

April 2017 Newsletter

PEIA Pathways

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Dealing with Stress Due to Ineffective Communication

With all of the ways available to keep in touch from text messaging to e-mail, one would think communicating would be easier. However, one of the biggest forms of stress in relationships at home and in the workplace is ineffective or a lack of communication. Here are some tips that could help ease this stressor.

- **Learn to be a good listener:** Allow the person you are communicating with to really share their feelings and thoughts uninterrupted. Empathize with them, put yourself in their shoes. If you first seek to understand, you will find yourself being better understood.
- **Be an active listener:** This means that you must be truly interested in what the other person is communicating. Listen to what they are saying instead of thinking about your response. Ask questions to gain more information or clarify what they are telling you. Good questions open lines of communication.
- **Be a reflective listener:** Re-state or reflect back to the other person your interpretation of what they are telling you. This simple technique shows the other person that you are both listening and understanding what they are saying. Re-stating what you think is being said may cause some short-term conflict in some situations, but it is certainly worth the risk to clarify what is being stated, understood, and the expectations that may follow.

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REST WELL. EAT WELL. FEEL WELL.



Success Stories of Clarence Wright and Kathy Scott

By: Charity Duvert



CLARENCE WRIGHT

On September 11, 2013, I started one of the wellness programs with other Philippi employees. This program was a competition to monitor what we ate and weigh ourselves weekly. We kept track of our meals in a notebook. I had tried to diet many times with limited success and any loss would soon be regained. This time, I had a little personal motivation. For as long as I could remember, I had chronic pain in my right knee. However, I had recently torn the meniscus in my left knee and was having problems just walking. I weighed nearly 300 pounds and was taking daily medication to control cholesterol and help me sleep. I would have to sit and rest after walking ½ mile. My hope was that I could lose 30 pounds.

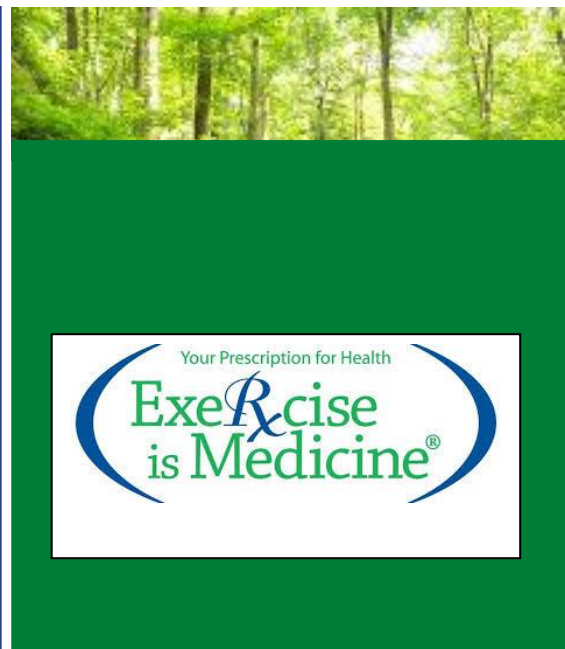
I started by trying a 1400 calorie a day diet previously provided by my doctor. Tracking the calories helped me to focus on the options available at every meal. For example, grilled chicken has significantly fewer calories than fried chicken. Mustard has fewer calories than mayonnaise. Biscuits have fewer calories than corn muffins. Jelly has fewer calories than butter.

For years, my wife and I would both eat a chicken sandwich for lunch. She would forgo the mayonnaise and eat only ½ the bun. I would eat my sandwich and the other half of her bun. ½ a bun and mayonnaise is 150 calories. 150 calories a day equates to approximately 15 pounds per year.

By the end of the 15-week competition, I lost 36 pounds. During that time, I had an MRI for my knee and was referred to a surgeon. I had an appointment for knee surgery. One week prior to surgery my knee pain went away. I called the surgeon and asked if I still needed the surgery. He said no and that I could call him when the pain returned. I went from a 44" to a 40" waist. We decided as a group to continue the wellness program through the holidays. My little notebook for tracking food and calories was full. My daughter suggested using MyFitnessPal, a phone app, to track my meals. It not only tracks the food and calories but also provides nutrition information. This is what transformed my diet to a lifestyle change. I found that, although I was reducing the calories but i was still eating too many carbohydrates. I was also eating too much of the wrong kind of carbohydrates and fats and not enough protein. Another benefit of using MyFitnessPal is that it is a daily record. I can look back and see what I ate and how much I weighed when I started on December 26, 2013 and every day since then.

