



New Horizons News

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Stress exhausts the brain.

Lab studies show that stress triggers chemical, cellular and structural changes that eventually take a toll on brain function. When a mouse or rat is put in a stressful situation, its hippocampus (the area of the brain that governs learning and short-term memory) gets smaller, and nerve cells shrink and lose their ability to communicate. With continuous exposure (10-day period), the animal's amygdala (the area of the brain that governs anxiety and fear) increases in size. Acute short-term stress can activate the immune system's ability to defend against a pathogen or repair a wound. Chronic, long-term stress has the opposite effect!

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The Power of Positive Thinking

Yes, positive thinking does lessen the effects of stress, according to several studies. People were asked to keep a daily diary of their positive experiences. The people who reported more positive experiences and a better mood throughout the day had the lowest levels of cortisol, which is a stress hormone that increases blood pressure and heart rate.

Meditation Disarms Stress

Meditation does work. In an 8 week meditation program where participants meditated for an average of 27 minutes each day, participants had reduced density of the amygdala, a part of the brain that related to anxiety and fear. The changes in the amygdala correlated with less self-reported stress. Studies show that even 10 minutes of meditation twice a day can enhance your physical health.

Mindfulness Quiets the Brain

The practice of being more attentive, present, and engaged in each moment, also known as mindfulness, has been studied for its ability to lessen the damaging effects of stress and protect the parts of the brain that are vulnerable to Alzheimer's disease and cognitive decline. 14 patients with mild cognitive impairment were taught to observe their thoughts and feelings in a non-judgmental way. An MRI showed that these individuals had less brain atrophy than the control group.

Exercise Tamps Down Cortisol

This is a no-brainer, pun intended. Many studies have shown that exercise can protect the brain against stress in a variety of conditions. Research indicates that a less-stressed brain can think and carry out tasks more efficiently.

Smart Ways to Stress Less

Look inward. Spend a few quiet moments every day meditating or practicing mindfulness. Get moving. Try to be physically active 20 to 30 minutes a day. Binge on *Big Bang Theory* reruns. Or anything that makes you laugh and feel good. Turn on Mellow Music. Music has a powerful effect on the brain and induces the release calming hormones. Strengthen Friendships. There is strong evidence that being socially active boosts cognitive ability. It helps us avoid feelings of loneliness and may reduce your risk for dementia as much as 60%.

This information is from the article "Calm Your Mind" from the April/May 2015 NeurologyNow magazine. You can see the full article at www.neurologynow.com.



Brain Injury Support Group

BISG Meeting

January 18th, 2018
12 noon

New Horizons

In attendance: David

Reimschuessel, Jason Lepurage, Tracy Stevens, Pat and Kate Thompson, Tom and Renee Culbert, Ray Singleton, Ellen Leftwich, and Jennifer Frettoloso.

We had a small group today, but there was plenty of discussion. We talked about resources in the community. Several members gave some great suggestions and info including "Neighbor to Neighbor" - a transportation resource utilizing volunteers drivers. Ellen announced that we will be collecting items all year long for the Christmas Stockings for the Elderly (re-gifting at its finest). Everyone was reminded that we are in the middle of flu and pneumonia so please beware! Take preventative measures. Next month's meeting will be in Georgetown at the Harborside restaurant. Hope to see you there!



Brain Injury Support Group

February 15th, 2018
12 noon

@

[Harborside Seafood and Italian](#)

815 Front St, Georgetown, SC 29440



**Dear You,
Make peace with the
mirror and watch your
reflection change.**

Silly Hearts



Q: What do squirrels give for Valentine's Day?

A: Forget-me-nuts.

Q: What did one volcano say to the other?

A: I lava you.

Q: What is a vampire's sweetheart called?

A: His ghoul-friend.

Q: Why did the boy put candy under his pillow?

A: Because he wanted sweet dreams.

Q: What did one pickle say to the other?

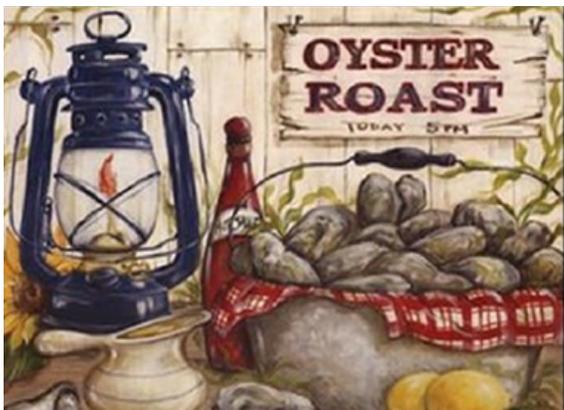
A: You mean a great dill to me.

