often powerful and can be painful but, as the cliché "no pain, no gain" suggests, the results can be impressive — helping to restructure the body by improving posture and increasing recovery.

Remedial masseurs often complain that aside from athletes, not enough people understand the benefits of deep tissue massage.

Subiaco Sports Massage Clinic therapist Bernd Adolph says that

while relaxing massages feel good, they are not always treating deep-rooted problems like muscle spasms and tissue injury.

According to Mr Adolph, who is also a remedial massage therapist for the Australian Olympic team, deep tissue massage focuses on specific areas such as static muscles, which don't perform actions but instead hold up the body.

"A lot of deep-seated spasms we get are from holding ourselves upright or sitting at a desk for prolonged periods of time," he said.

"Our bodies haven't been designed properly to do that sort of work. We probably have much more capability in throwing a spear, than sitting on a computer and doing those minute movements, which are actually coming from our neck and shoulder, more so than our arms."

Mr Adolph performs deep tissue massage on people with repetitive strain injuries but also treats a wide range of other complaints such as muscular overloads, injuries from car accidents and bad posture.

"We work to release the muscle to its normal functional length," he said.

"Deep muscle in a contractile state will not function properly and will have diminished metabolism — which means diminished exchange of products such as blood, iron and calcium."

Victoria Park Sports Massage Clinic remedial massage therapist Esmat Parkar said deep tissue massage increases the muscles' range of movement by releasing tension and knots, and also increasing

flexibility of the fascia. It can also help to break down scar tissue, eliminate toxins from the muscles and improve the body's circulation and immune system.

According to Ms Parkar, relaxing or superficial massages can only reduce inflammation and boost circulation but can't help treat physical disorders that lie very deep. Although deep tissue massage can treat injuries, she believes it can also be relaxing.

'When you have longstanding chronic pain you can get stressed or depressed.'

"When you have longstanding chronic pain you can get stressed or depressed," she said.

"So our first issue is trying to get the clients out of pain, and as the pain improves, you will see a difference in their mind."

Ms Parkar works on clients for about 45 minutes to an hour, and during the treatment the client should feel a combination of pleasure and pain.

Soreness after the massage can range from 12-24 hours.

She recommends clients drink plenty of water before and after the massage to rid the body of toxins.

Some private health funds, including HBF, provide rebates for remedial massage treatments including deep tissue massage.



Cuppa tea, sport?

MONICA VIDENIEKS

Green tea, already renowned for its antioxidant properties and linked to preventing serious diseases like cancer, may now find a market as a sports drink.

A small Brazilian study has found the powerful antioxidants in green tea may help to combat the debilitating side effects of resistance training for athletes.

Resistance training, marked by weight-bearing exercises like bench presses, can lead to an excess amount of damaging free radicals in the body. This is because the intensity of the exercises combined with too few antioxidants in the diet, can limit the ability of an athlete's body to fight free radicals.

The study, by two universities in Santa Catarina and published in the journal Nutrition, found that when the athletes consumed green tea every day for seven days, their bodies were better able to counter oxidative stress caused by free radicals.

"This study suggests that green tea intake may offer a protective effect against oxidative damage induced by resistance exercise," lead author Vilma Simoes Pereira Panza wrote.

"Consumption of green tea, a beverage rich in polyphenols, may offer protection against the oxidative damage caused by exercise, and dietary guidance for sports participants should be emphasised."

While the study monitored only 14 male athletes aged between 19 and 30, it found that after seven days of consuming three cups of green tea per day the athletes drinking green tea had higher levels of polyphenols — the powerful green tea antioxidant as well as glutathione, a protein credited with protecting the body from oxidative damage from free radicals.

THE TEAM

FEATURES EDITOR: Helen Winterton, 9482 3574, features@wanews.com.au
EDITOR: Monica Videnieks, 9482 3347
DESIGN: Vanessa Fielden, Vickie Papadopoulos
SALES MANAGER: Vanessa Hilton, 9482 3467
ADVERTISING: Sue Hamilton, 9482 3563

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WIPE OUT COLD SORES. Image of a person applying ointment to their lips.

They are unsightly and painful but there are ways to reduce outbreaks of these irritating blisters, says Cynthia Cross

Cold sores are irritating, unattractive and often painful oral blisters. It is estimated that as many as eight out of 10 people have the herpes simplex virus 1 (HSV 1), which causes cold sores.

While there is no cure for the virus, the good news is there are simple ways to reduce the duration, frequency and severity of cold sores. Naturopath and medical herbalist Madeleine David said that once a person has been infected with HSV 1, the virus lay dormant in the nerves until the body was unsettled and the virus was awakened.

"Cold sores can be triggered by exposure to ultraviolet light, colds and flu. Low immune function and stress can also trigger an outbreak," Ms David said.

Synergy Clinic naturopath Tracey Gibbs said sun and wind exposure, hormonal imbalances, bad dietary choices, fatigue and medications like steroids could also activate the virus.

Ms Gibbs believed that strengthening the immune system was the best way to avoid cold sore outbreaks.

"Have you ever noticed that when you are very busy or stressed that an outbreak occurs?"

This is because stress lowers the immune system," Ms Gibbs said. Lifestyle and dietary changes like relaxation techniques, regular exercise, adequate sleep and healthy eating, could help improve immune system function, and lower the incidence of the blisters, she said.

Lemon balm had antiviral properties and could be taken as a herbal tea. She also suggested applying lemon balm, St John's wort or lavender essential oil to affected areas. Ms David said taking magnesium and B-vitamin supplements could help improve cold sores caused by high stress.

She also advocated a diet high in the amino acid lysine and low in arginine to assist in prevention.

Foods that contain more lysine than arginine include legumes, tofu, tempeh, avocados, mangoes, apples, apricots and pears.

Foods that should be limited include nuts, seeds and chocolate, which are high in arginine.

Some research suggests drinking calendula tea may accelerate the healing of cold sores.

The research also found that taking half a teaspoon of echinacea extract three times daily for up to 10 days and eating one or two cloves

TOP 5 NATURAL REMEDIES TO BEAT COLD SORES

- Increase vitamin C and zinc intake.
• Eat foods high in lysine and low in arginine.
• Drink lemon balm teas and apply lemon balm creams to cold sores.
• Take echinacea and St John's wort.
• Relax — have a massage, meditate, learn tai chi or yoga to wind down.

of raw garlic a day increased resistance to the herpes virus. To avoid catching the cold sore virus Ms David recommended avoiding direct contact with cold sore lesions or sharing items with an infected person.

Ms Gibbs said that those with cold sores should keep their hands clean to avoid spreading the virus to others.

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