We continued our wellness programs through June 2014, with focuses on activity, drinking water and eating fruits and vegetables. I lost 93 pounds and was feeling great. I had a 34" waist and shirt size went from 2X to medium. My son gave me a Fitbit step tracker for my birthday. Since August of 2014 to present I have gone from averaging 10,000 steps per day to 30,000 steps per day. I went for my annual physical with my doctor in September 2014. He was very happy with the weight loss. His office called me the next morning after they had my blood work results.

Success Stories of Clarence Wright and Kathy Scott



My cholesterol was 125. Prior to taking medications it was typically 250, with medication it had been 190. He instructed me to stop taking the medication and would test me again in a month. When I stopped the medication I quickly discovered that the medication was also causing my insomnia and I stopped taking the sleeping pills.

Now, 3 years later I still feel great. I struggle with eating properly but continue to use MyFitnessPal to monitor my eating and activity and to keep me on track. My wish is for everyone to live a healthy and active life. Special thanks to my wife Dianna and Wellness Coordinator Carla Poling for their help and support.

KATHY SCOTT

I began my journey to get healthier with serious enthusiasm in February 2014. The PEIA Wellness programs have helped me to lose weight by encouraging steps and by drinking water instead of other choices. I continue to drink at least 2 of the H2O Go cups daily full of water. I walk with co-workers each work day, if possible. We can be caught out walking in the snow, sun, and rain. We encourage each other and find it hard to say "no"

to a walk when we check in to see if anyone is going out walking at lunch break. I still wear my pedometer daily. I have managed to keep off 50 pounds that I lost with diet modification, walking, and drinking water.

One co-worker, Clarence Wright, began a lifestyle change and quickly impacted my view of weight loss. I was encouraged by his weight loss and I thought that he was not going to leave me behind in my fat world. If he could lose all the weight he lost, I could lose some too. I started diet and lifestyle changes and I hope that we always continue to encourage each other and sometimes use a little pressure on each other to keep on track.

My co-workers, Clarence Wright and Nick Payne give me encouragement daily through walking or using an app that tracks our diet. They both have lost quite a bit of weight and we joke that we have lost a person or two in the Philippi office. I hope we will always encourage each other to stay as healthy as we are and continue our journeys to live healthier lifestyles. I always remember and repeat something that Nick Payne says consistently, "Eat to live; don't live to eat".



Five Natural Ways to Lower Stress.

By: Debbie Turner



Stress is a normal part of our lives, whether it be the loss of a job, loss of loved one, divorce, or just a hectic lifestyle. Below are five natural ways to cope with the stress in your life:

Meditation – meditation is a powerful way to relieve stress. Simply give yourself as little as 10-15 minutes a day to clear your mind and take some silent time. The purpose is to refocus and eliminate the jumbled thoughts that accumulate in your mind.

Exercise – exercise in any form can be a great stress reliever. Exercise is closely related to mediation in the sense that it gives you time to be alone with your thoughts. Exercise can relieve stress by pumping endorphins throughout the body and improving your mood. Try to achieve at least 30 minutes a day of exercise.

Hot Bath – soaking in warm water has a soothing effect on both mind and body. This type of relaxation and therapeutic benefits are based on the stimulation of blood circulation and release of muscle tension. Indulge in scented oils or salts, such as lavender, that give an aromatic boost to your bath.

Sleep – another natural stress reducer is a good night's sleep. Insufficient sleep can leave us cranky, irritable and on edge. The aim is to find the right equilibrium which permits individuals to feel well rested and ready to face yet another day.

Diet – it has been proven that eating a lot of junk food can make people depressed – not to mention overweight. (This in itself can be a source of stress.) Healthy foods, such as whole grains and protein, are known to improve mood and provide long lasting energy. Foods known to be stress busters include salmon, almonds and blueberries, just to name a few.

It's almost impossible to eliminate stress from our lives, but we can find healthy and natural ways to cope with it.



Movement and Breath:

By: Salina Lyter



Matching your breath to body movement is essential in physical fitness activities and creates a powerful union. This requires consciousness of your breath cycle. Think of any professional athlete are they not masters of their breath? Michael Jordan comes to mind, as he soars through the air like a bird with expanded wings and lungs just before he slam dunks the basketball. Breath control is a commanding force!

