

Next Chapter Notes

A Newsletter for those in
pre-retirement or retirement

The Silent Struggle of High-Functioning Depression

Some individuals with major depressive disorder may not seek help because they don't recognize their symptoms and seem to function well socially and at work. If you're near retirement or in retirement, according to data from sources such as the CDC and WHO, approximately 10-15% of adults over 50 experience depression at some point, whereas the prevalence in adults under 50 is typically around 7-10%. Overall, people may appear happy and cheerful outwardly yet struggle internally with persistent sadness, low self-worth, anxiety, inadequacy, and despair. Does this sound like you? People with atypical or "high-functioning" depression might avoid seeking support or fail to recognize their condition, often attributing symptoms to other personal challenges rather than a diagnosable disorder. If your company has an EAP, discuss your experiences with the EAP. Or discuss your concerns with your medical provider or find a therapist to help you. Don't let this condition cloud your judgment or prevent you from seeking help. Don't struggle in silence. Complete an assessment of your needs, and take the next step toward support and treatment. Learn more: psychologytoday.com [search



Stress Tips from the Field: Intervene with Zoom Fatigue

Zoom meetings may not include much physical exertion, but they can leave you feeling drained or burned out. You could be experiencing "Zoom fatigue" if you have been engaging in long and frequent videoconferences or virtual meetings, such as those held on Zoom. The fatigue stems from the high cognitive demand of having to process multiple faces and nonverbal behaviors on-screen, and of monitoring your own behavior, appearance, and nonverbal actions while online, which might include forcing yourself to stay awake. Symptoms of Zoom fatigue include struggling to maintain attention during calls, dreading video calls, or avoiding video altogether in favor of audio-only interaction. Other symptoms, such as impatience and irritability during virtual meetings, might also be problematic. Now, see the fixes for Zoom fatigue! <https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2021/02/four-causes-zoom-fatigue-solutions>



Productivity Tip: Overcome Distractions with the Two-Minute Rule

If you must work amid environmental noise and other distractions, try the "two-minute rule" to maintain productivity and reduce frustration. Credited to David Allen in "Getting Things Done," the rule suggests never delaying a task that takes less than two minutes. In noisy or distracting workplaces, it can be adapted to help focus when attention is limited. With determination, two minutes of concentrated effort are achievable. Start by deciding which task must be done now, then break it into two-minute segments. Fully focus on each segment, completing it before taking a brief mental break to reset. This approach creates continual small wins, builds momentum, and helps you tolerate interruptions. Over time, these small bursts of focused work improve productivity, reduce stress, and make a disruptive environment more manageable.



The Power of Accountability Partners in Exercise

If you struggle to stay motivated with a regular exercise program, teaming with an accountability partner or buddy can double your chances of success. Exercising alongside someone naturally reinforces commitment, while relying on each other for scheduling and progress tracking strengthens accountability. The combination of social connection and the obligation to keep promises increases the likelihood of reaching fitness goals. This shared responsibility helps you stay motivated, even on days when you'd rather skip a workout. For best results, choose a friend or colleague rather than a virtual partner. Online connections can be helpful, but they often lack the real-time interaction and relationship-building dynamics that make accountability and long-term adherence to an exercise program more effective.



Learn more: sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/10/161004081548.htm

A Better Morning Routine May Change Your Day



Take charge of your mornings in order to reduce stress, avoid rushing, and starting the day feeling behind. For starters, plan to wake up at a consistent time. At night, lay out your clothes and write a short to-do list for tomorrow. Add one small chore that you might otherwise ignore, which takes ten minutes or less to complete. Why? Completing a simple chore—decluttering or tidying up a kitchen—helps you build a habit loop. The visual completion of a chore prompts a small, gratifying dopamine boost. This is how your brain responds to small wins. The feeling of accomplishing something early in the morning helps you anticipate other successes in your day. This feeling that you're in control of the direction of your day is likely to stay with you. Your mental clarity will carry into the office. Instead of being on edge, reactive, and easily triggered, you will be more solution-focused and harmonious with coworkers and customers because you will be calmer and more patient. Beginning your day as described is about "intention," and this primes your brain for focus and productivity. Try it for a week. See if you notice the positive domino effects that a morning routine and the small chore brings.