Q: What did the boy octopus say to the girl octopus?

A: Can I hold your hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand?

Q: How did the telephone propose to his girlfriend?

A: He gave her a ring.



The Brain Injury Association of SC

*7th Annual
Shuck-A-Rama*

*Runnymede Plantation
February 3, 2018 2pm-5pm*

Spinal Cord Injury Information Corner

2018 SC Assistive Technology EXPO

Date:
March 6, 2018

Time:
8:30 am to 9:30 am – Registration
9:30 am to 4:00 pm – Classes begin

Place:
Columbia Metropolitan
Convention Center
1101 Lincoln Street
Columbia, SC 29201

~Free Admission
~Open to the Public
~Free parking in convention center parking lot and in 1007 Park Street parking garage

EXHIBITS AND WORKSHOPS SHOWCASING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES

Imagine everything you need, all under one roof! For 25 years, the SC Assistive Technology Program has hosted the SC Assistive Technology Expo and has been the go-to source for people with disabilities, their families, seniors, veterans and healthcare professionals. Every event opens your eyes to new technologies, new possibilities, new solutions and new opportunities to change your life. Where else can you discover ability-enhancing products and services, learn about adaptive sports, and attend informative workshops and only scratch the surface of what the Expo has to offer?

American Heart Month

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States; one in every three deaths is from heart disease and stroke, equal to 2,200 deaths per day.

Prevention starts with everyone. Protect yourself and your loved ones from heart disease and stroke by understanding the risks and taking these steps:
~Get up and get active by being physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.

~Ask your doctor if you should take an Aspirin every day.
~Find out if you have high Blood pressure or Cholesterol, and if you do, get effective treatment.
~If you Smoke, get help to quit.
~Make your calories count by eating a heart-healthy diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables and low in sodium and trans fat.
~Take control of your heart health by following your doctor's prescription instructions.

Silly Hearts



Q: What did the stamp say to the envelope on Valentine's Day?

A: I'm stuck on you!

Q: What travels around the world but stays in one corner?

A: A stamp.

Q: What do farmers give their wives on Valentine's Day?

A: Hogs and Kisses!

Q: Why did the boy have his girlfriend put in jail?

A: She stole his heart.

Q: What did the pencil say to the paper?

A: I dot my i's on you!

Q: What did one light bulb say to the other?

A: I love you a whole watt!

COASTAL ADAPTIVE SPORTS Wheelchair Basketball

Open Basketball Practice: Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Closed Team Only Practice: Fridays at 6:30pm

Location: North Myrtle Beach Aquatic and Fitness Center

8 Wheelchairs for use with no charge!

February

Red Roses and Romance

Everyone loves Cupid, especially around the month of February. This is the month when all the guys have a chance to recover a great relationship with their special loved one. You can always use a few nights to just sit back and relax with your sweetheart. Make sure to shower her with treats and you might get a romantic kiss or two.

But, be careful to not get Cupid drunk on love. He is short, chubby, and armed! You might just end up with his arrow in your left butt cheek! (hahaha!!!)

Jason Lepurage



Dates to Remember

2nd Groundhog Day

4th Superbowl Sunday

13th Mardi Gras

14th Valentine's Day

15th Brain Injury

Support Group Meeting

19th President's Day

23rd Canvas & Cocktails



Canvas & Cocktails

A fundraiser for the HCDSN Art Program.

WHEN:

Friday, February 23rd, 2017
5:30pm – 8pm

WHERE:

William H. Miller Studios
&
Fine Art
714 Main Street
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577

Waccamaw Regional Foundation presents a unique opportunity to partner with our AMAZING organization in order to make a difference in our community. This Fundraiser will allow the community and its' leaders to view and support the Arts Program at Horry County Disabilities and Special Needs. Art has been shown to help develop hand eye coordination, fine & gross motor skills, patience & creativity. It is also a healthy outlet to cope with stress.



It is better to give others a piece of your heart than a piece of your mind.



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**Disability is not the end,
it's an opportunity for a
new beginning.**

**Horry County Disabilities
and Special Needs**