Adequately timing your breath with movement aids and advances your exercise regimen. For example, core strengthening exercises demands proper breathing techniques to develop and hypertrophy the underlying muscle.

Application of breath enhances power. In resistance training (applying weight or loading the muscle with force), manipulating breath delivers oxygen to the muscle while working. One should exhale during a contraction and inhale through extension. You may also relate a contraction to flexion (decreasing the angle between the bones of the limb at the joint, while extension increases the angle between two body parts).

Yoga is an activity that necessitates breath control (pranayama) and in result, harmonizes the mind and body. Moving through and holding postures (asanas) commands your attention to the rhythm of breath dutifully. It truly becomes a dance of mindful movement and breath that is partnered and engaged. It is a beautiful and phenomenal process.

Focus on breath allows the achievement of any exercise, ultimately making the work more tolerable and enhancing overall results. A well-rounded physical fitness program includes: cardiorespiratory or endurance conditioning, resistance or strength training, and flexibility components. Each constituent calls for breath awareness. Master your breath and become a master of your body!

5 Simple Ways to Boost a Walking Routine

By: Corey Clendenin



Walking is one of the simplest but effective exercises. It is low impact, therefore easier on joints. It can be done almost anywhere, and takes little if any equipment. Below are some tips to help a walking program become more effective, which will increase results:

Use a pedometer: Pedometers and tracking applications are often free or low cost, and can help you reach a goal. Many people think they are moving more than they really are during the course of a day. A suggested long term goal would be to reach 10,000 steps per day. If you do not currently walk a lot, begin by attempting around 2,500 per day, and work up as the weeks go by. Consistent use of a tracker or pedometer will help in determining a routine.

Use a heart rate monitor: This tool will monitor the body's heart rate during exercise. It can be easy to "get stuck" in a walking rut and not even know it. After weeks go by, walking routes may become easier. Wearing a heart rate monitor can help you strive to increase your speed or the incline of your walk in order to burn more calories while walking. It is suggested to keep exercise heart rate around 65-75% of the maximum heart rate to most efficiently burn calories. To find your maximum heart rate, use the formula **220 - your age**. (i.e. a 35 year old person would use the formula $220 - 35 = 185$ beats per minute.) Remain between 65-75% of your maximum heart rate during exercise. (The previous example of a 35 year old person would try to keep heart rate during exercise at 120 BPM – 139 BPM to remain in the suggested range.)

Using weights: Walking weights can be hand held or strap onto your ankles. (Carrying weights during walking/hiking may not be advisable for people with joint and/or back problems. Check with your medical provider!) Some individuals use a backpack with weights or supplies in it while hiking to increase the challenge of the route. You don't have to use dumbbells or weight plates! You can use anything that has some weight to it (for example a full 1 gallon water jug will weight 8.5 lbs.)

Uphill/hiking: A great variation for a walking program most people forget about is hiking, or walking uphill. Most people will enjoy being outdoors on a nice trail enjoying the weather. This may inspire them to walk more than being inside on a treadmill. Additionally, in West Virginia there are many free local parks with trails for use.

Walking buddy/club: Support is often the best way to stay on track with any plan. Check your local areas for a walking club or buddy on which you can rely. This will keep you both on track and help in reaching your goals. Walking clubs or groups can be fun and challenging ways to keep walking fun and motivating.

Why WAIST?

By: Beth Metzger



Typically, your primary care visit begins with the same baseline measures- height, weight and blood pressure. Your healthcare provider may have used your height and weight to calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI). However, in the last 10 years there has been an increase in physicians taking interest in patients' waist circumference during these baseline measurements. While it has been proven healthy weight can help reduce the risk of certain diseases and health conditions, what exactly does the waist measurement have to do with your health? Is waist circumference a better measure than BMI?

When asking for a waist measurement, people tend to provide the waist size of the pants they wear. This may not be the actual size of a person's waist when measured around the circumference of waist, (at the top of the hip bone). This measurement shows the medical professionals if a person has an increased amount of abdominal fat. According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, if your weight is carried around your waist rather than hips,

you are at a greater risk for heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. Having a few extra pounds around the middle also increases your risk of developing high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Waist circumference is a better measure than BMI because it is a better indicator of your overall health. BMI is a generalized measurement good for large populations. However BMI may overestimate body fat in athletes or those with a muscular build and may underestimate body fat in older individuals who may have lost muscle. As with a larger waist measurement, having a higher BMI for an average person increases your risks of developing cardiovascular diseases and insulin resistance. (NHLBI, 2017)

Reducing your weight and waist measurement can be done by increasing your activity and following a healthy diet. PEIA Pathways to Wellness has a variety of programs to get you started! With personal health coaching, individualized goals can be made to help you on your wellness journey. Contact your Regional Health Promotion Consultant for a list of programs and health coaching to begin new healthy initiatives.