psychologytoday.com/us/blog/changepower/201207/the-amazing-power-of-small-wins

Beginning the Journey to End Domestic Violence



Domestic abuse or Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a devastating violation of trust and safety that can make a person feel trapped in their own home. Older adults aged 50 and above experience various forms of domestic violence, with financial abuse being the most common. Underreporting often means that the true prevalence is higher than the official statistics indicate. Victims may feel isolated from the world and silenced by fear. If you're a victim of domestic violence or IPV—even if you are not ready to act—reach out for confidential support. A single call, experience shows, can be life-changing because very specific guidance that speaks to your unique situation may be the missing piece of help, the idea, or the step that allows you to move forward now. If your company has an EAP, connect with them, or a health provider, or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), which is always available. Making yourself heard and having support are your first steps. You may hesitate or fear that the abuser could somehow find out and retaliate. You might feel embarrassed or believe you should handle the situation on your own. You might even question whether what you are experiencing is really abuse, or you might hope that things will improve soon. These are all common roadblocks to making your first call for support. Victims often remain silent, but delaying getting help can increase the risk of further harm or make it harder to break free from the cycle of abuse. Learn more: thehotline.org [search "plan"]

Embrace Digital Wellness



Digital wellness involves intentionally setting limits on when, where, and how technology is used to protect your mental, emotional, and physical well-being. "Digital mental health" is a rapidly growing field of study. It examines how virtual reality, smartphones, apps, social media, artificial intelligence, and 3D interaction affect wellness. Can placing personal boundaries on digital engagement help protect your well-being? Could it improve relationships and productivity, reduce stress, lessen anxiety, and improve sleep? Some research has shown that technology boundaries reduce screen fatigue, improve focus, increase productivity, and boost real-world relationships. They may provide for rest and more time for hobbies and mindful engagement. Start with a simple digital boundary to observe its positive effects. For example, take a walk in nature without a smartphone. Create a "technology-free zone" in your home. See if you feel calmer, more focused, and more connected to the world around you in healthier ways.

Learn more: pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12079407/

Next Chapter by the Numbers: Nutrition



At a recent retirement conference, five pillars of health promoting longevity were discussed: Nutrition, Sleep, Exercise, Stress Management, and Connections. This article focuses on key aspects of nutrition. As we age, maintaining healthy eating habits becomes increasingly important for overall well-being, disease prevention, and longevity. Proper nutrition helps manage weight, boost the immune system, and increase energy, improving quality of life. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats provides essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Currently, only about 10-15% of people over 60 follow such diets. Protein intake is vital because muscle mass decreases with age. Consuming sufficient sources of protein, such as fish, poultry, beans, and dairy, helps preserve muscle strength. Calcium and vitamin D are essential for bone health; about one-third of women and one-fifth of men over 50 risk osteoporosis-related fractures. Dairy products, fortified foods, and supplements can support these needs. Limiting added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium further decreases the risk of cardiovascular disease and hypertension. Hydration is often neglected, yet it's crucial. Thirst perception diminishes with age, increasing the risk of dehydration, which affects approximately 16% of older adults. They should aim for at least eight cups of water daily, adjusting the amount based on their health status and level of activity. Improving nutritional habits can be achieved by consulting healthcare providers, utilizing resources from organizations like the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and choosing nutrient-dense foods. These strategies can enhance health, promote a better quality of life, and support successful aging and longevity. Sources include: CDC Nutrition and Healthy Aging, the U.S. Dietary Guidelines, and MyPlate for Older Adults.



Chris Gomburg
Retirement Coach

Web: www.chrisgomburgretirementcoach.com
Email: chrisg@chrisgomburgretirementcoach.com
Tel: 818-692-1934