Resources:

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. (March 8, 2017)
Assessing Your Weight and Health Risk.

Retrieved from:
https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/risk.htm

Recipe of the Month: Blueberry Fields Salad

Adapted from Southern Living Magazine



Salad:

- 1 cup chopped walnuts.
- 2 5.5oz packages spring mix.
- 2 cups fresh blueberries.
- 1 small red onion, halved and sliced.
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese.

Dressing:

- ½ cup balsamic vinegar.
- 1/3 cup blueberry preserves.
- 1/3 cup olive oil.

- If desired, toast walnuts in a small skillet over med-high heat, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes until fragrant.
- Whisk together balsamic vinegar, blueberry preserves and next olive oil in a small bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Combine walnuts, spring mix, blueberries, sliced onion and crumbled feta cheese in a large bowl.
- Serve with the vinaigrette.



Exercise of the Month

Bulgarian Split Squats

By: Marjan Washington



Benefits:

Produces noticeable muscle and strength gains. This exercise achieves a similar amount of lower body muscular overload as the squat does, but with a fraction of the weight. It increases flexibility of the hip flexors and improves overall lower body mobility. This movement improves your core strength and balance, as well as your agility. Reduces risk of injury by minimizing strength and muscular differences between your left and right side.

Instructions:

- Start off by standing in front of a flat bench with both feet together and holding a pair of dumbbells at your sides with your palms facing inward.
- Place one foot back on the bench in a staggered stance with your toes pointing down and the top of your foot pressing flat against the bench.
- Keep your chest up, core tight, and begin slowly lowering yourself by flexing the knee and the hip of your front leg. Continue descending until knee of leg on bench is just short of touching the ground.
- Once you reach the bottom position, push yourself back up by extending your front knee and hip at the same time and stopping just short of locking out your knee.



Note: You can also perform this exercise using a barbell if you prefer. My recommendation is to use dumbbells, but if you can position a bench behind a squat rack and safely un-rack the bar to get yourself into position, a Bulgarian barbell split squat is an option too.

Cholesterol: Good Vs Bad

By: Grace Matthews



GOOD FATS vs. BAD FATS



Cholesterol is a waxy like substance found in your body and in food. Your liver and your body make all the cholesterol needed and then circulate it through the bloodstream. Your liver produces more cholesterol when you have a diet high in saturated and trans fat. Food sources of cholesterol are meat, poultry, and full fat dairy products.

When you have too much cholesterol in your body, plaque starts to form between layers of your artery walls, making your heart work harder to circulate blood. The plaque can then break open and cause blood clots that can lead to stroke and heart attacks. A stroke happens when a clot blocks an artery to the brain and a heart attack happens when a clot blocks an artery to the heart.

Cholesterol can't be dissolved in the blood, so it is transported by lipoproteins. Lipoproteins are made up of fat and proteins. The 2 lipoproteins that carry cholesterol between the cells are LDL and HDL. LDL stands for low density lipoprotein and is considered the "bad" cholesterol because it contributes to fat that can clog arteries and make them less flexible. HDL stands for high density lipoproteins and is considered the "good" cholesterol because it helps remove the LDL cholesterol from the arteries.

A healthy diet and plenty of exercise is important to keep your cholesterol levels at a safe, normal range. Always consult with your doctor if you have any issues or questions regarding your cholesterol.

Chronic Pain and Mind - Body Connection.

By: Sharon Rotenberry



Chronic pain can have many sources. Getting older may affect bones and joints in ways that cause chronic pain. Other common causes are nerve damage and injuries that fail to heal properly.

Some kinds of chronic pain have numerous causes. Back pain, for example, may be caused by a single factor, or any combination of factors like years of poor posture; improper lifting and carrying of heavy objects; being overweight, (which puts excess strain on the back and knees) congenital condition (such as curvature of the spine) traumatic injury; improper footwear (i.e. wearing high heels); or even sleeping on a poor mattress.

Another cause for chronic pain may be diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis or fibromyalgia. Other culprits include cancer, multiple sclerosis, stomach ulcers, AIDS, and gallbladder disease.

The source of chronic pain can be a mysterious issue to untangle. Although it may begin with an injury or illness, ongoing pain can develop a psychological dimension after the physical problem has healed. For this reason, many health care providers often find they have to suggest a number of different types of curative steps for their patients who suffer from chronic pain, (WebMD Medical Reference Reviewed by David T. Derrer, MD on March 20, 2016).

In her book, *Comprehensive Myofascial Self Treatment*, physical therapist Joyce Karnis states that data supports the mind and memory are not only contained within the



brain, but also within the body and its tissue. For example, when walking by a bakery, you may smell bread, which reminds you of the kitchen where your grandmother baked bread. Similarly, if you were stopped at a red light in the rain and were hit from behind by another car, you may have sustained a painful neck or back injury that required several months of therapy for recovery. Years later, you may still experience anxiety when stopped at a red light in the rain. The anxiety may manifest itself through stiffness in your neck or back and/or increased awareness of the habits of other drivers.

It is important to acknowledge the reactions and sensations in your body and be aware of their possible sources. Medications may dull the sensation of pain, but will not always “heal” pain. Sensations, thoughts, and emotions should be addressed when dealing with chronic pain. Consider addressing the mind *and* the body when treating chronic pain.



Region Summaries



1 Region 1 - (Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Doddridge, Marion, Harrison, Pleasants, and Gilmer):

The northern part of the state kicked East

Fairmont Middle School kicked off a yoga class. Fitness classes continue at John Manchin Senior Health Care Center and the Harrison County State Building. PiYo will wrap up at John Marshall High School. The 6-week Dynaband challenge is taking place at the Marion County Health Department. John Manchin Senior Health Care Center participated in the back presentation. Oak Glen Middle School participated in the knee presentation. The Marion County Board of Education and WV DHHR in Hancock County started the Back on Path Walking program. The Hancock County DHHR also participated in the carpal tunnel presentation. Healthy Tomorrows flyers were distributed to various sites in Marion and Hancock counties. In April the Brooke County Library will be hosting the knee and carpal tunnel presentations. In Hancock County the DHHR will be participating in the back and Deep Relaxation presentations. We are currently scheduling programs, individual health coaching, and Work It Out assessments to help support Healthy Tomorrows goals and conducting presentations on various musculoskeletal issues.

2 Region - (Monongalia, Taylor, Barbour, Preston, and Lewis):

WVU's One Waterfront Place has concluded a very exciting and well-attended Yoga class, while personal Lifestyle Coaching continues to be an option at other locations. Elsewhere in Monongalia Co., the employees of Brookhaven Elementary embarked on a walking challenge by logging their daily steps, primarily as a group after-school activity. Meanwhile, on the opposite side of town, Mountain View Middle joined in on the walking action. At Barbour County DEP offices in Philippi, some employees continue to inspire each other with their journey of healthier living as they continue to put into practice what they all learned during their exciting sessions of Personal Lifestyle Coaching. At Preston Co., folks at Central Preston School have concluded their H2O Go challenge.

3 Region - (Upshur, Tucker, Hardy, Grant, Pendleton, and Randolph):

Pendleton – Zumba onsite classes started at Franklin Elementary with great attendance. Follow-up is occurring with health coaching in the county, H2OGO at DHHR. Grant – Health coaching is going on throughout county, H2OGO at DHHR.

Hardy –Health coaching is taking place throughout the county. A Dynaband class began at Eastern Community College, as well as H2OGO program. Randolph – Beverly Elementary completed their H2OGO program and is beginning their six week walking quest. Country Heat fitness class is continuing with good attendance. Follow up is occurring with the WIO fitness assessments. Six month WIO assessments at DHHR and health department. George Ward is continuing with their six week walking program.

4 Region - (Monroe, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, Raleigh, and Summers):

Region 4 has sprung into spring. The Work It Out Fitness Assessments continues to have several Health Coaching sessions throughout the entire Southern Region. Princeton Community Hospital held two Work it Out demonstration and dyna band classes for its employees. Shady Elementary in Raleigh County participated in the Work It Out Fitness Assessments to gear them up for the warm weather. Raleigh County Board of Education will be participating in our Work It Out Fitness Assessments. Fairdale Elementary in Raleigh County are going strong with their Zumba class. Mercer DHHR in Mercer County, Welch Hospital in McDowell County, Crescent Elementary in Raleigh County and Wyoming East High School in Wyoming County will all be completing their follow up Work It Out Assessments.

5 Region - (Greenbrier, Nicholas, Webster, Pocahontas, Fayette, and Braxton):

Region 5 is getting active and staying hydrated! Frankford Elementary, Braxton County Board of Education, Flatwoods Elementary, Braxton County High School, Sutton Elementary, Braxton County Middle, Frametown Elementary, Little Birch Elementary and Ronceverte Elementary are all pledging to stay hydrated and reduce their sweetened beverages with H2O Go. Getting Back on Path with the walking challenge is Braxton County High School, Braxton County Middle, Flatwoods Elementary, Little Birch Elementary, Sutton Elementary and Braxton County Board of Education. Braxton County BOE is also holding the Don't Just Sit There presentation along with the Dynaband to help office staff get active. Many wellness initiatives are in the works for all the counties in the region.

6 Region - (Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Mineral, and Hampshire): Region 6 has continued to stay active in 2017. The DHHR in Martinsburg is wrapping up their onsite yoga class. Hedgesville Elementary started their Zumba class. The Jefferson County Public Service District completed the H2OGO challenge and participated in the dynaband presentation. The DHHR in Martinsburg had two full days of the work it out program fitness assessments. Keyser High School will be doing work it out this month and starting the back on path walking challenge as well. James Rumsey will also participate in the work it out fitness assessment later this month. The WV School for the Deaf and Blind will do their work it out follow up later this month.

7 Region - (Kanawha (non-school sites), Boone, Logan, Lincoln, and Calhoun Region 7 is blossoming into wellness! DHHR-Dunbar participated in the Work It Out Program. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission hosted Watch Your Back and It's All in the Wrist, injury prevention presentations. These events included introductory stretches and exercises. BPH also offered the carpal tunnel syndrome presentation to employees while BBH kicked off their walking challenge. Warm weather offers outdoor opportunities to develop healthy bodies and minds! Don't delay, seize the day!

8 Region 8- (Mingo, Mason, Wayne, Cabell, and Putnam): In Putnam County, Hurricane High School began their walking program. Mountain View Elementary School is Interested in beginning a Yoga class and participating in the H2O Go program. In Mason County, Beale Elementary began their Zumba fitness class. In Cabell County, Cabell County Library began their Move It program and will be participating in Work It Out on March 29th. They will begin their Zumba Class on May 1st. Huntington High School started their first Yoga class with great success in participation along with the Back on Path Program. Huntington Middle School has begun their Zumba Class. Milton Elementary school will begin their Boot camp class soon. Culloden Elementary has completed their Boot camp fitness class and are now beginning their Move It program. Wayne County DHHR will begin their Boot camp fitness class on March 23rd.

9 Region 9 - (Clay, Ritchie, Wood, Wirt, Jackson, Roane, and Kanawha County Schools): Region 9 has started the spring season with a full calendar. The Work It Out Program is very popular! Sites like Cedar Grove Elementary and Cedar Grove Middle Schools participated. Both schools also participated in the dynaband and walking programs. Malden Elementary participated in Work It Out and started the dynaband and walking programs. Zumba classes are going well at Central and Hayes Elementary schools, with over 12 participants per class. A yoga class will begin this month at East Bank Middle. The Jackson County BOE participated in a number of presentations at their latest training.

Dealing with Stress Due to Ineffective Communication (Continued from Page 1)...

- **Wait to speak until the person or people you want to communicate with are listening:** The saying "it's like talking to a brick wall" is a great example. If they aren't ready to listen, no matter how well you communicate your message will not be heard.
- **Don't try to talk over somebody:** If you find yourself being interrupted, relax, don't try and out-talk the other person. If you are courteous and allow them to speak eventually they will respond likewise. If they don't, point out to them that they are interrupting the communication process. You can only do this if you have been a good listener. Double standards in relationships seldom work.
- **Help the other person become an active listener:** This can be done by asking them if they understood what you were communicating. Ask them to tell you what it was that they heard. If they don't seem to understand what it is you are saying, keep patiently trying until they do.
- **Don't be afraid of long silences:** Human communication involves much more than human words. A great deal can be communicated during silences; unfortunately in many situations silence can make us feel uncomfortable. Relax. Some people need silence to collect their thoughts and feel safe in communicating. The important thing to remember during silences is that you must remain an active listener.

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